

The Bible: Why? How?

- I. The invisible God and Creator has revealed Himself by three means.
 - A. General revelation in nature. **ROM 1:20 c/w PSA 19:1; ACT 14:17.**
 1. Nature only reveals His existence and power (creative and destructive).
 2. Nature does not reveal His purpose or will, nor does it reveal specifics about sin, forgiveness, reconciliation, the afterlife, etc.
 3. Nature's message is subject to ambiguous interpretation, as is evident by the variety of superstitions derived from natural phenomena.
 4. Nature is a broken book under the "...bondage of corruption..." (**ROM 8:20-22**) and is therefore not an infallible revelation of God's person, will, and purpose for man.
 5. Those who look to nature for ultimate answers end up worshipping the creation, not the Creator, and rationalizing their way to destructive conclusions. **ROM 1:23-28.**
 - B. Special revelation.
 1. God once granted *external* revelation through theophanies (veiled personal appearances) and voices in which He spoke to men. **GEN 3:8-19; 12:7; EXO 3:2.**
 2. God once granted *internal* revelation to chosen individuals through visions and dreams. **GEN 15:1; NUM 12:6; ACT 2:17; 16:9-10.**
 3. God gave *inspired* revelation to the prophets and apostles for declaration and recording. **2PE 1:21; 2TI 3:16.**
 - C. Jesus Christ. **JOH 1:18; MAT 11:27; 1JO 5:20.**
 1. Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God. **HEB 1:1-3; 1TI 3:16.**
 2. It is by His knowledge of God that sinners are justified. **ISA 53:11; JOH 10:15.**
 3. Jesus Christ taught men of God and sent His Spirit to amplify His knowledge of God, God's will, purpose, plans, etc. **JOH 14:25-26; 16:13-15.**
 4. If one would more perfectly know God, he must grow in grace and in the knowledge of God as expressed in and by Jesus Christ. **2PE 3:18.**
- II. What men may truly know of God, they must know through Jesus Christ. **JOH 14:1, 6-7.**
 - A. Jesus Christ not being present to our senses, we must rely on the information provided to us by those to whose senses He was abundantly manifested. **1JO 1:1-3.**
 - B. Men are accountable to the *record* that God provided through *them*. **1JO 5:9-10; 4:6.**
 1. record: The fact or attribute of being, or of having been, committed to writing as authentic evidence of a matter having legal importance, *spec.* as evidence of the proceedings or verdict of a court of justice; evidence which is thus preserved, and may be appealed to in case of dispute. 2. The fact or condition of being preserved as knowledge, esp. by being put into writing; knowledge or information preserved or handed down in this way.
 2. Hence, the need for *recorders* (One who records or sets down in writing). **ISA 8:1-2; 1KI 4:3; JOH 21:24; ACT 15:23; 1CO 2:11-13; 5:9-11; EPH 3:3.**
 - C. The apostles of Jesus Christ not only left a written record of their knowledge and experience of Him, they also authenticated the previously written record. **ROM 15:4.**
 1. The O.T. scriptures testified of Christ. **JOH 5:39.**
 2. They were Israel's chief advantage. **ROM 3:1-2.**
 3. All scripture declares Jesus Christ by Whom God may only be truly known.
 - D. God has therefore decreed that He may only be truly known to the post-apostolic world by inspired scriptures which declare Jesus Christ *prophetically* (O.T.) and *historically* (N.T.).
 1. It is the inspired *written record* by which God may be known and that record was completed by the time of the last apostle's death. **DAN 9:24-27.**

- a. The apostles would be guided into all truth. **JOH 16:13.**
 - b. The apostles would stand as God's judges. **MAT 19:28; 1JO 4:6.**
 - c. As the inspired prophets *spoke* (**2PE 1:21**), then *wrote* (**ACT 13:27**) for our learning (**ROM 15:4**), so the inspired apostles *spoke and wrote* for our superior knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. **2PE 1:19.**
2. The written record of scripture is the supreme revelation of God available to us.
- a. It tells us how the external revelation of God in nature came into being, why it is in its present state of entropy, and its inability to adequately inform us about God. **HEB 11:3; ROM 5:12; ECC 8:17.**
 - b. In the absence of the Person of Jesus Christ (by Whom God is known), it stands as His record available to us to perfect us in the knowledge of Himself, and therefore in the knowledge of the Father. **EPH 3:4-5; 2TI 3:15-17.**
 - c. Even angels by which the word of God came (**ACT 7:53**) defer to scripture. **DAN 10:21.**
 - d. The best record of purchase is a subscribed (signed) written one. **JER 32:10-12 c/w REV 1:1, 19; 22:16.**