

HOW DOES GOD REVEAL HIMSELF TO MAN AND WHAT IT MEANS TO US TODAY?

By Ed Hudson

(Source: AI; Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry; The Gospel Coalition; Focus on the Family Canada; The Think Institute; NLT Study Bible)

1 Peter 3:15; Jude 1:3 It is incumbent upon all Christians to be ready to defend our faith in God. So how do we defend our faith in the one true God? How does this relate to fulfilling the great commission? What does God tell us about this? Well, let's start with the basics as this provides the foundation for our faith. Hence today's theme: ***How does God reveal Himself to man & what it means to us today?***

This is a two-part question. We will start with how God reveals Himself to man, followed by how we can implement and utilise His revelation of himself meaningfully today. Theologians use various categories when studying how God reveals himself to His creation. I am going to use the three categories of Creation, Scripture, and Jesus. These are further categorised as (1) General revelation – Creation; (2) Special revelation – Scripture; and (3) Incarnational revelation – Jesus (Christian Apologetics and Research

Ministry). In Jesus we see the best representation of what God wants us to know about Him, His purpose, and His character. After all, He is the express image of God ([Heb1:3](#)). Beside these three main categories God dwells in believers

([John 14:23](#); [Gal. 4:6](#)), we have fellowship with Him and each member of the [Trinity](#) ([2 Cor. 13:14](#)). ([2 Cor. 13:14](#)). So, there is a sense of His revelation to us internally beside the categories listed above. However, we do not want to raise our subjective experiences to the same level of Scripture. Scripture is the final authority, not what we feel God is saying to us. Nevertheless, God does communicate to us internally through conviction of sin ([John 16:8](#)), His leading ([Romans 8:14](#)), and His love ([1 John 4:8](#)). So, let's take a look at what the Bible says about God's revelation to mankind under the above three categories:

1/ [Rom 1:20](#) We are made in God's image, and because of it, we can appreciate and see the handiwork of God all around us. We can look at the creation see the vastness of space, the beauty of sunsets, the perfection in the harmony and design of our ecosystem, the wondrous diversity of plant and animal life. He is a God of order, great power, and incredible intelligence. All of this is evident through the created order. In effect, this is what we call today as the scientific method – application of the five senses – see, hear, taste, smell and feel. Think of this. Space is length, breadth and height. Time is past, present, and future. Matter is solid, liquid, and gas. So, in a sense, we live in a trinity of trinities.

2/ [Tim 3:16–17](#) Scripture is a better revelation of God than is creation. In it, God reveals specific truths. We learn that there's only one God ([Isa 43:10](#)), that God is holy ([1 Pet. 1:16](#)), made of spirit ([John 4:24](#)), all-powerful ([Jer 32:17](#)),

compassionate ([2 Chron. 30:9](#)), eternal ([Ps 90:2](#)), and more. Also, we learn about God's moral character. Jesus said that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks ([Matt 12:34](#)). God spoke and created ([Gen 1:1-3](#)). He also gave us the moral law such as the 10 Commandments ([Ex 20:1-17](#)). So, Scripture reveals to us more about God, His character, will, and purpose for us ([Isa 43:7](#)) than does creation.

3/ Heb 1:3 **God reveals Himself to us in Jesus through the Holy Spirit (Incarnational Revelation)** In Jesus, we have the complete revelation of God spoken to us in the Old Testament that is

recorded in the New Testament. We learn that Jesus is the express image of God ([Heb1:3](#)), who walked on earth and died for our sins ([1 Pet. 2:24](#)). Jesus is called God ([John 1:1](#)) and since He is the perfect one, He is a greater revelation of God's character and nature ([Heb. 1:3](#)) than is Scripture. After all, the scriptures bear witness of Jesus ([John 5:39](#)). So, the ultimate and best way that God reveals Himself to us is in the person and work of Jesus. He is God in the flesh, the one who lived, loved, and died for us. In Him we see the fulfillment in the perfect manifestation and revelation of God to us. It is interesting to note there are three categorisation namely: (1) Creation – the Father; (2) Scripture or The Word – Jesus; and (3) Christ in us through the Holy Spirit, the triune God.

All of this lays the foundation for our defence and ability to answer nonbeliever's questions. When we are defending our faith or explaining the reality of God to

nonbelievers, we can ascertain what level a person is at IE level 1 – Physical Creation; Level 2 – The word of God (scripture); or Level 3 – Jesus who is the Messiah who lived died and was resurrected. Each level has certain and specific elements of truth to help us counter various arguments or address specific questions. In some situations, all three levels will come into play so it behoves us to ensure we are adequately across all three levels.

Clearly, the three levels that God uses to reveal himself to mankind has a reason and purpose. We can use what God has revealed to us in identifying a process we can use today when we defend our faith and or guide nonbelievers. Defending the Christian faith—known as apologetics—involves providing a thoughtful, reasoned account of Christian beliefs while maintaining a respectful and gentle attitude as we read previously in **1 Peter 3:15**. As apologist we need to be prepared to give an answer to our belief, hope and faith in Jesus and doing so with gentleness and respect. In addition, there is the expectation that we play a role in God's reality is we cannot do anything unless we have been prepared to do what God requires of us. So, how should we prepare ourselves for this task?

Our preparation could build on the foundation of how God reveals himself to mankind in the following three stage process (AI):

Build Your Knowledge of Scripture:

Know the Word: Read, study, and memorise scripture to understand the core doctrines of the faith and the foundational teachings about Jesus. As noted by the [The Think Institute](#), *“Read, study and memorise Scripture. Be aware of its primary, secondary and tertiary doctrines—and how to tell them apart.”*

- **Understand the Evidence:** Familiarise yourself with historical and logical reasons for belief, such as eyewitness accounts of the resurrection and fulfilled prophecies.

- **Use “Slow Thinking”:** You need to adopt System-2 Thinking that is thoughtful, deliberate, analytical and constructive rather than blurting out the first thing that comes to mind (System -1 Thinking)

- **Filter what you say:** you must filter what you say, but more important you must filter your thinking. And God describes this filtering process in **Phil 4:8**.

- **Approach Conversations with Gentleness: Be Respectful:** Follow the biblical command in **1 Peter 3:15** to always be ready to give an answer for your hope, *“yet with gentleness and reverence.”* As outlined by [Focus on the Family Canada](#), *“Listening to the questions of your opponents with care”* is vital to a meaningful exchange – build a relationship.

- **Start with Affirmation:** Find common ground and avoid immediately contradicting or attacking the other person's perspective. Try to build a relationship during your discourse.

Rely on Truth and Humility

- **Humbly Admit our Limits:** You do not need to have an answer for every single question. If you do not know a response, admit your limited knowledge honestly and offer to look into it before speaking further. Stick to the basics – as Bill is want to say. the main things are the plain things and the plain things are the main things,

- **Trust God with the Results:** Remember that changing hearts is ultimately God's work, not yours, so you can share your faith without anxiety or arrogance.

Pray: We cannot defend our faith or evangelise on our own we need the help of the Holy Spirit. Pray that the Holy Spirit will lead you and put the right words into your mouth.

In conclusion, if we are to know God, it is important for us to seek knowledge according to how and what He has revealed to man. Many have tried to gain knowledge of God through their unaided reason, or through some kind of subjective intuition. We too, are vulnerable to doctrinal error. We too, are tempted to give in to sin. However, we need not be afraid, be anxious or live in despair. The God of the Bible has told us not only who he is but also how we should seek knowledge about him. That knowledge comes from His created universe, His special revelation in Scripture, and through and by Jesus Christ himself living in us through the Holy Spirit. Only through these appointed means can we come to know God, as Lord, and as our Savior. In addition,

the above process can assist us in how we promote the good news to others (The Gospel Coalition). Let us not be ignorant or shy in pointing

others to Jesus since God has given us everything we need in order to do so.