



GOOD NEWS
for the unsaved
WORLD!

(#13)

What people can know without the Bible – God's glory in creation! (*though people suppress it*)

**WHAT CAN PEOPLE KNOW
(ABOUT GOD AND JUDGMENT)
WITHOUT THE BIBLE?**

The passages we looked at in Acts seem to suggest that we can know something!

Yet he has not left himself without testimony ...
Acts 14:17a (NIV)

... so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him ...
Acts 17:27b (NIV)

CAN WE REALLY KNOW SOMETHING?

God tells us that we can know a lot!

- ... about God
- ... about good vs. evil

More than we sinners want* to know!

* [Unless God changes and saves us.]


Nothing can show us God in his fullness; for that would be too much for a created being to comprehend. But what we can see is sufficient for us to know him, and to grow in our knowledge of him.

SOME BASIC THINGS WE CAN KNOW FROM CREATION

☞ God's "invisible attributes" are clearly seen in what God has created.

For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.
Romans 1:20 (ESV)

We cannot see the uncreated God directly. But in creation, we see him as though in a reflection.



If we don't see or recognize these things ...

- ✓ It's because, by sinning, we have suppressed them.
The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ...
Romans 1:18 (NIV)
- ✓ It's not God's fault; for God has made it clearly visible.
What can be known about God is clear to them because he has made it clear to them.
Romans 1:19 (GW)

Since God revealed himself so clearly through creation ...

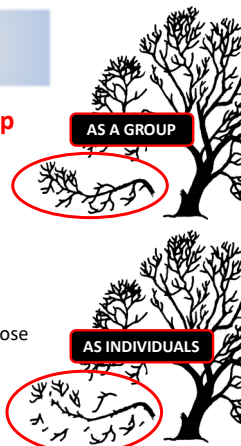
- ✓ It can be said that people knew him (before they suppressed that awareness).
☞ **It's not just a "MAYBE they knew him"!**
For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, ...
Romans 1:21a (ESV)
- ✓ This leaves us with no excuse.
So they are without excuse.
Romans 1:20b (ESV)

THE EFFECTS OF SIN

Sin's effect on our relationship with God:

Our sin has occurred in two ways, and it has cut us off from God in two ways:

- ✓ **As a GROUP:** The human race, in Adam, chose to sin.
- ✓ **As INDIVIDUALS:** *Every* time we choose to sin, it is as though we are saying, "I approve of what Adam did in the garden."



Sin's effect on our ability to see God through creation:

- **BLINDNESS:** Our suppression of the truth hinders our ability to see the expression of God's glory.
- **CURSE:** The curse (pain and suffering) that came because of sin masks some of the expressions of God's goodness.
- **DESTRUCTION:** We tend to mistreat and destroy creation, which makes it more difficult for us to recognize God's glory.
- **EVEN SO, IT IS STILL THERE:** The worst of sin cannot totally choke out the revelation of God in creation.

**THEREFORE... IN SPITE OF SIN... WE CAN SEE...
(IF WE ARE WILLING)**

- ☞ God's power/ways/works: These can be seen through what he has made.

God is exalted in his power.
Who is a teacher like him?

Who has prescribed his ways for him,
or said to him, 'You have done wrong'?

Remember to extol his work,
which men have praised in song.

All mankind has seen it;
men gaze on it from afar.

How great is God--beyond our understanding!
The number of his years is past finding out.

Job 36:22-26 (NIV)

- ✓ We can't comprehend all of God's greatness, but we can comprehend some of it.

- ☞ God's kindness: This can be seen in the good things he brings into our lives.

Yet he has not left himself without testimony: **He has shown kindness** by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.

Acts 14:17 (NIV)

He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and **sends rain** on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Matthew 5:45b (NIV)

- ✓ Scripture tells us that all good comes from God.
- ✓ Sinful people don't deserve good things.
 - ✓ We have rejected God and deserve only punishment.
 - ✓ **THEREFORE:** We should be amazed that anything good occurs in our lives.

- ☞ God's glory and righteousness: These are revealed in the heavens, and visible to all.

The heavens tell of the glory of God.
The skies display his marvelous craftsmanship.
Day after day they continue to speak;
night after night they make him known.

They speak without a sound or a word;
their voice is silent in the skies;

yet **their message has gone out to all the earth,**
and their words to all the world.

Psalms 19:1-4a (NLT)

The heavens tell about his righteousness,
and **all the people of the world see** his glory.

Psalms 97:6 (GW)

**IT'S NOT JUST "REVELATION OUT THERE IN CREATION" ...
IT'S ALSO "REVELATION HERE IN US" ...**

Human beings are created in the "image of God."
God has given us characteristics that are revelatory of his own nature and character.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, ..."

Genesis 1:26 (NIV)

... we are God's offspring, ...

Acts 17:29a (NIV)

We are as much like God as possible, for a created being.

**THIS INCLUDES
(among other things)**

☞ God's attributes are reflected through attributes we have. Examples...

Our ability to communicate ⇒ a reflection of the God who communicates.

Our ability to know ⇒ a reflection of the God who is all-knowing.

Our ability to rule over various things in creation ⇒ a reflection of the God who rules over all.

[God has each of these characteristics infinitely; we have them finitely.]

☞ God's very being (as 3 united in 1) is reflected in the nature of human gender (as 2 united in 1).

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
Genesis 1:27 (NIV)

⇒ The basic concept.
⇒ "Human" as "ONE."
⇒ "Male/Female" as "TWO."

>> It's more than just a physical act (which animals can also do). <<

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.
Genesis 2:24 (NIV)

✓ Because we are sinners, it is our tendency to distort and pervert even sexuality and gender-related issues. Instead of glorifying God by the way we live, we'd rather demonstrate that sin knows no limits.

☞ Like God, we have an awareness of good and evil. (But there is a big difference.)

✓ This is a characteristic that had to be learned by experience – by choosing to do either good or evil.

And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. ..."
Genesis 3:22a (NIV)

✓ The human race chose to learn it by doing the evil, rather than the good – and that has influenced our conduct ever since.

Although they know God's judgment that those who do [wicked] things deserve to die, they not only do these things but also approve of others who do them.
Romans 1:32 (GW)

✓ Even people who have never been exposed to the Bible have an awareness of the basic moral principles found in the Bible.

They demonstrate that God's law is written within them, for their own consciences either accuse them or tell them they are doing what is right.
Romans 2:15 (NLT)

✓ People suppress and distort their awareness of good and evil (just as they suppress and distort their awareness of God).

Their consciences have been scarred as if branded by a red-hot iron.
1 Tim. 4:2b (GW)

Indeed, their very way of thinking and their consciences have been corrupted.
Titus 1:15b (ISV)

YOUR OPPORTUNITY

**OPEN
YOUR
EYES!**

Look for ways God's glory is revealed in creation.

Then give him the honor he deserves!

People may suppress these things NOW.

**BUT THIS
IS GOING
TO CHANGE!**

**The day is coming,
when all pretension will come to an end.**

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.
Habakkuk 2:14 (NIV)

Credits

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