

GOOD NEWS
for the unsaved
WORLD!

(#15)
How God has revealed himself;
our attitude and responsibility.

IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT?

HEY GOD, I'D BE HAPPY TO BELIEVE IN YOU, IF YOU WOULD JUST SHOW YOURSELF TO ME!

God doesn't cater to the arrogant and demanding.

IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT?

THERE HE IS!

THIS IS EXCITING!

God doesn't gratify the desires of curiosity seekers.

What do you want?

DO YOU WANT TO DIE?

☞ GOD TOLD MOSES:

... humans cannot see me and live."
Exodus 33:20, 23b (CSB)

☞ GOD IS UNCREATED, *BYOND* ANYTHING THAT CREATION CAN CONTAIN. AS KING SOLOMON OBSERVED:

But who is able to build him a temple when heaven itself, the highest heaven, cannot hold him? Who am I to build him a temple except as a place to sacrifice in his presence?
2 Chron. 2:6 (GW)

Scripture tells us that God, the Creator, cannot be seen.

☞ EVEN WITH A LIMITED EXPRESSION OF HIS PRESENCE, ALL WE CAN SEE IS THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GLORY
– seen as light that is too bright to stare at.

... the eternal king, immortal, invisible, the only God, ...
1 Tim. 1:17 (NET)

[God] who ... dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or ever can see.
1 Tim. 6:16 (OEB)

When God doesn't show himself to people, it's not because he's mean, unkind or spiteful, but because it just can't be done!

So is there absolutely NO way to see God?

☞ **THROUGHOUT HISTORY**, PEOPLE HAVE TRIED TO INVENT:

- Images of God, based on created things.
- Substitute "gods" of their own liking.

☞ **THE TRUE GOD, THE CREATOR, FORBIDS THIS.**

- He cannot be patterned after created things.
- Nor does he allow us to invent substitutes.

... the only God, ...
1 Tim. 1:17 (NET)

"I am the Lord your God, ...
"Do not worship any other gods besides me."
"Do not make idols of any kind, ..."
Exodus 20:2a, 3, 4a (NLT)

So is there absolutely NO way to see God?

- THROUGH IMAGES PEOPLE HAVE TEND TO BE ON CREATION OF THEIR OWN. GOD, THE TRUTH, CANNOT BE REPLICATED IN THESE THINGS. NOR DO WE WANT TO BE REPLACED BY THESE THINGS.

NOT THROUGH IMAGES AND SUBSTITUTE GODS!

THESE ONLY GIVE YOU COUNTERFEITS AND FAKES. YOU DON'T END UP SEEING THE TRUE GOD!

"I am the Lord your God, ... Do not worship any other gods besides me."

"Do not make idols of any kind, ..."

Exodus 20:2a, 3, 4a (NLT)

EVEN SO... *Scripture shows us that God has revealed himself!*

(1) GOD MADE CREATION IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT REFLECTS HIS GLORY (like a reflection in a mirror).

And [the seraphs*] were calling to one another:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

Isaiah 6:3 (NIV)

This is why we can learn about God's glory, power, "divine nature," wisdom, etc., through creation – Romans 1:19-20, etc.

* [Seraph – a heavenly (or angelic) being, described by Isaiah.]

(2) GOD ALSO CREATED HUMANS IN HIS IMAGE...

- Humans were created as the greatest possible reflection of what God is like.

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 (ESV)

OUR DECISION TO SIN has effected all this revelation (in ourselves, and in all creation), but it has not totally destroyed what we can learn about God.

(3) GOD HIMSELF HAS TAKEN THE FORM OF A HUMAN TO REVEAL HIMSELF TO PEOPLE!

- NOT a full manifestation of deity (which cannot be "contained" in creation),
- But a revelation that is:
 - ✓ limited to what we can comprehend...
 - ✓ accurate in what it reveals.

... Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, ... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man,...

Phillip. 2:5b, 6a, 7-8a (NIV)

In the OLD Testament:

- IN A FEW INSTANCES, GOD REVEALED HIMSELF IN THE FORM OF A MAN. (The people were often surprised that they didn't die!)

[Jacob] "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared."

Genesis 32:30b (NLT)

[Samson's parents] So Manoah said to his wife, "We will certainly die because we have seen God."

But Manoah's wife replied, "If the Lord wanted to kill us, he would not have accepted our burnt offering and grain offering. ..."

Judges 13:22-23a (GW)

[In the OLD Testament:]

- SOMETIMES A LOT HAPPENED IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD... and many people were involved.

[74 leaders of Israel] [On the mountain,] ... they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there seemed to be a pavement of brilliant sapphire, as clear as the heavens. And though Israel's leaders saw God, he did not destroy them. In fact, they shared a meal together in God's presence!

Exodus 24:10-11 (NLT)

[In the OLD Testament:]

☞ THE NEW TESTAMENT REVEALS THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS SEEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT ERA!

[**Isaiah**] In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw **the Lord** seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.

"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen **the King, the Lord Almighty.**"

Isaiah 6:1, 5 (NIV)

[**The New Testament explanation of this event**] Isaiah ... saw **Jesus'** glory and spoke about him.

John 12:41 (NIV)

In the NEW Testament:

☞ THE NEW TESTAMENT AFFIRMS NOT ONLY THAT GOD CANNOT BE SEEN... BUT THAT JESUS REVEALS HIM.

The Word [Jesus] became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, ...

No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 1:14a, 18 (NIV)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Col. 1:15 (NIV)

[In the NEW Testament:]

GOD CANNOT BE SEEN... JESUS REVEALS HIM (cont'd.)

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied."

Jesus replied, "Philip, don't you even yet know who I am, even after all the time I have been with you? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking to see him?"

John 14:8-9 (NLT)

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, ...

Hebrews 1:3a (NIV)

Today:

☞ **AT THE PRESENT TIME:** JESUS IS NOT ON EARTH. HE HAS ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN.

☞ **IN THE FUTURE:** JESUS WILL RETURN TO EARTH. WE WILL SEE HIM AT THAT TIME.

☞ **BUT DOES HE EVER SHOW HIMSELF IN THESE PRESENT TIMES?**

GOOD QUESTION!

Maybe we can look at it next time!

Until then...

OUR OPPORTUNITY:

{ We have more important things to do, than to look for God to appear (even if he does appear). }

• **Our obligation?**

But just as [God] who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written:

"Be holy, because I am holy." *

1 Peter 1:15-16 (NIV)

• **Why?**

... those who are not holy will not **see** the Lord.

Hebrews 12:14b (NLT)

* YES, it's a command. YES, it's not easy. YES, your "old self" will constantly fight back. **But God offers us the power – his Spirit – to arow in holiness.**

Credits (1)

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