

The Revelation of God

"Thus says the Lord 'Let my people go, that they may serve me.'" – Exodus 8:20
Newsletter Article for Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Berlin, PA, USA

Imagine family members gathering in the dining room after playing outside. Discovering a freshly-baked cake in the middle of the table, someone asked, *"Where did this come from?"* An older kid who was studying science at school sought to express his learning by saying, *"If you take the list of ingredients specified on the box, mix them up in the right order, and place them in a cake pan at the proper temperature for the right amount of time, you get a cake like this!"* to which a younger child countered, *"Silly, you! Don't you know that Aunt Matilda just loves baking cakes?"*¹ Now which of these two comments would you say qualifies as stating the truth? Sadly, certain self-proclaimed "educated" people would say, *"only the first one."* Indeed, many people today, following the teachings of skeptical philosopher David Hume, would say that only "scientific" speech about things that can be measured, qualify as being truth statements. Hume further said that anything which does not qualify should be *"tossed in the flames"* (which logically means that his own essay² should be cast in the fire since nothing he wrote there could be measured either).³ Just think about it. Life as we know it would come to an end if we limited ourselves to measurable statements. Worse still in regard to this article, these same followers use Hume's view as an excuse for not believing the Christian message. They say, *"I don't believe your **revealed** religion...I prefer knowing what **science** tells us instead."*

That posture makes me wonder if such skeptics bother to converse with their spouses or children or friends (if they have any left). Human beings are created to live together in communities that are enriched by both *speaking* to, and *hearing* from, one another. While scientific facts about each other may be interesting; they omit lots of other things. This task of both *speaking* and *hearing* entails both sides of the experience of revelation. Without it, we must all remain **"closed books"** to each other. So also, we cannot know God unless we open ourselves up to His revelation to us, the Bible (1 Cor. 3:11).

To **refuse** or **dismiss** revelation (which we indeed must employ almost constantly in our daily *earthly* lives) **with respect to God** entails firstly defining "god" as a force that is neither personal nor intelligent), and that is called "idolatry." Secondly, that rejection absolutely limits the intentions of God out-of-hand. Thirdly it is a posture of resistance, indeed, it is wholesale rebellion against the authority of God over our lives. Fourthly, it is an **irrational position** to suggest that God cannot communicate with us, should He choose to do so. And why shouldn't He want to communicate with us?

The scope of this article is not to defend the Bible as the revealed Word of God here. That goal is accomplished in Lee Strobel's book which we studied in the Spring and Summer of 2019.⁴ It is instead to do four things, 1) point out the irrationality of rejecting God's revelation out of hand, 2) identify the common experience of **revealing** our own inner thoughts to each other continually, and 3) celebrate the Bible's declaration that in its pages God reveals both His mind and His plan of salvation Hebrews 1:1-3). Finally, in that same Word, God has revealed His very heart in the person of Jesus Christ, who is God's Word become flesh (John 1:1-3, 14-18). The Bible then is neither *just* a story, nor is it *just* an agreed-

¹ My inspiration for this analogy is Dr. John Lennox, one of the lecturers in my M.A. in "Science and Religion."

² "An Enquiry into Human Understanding." <https://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3ll3/hume/enquiry.pdf>

³ Ibid. The final paragraph.

⁴ The Case for Christ. (Zondervan, 2016).

upon body of doctrine that we invented, but instead the very channel through which God speaks to us. This means that reading it isn't an obligation, but a great privilege to learn what He wants to tell us.