

*“The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God’s **revelation** of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It **reveals** the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of **divine revelation**.”* (The Baptist Faith and Message, article 1)

*“The Holy Scriptures are the only sufficient, certain, and infallible standard of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience. The light of nature and the works of creation and providence so clearly demonstrate the goodness, wisdom, and power of God that people are left without excuse; however, these demonstrations are not sufficient to give the knowledge of God and His will that is necessary for salvation. Therefore, the Lord was pleased at different times and in various ways to **reveal Himself** and to declare His will to his church. To preserve and propagate the truth better and to establish and comfort the church with greater certainty against the corruption of the flesh and the malice of Satan and the world, the Lord put this **revelation** completely in writing. Therefore, the Holy Scriptures are absolutely necessary, because God’s former ways of **revealing** His will to his people have now ceased.”* (2LBC, 1:1)

The Doctrine of Revelation tells us that God has revealed Himself to us that we might know Him, experience life with Him, and that go and let others know about Him. How does He reveal Himself? Two ways:

- General Revelation
  - Creation
    - *Psalm 19:1*, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.”
    - *Isaiah 6:3*, “Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is full of His glory!”
    - *Romans 1:20*, “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. So, they are without excuse.”
    - *Acts 14:17*, “Yet He did not leave Himself without witness, for He did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”
  - Common Grace—His kindness common to all people (not in a saving way)
    - *Psalm 65:9*, “You visit the earth and water it; You greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; You provide grain, for so you have prepared it.”
    - *Psalm 104:14*, “You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for the man to cultivate that he may bring forth food from the earth...”
    - *Matthew 5:45*, “For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust.”

- Conscience—internal sense of right and wrong because we are made in His image
  - *Romans 2:14-15*, “For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law unto themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness...”
  - *Matthew 7:11*, “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?”
- Special Revelation
  - While general revelation is good and true, it is not sufficient for someone to know the gospel. General revelation may bear witness that there is a Creator who exists, but it does not convey a saving gospel message. It is sufficient to condemn and insufficient to save. Nature cannot unlock the door of redemption. So, God has revealed Himself in a special way. Special revelation reveals truths that could not be discovered by observation or reason alone—especially God’s will, character, and plan of redemption. General revelation shows that God is; special revelation shows who God is.
  - Primarily in the Written Word, the Bible.
    - The Bible is the “**inscripturated**” (written) and enduring form of that revelation. It preserves God’s redemptive speech in a stable, authoritative form accessible to all generations.
    - The Bible reveals what cannot be known otherwise:
      - God’s character. Scripture reveals God not merely as Creator, but as: holy, just, merciful, covenant-keeping, redeemer. These attributes are displayed most clearly in His redemptive acts, especially at the cross.
      - Humanity’s true condition. General revelation can show that humans are moral beings; Scripture reveals the depth of sin, human inability to save itself, and the necessity of grace.
      - God’s redemptive plan. The Bible uniquely reveals the meaning of history, the purpose of Israel, the identity and mission of the Messiah, the nature of salvation by grace through faith. Without Scripture, Christ’s death would be an event without explanation. Scripture reveals its meaning.
  - Supremely in the Living Word, Jesus.
    - *Hebrews 1:1-2*, “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world.”
    - There were many ways formally in which God spoke to His people, but now there is only one means of revelation: through His Son. Christ is the superior and final agent of God’s revelation and redemption. Christ did not arrive with a revelation from God; He Himself is the revelation from God.

- *John 14:8-9*, “Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know My, Phillip? Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father.’”
- *Colossians 2:9*, “For in Him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily...”
- In the OT you have a progressive unfolding of truth. All through the OT God is revealing His character, His heart, His will, His ways...and ultimately revealing His plan to redeem sinners. That revelation reaches its pinnacle in Jesus Christ, who is the fulfillment of God’s redemption plan as He unfolded it in the OT with prophecies and types. In fact, all of Scripture pointed to Christ and found its fulfillment in Christ.
  - *Luke 24:25-27*, “And He said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory?’ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scripture the things concerning Himself.”
  - *John 5:39*, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me.”
- So, in the person of Jesus Christ revelation has been brought to completion with a dramatic suddenness. God’s Son embodies all that the Father has to say to men. Nothing needed was held back for a later time. No greater revelation can be imagined. Christ is the ultimate truth and reveals it fully. Hebrews 1:1-2 breathes unreserved finality. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the grand finale of revelation.

## Conclusion

With this in mind, we should ask four questions of any text or passage that we are reading in the Bible:

1. What does this passage reveal to me about the character, heart and ways of God?
2. What does this passage reveal about my brokenness and need for a Savior?

*Romans 3:10-12*, “None is righteous, no not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God; all have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

*Jeremiah 17:9*, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”

The only hero in the Bible is Jesus. Everyone else is a sinner that needs a Savior. So, avoid the temptation to put yourself in the story as the hero. All the Scripture to expose your need for grace, forgiveness, and redemption that only comes from Jesus.

3. What does this passage reveal about the perfect life, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection of Jesus?
4. What does this passage reveal about how I should respond to Christ’s work and love for me?