

Revelation: God Speaks

The world we live in is obsessed with communication.

Why is communication so important? _____

What are some of the different ways in which people communicate with one another today?

The Bible presents to us a God who speaks. In the opening chapter of the Bible (Genesis 1), the phrase 'God said...' occurs 10 times. Human beings were created in the image and likeness of a God who exists in community (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who communicates with each other. It should be no surprise that human beings communicate with one another. God also speaks to us and we can speak back to God in prayer.

The 'doctrine of revelation' deals with how God speaks to us.

Why is it important for God to speak to us? _____

Revelation means to make something known that is hidden. In the TV quiz show 'Deal or No Deal' different amounts of money are hidden in 22 boxes. During the show the boxes are opened and the amounts of money hidden in the boxes are revealed. Through revelation, God speaks to us and reveals to us who He is and his purpose for His creation.

'If God has something to say to man, then let him say it' (Brian Edwards, Nothing but the truth).

1. General Revelation

Through general revelation God reveals Himself to all people, in all times, in all places, in all cultures, and in all circumstances.

Complete the table to find out some of the different ways in which God reveals Himself generally and what does this reveal about God:

| | How does God reveal Himself? | What does this reveal about God? |
|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Psalm 19:1-4 | | |
| Romans 1:19-21 | | |
| Acts 14:17 | | |
| Acts 17:26-27 | | |
| Romans 2:14-15 | | |
| Ecclesiastes 3:11 | | |

'God not only sowed in our minds that seed of religion but revealed himself and daily discloses himself in the whole creation and preservation of the universe. As a result, humans can not open their eyes without being compelled to see God'. (Calvin, Institutes of Christian Religion I.V.1)

What does general revelation tell us about God? _____

What does general revelation not tell us? _____

2. Special Revelation

Special revelation is different to general revelation because it is not given to everyone and because it contains a special message, the message of salvation.

Complete the table to find out some of the different ways in which God specially reveals Himself to certain people in certain times and certain places.

| | How does God reveal Himself? |
|---|------------------------------|
| Genesis 18 Daniel 3:25 | |
| Isaiah 6:1 cf. John 12:41 Acts 10:9-23 | |
| Exodus 10:2 John 2:11 | |
| Hebrews 1:1-3 Colossians 1:15-17 | |
| 2 Timothy 3:16 | |

If Jesus perfectly and fully reveals God, why do we need the Bible? _____

In your own words summarise what the difference between general and special revelation is?

Why does no-one have an excuse for not believing in God? (Romans 1:19-20) _____

If God has clearly revealed Himself to everyone, why do some people not believe in God? (Romans 1:18, 25)

'There is nothing like the written Word of God for showing you the way to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus'. (The Message)

Doctrine

The foundations of the Christian faith

