

“Person-Revelation/The Closing of the Scriptures”
The Revelation of God - Week 4 - Summer 2019

- Person Revelation

- The Person of Jesus Christ is the fullness of God’s Revelation to us.

Hebrews 1:1–3 - ¹ God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. ³ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- The Person of the Holy Spirit reveals the *truth* of God’s Revelation to us.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 - for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction...

- ▶ When the Revelation of God - in any of its forms - sinks in, it is because the Spirit is there to supernaturally convince us of its truth.
- ▶ Note the Trinitarian union of God’s Revelation to us.
 - ❖ God the Father speaks.
 - ❖ The Speech that goes forth is God the Son.
 - ❖ God the Holy Spirit enables us to receive the Son, and with Him, the Father.
- ▶ Our Triune God is profoundly and intimately with us at every moment we receive His gracious Revelation.
- ▶ He’s the Sender, the Deliverer, and the Receiver of His Revelation to us.
- Believers
 - ▶ We are meant to reveal God.
 - ▶ We were created in His image, as His representation.
 - ▶ We are being remade into the Image of Christ.
 - ▶ As His people, we are to live in such a way that reveals God to others.

Matthew 5:16 - *Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

- The Closing of the Canon

- First, the New Testament already speaks of verbal Revelation soon coming to a close:

Ephesians 2:19–20 - ¹⁹ *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,* ²⁰ *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone...*

- ▶ Both the apostles and (NT) prophets had the role of communicating God's direct Revelation (written and verbal).
- ▶ But note, Paul describes their role as the *foundation* stage of the early church.
 - ❖ That would include their ministry of direct Revelation as well.
 - ❖ Thus, we shouldn't expect the communication of direct Revelation from God to go on for the rest of history.
- ▶ What would replace the apostles and prophets in the role of getting God's Word to His people?

1 Corinthians 11:2 - *Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.*

2 Thessalonians 2:15 - *So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*

2 Peter 3:15–16 - *...our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶ as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

- ❖ In the latter days of New Testament times, we see an emphasis on holding fast to *tradition(s)*.
- ❖ This would have included the foundational level teaching of the apostles and prophets (much given verbally at first).

- ❖ But also notice, in the 2 Thess. 2 passage, Paul speaks about authoritative tradition given in written form.
- ❖ In 2 Peter 3, Peter shows full awareness that the writings of the apostles were to be regarded as Scripture.

▶ Summary:

- ❖ The New Testament points to a growing reliance on the apostolic traditions received by the first Christians.
 - ❖ These authoritative traditions included the writings of the apostles.
 - ❖ These writings were regarded as Scripture.
- We don't see anything about coming *future* inspired teachers and writers who too would give the direct spoken or written Word of God to His people.
 - One of the chronologically latest New Testament books drives this home:

***Jude 3** - Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.*

- Also, Paul says the time of direct Revelation, outside the Bible, was coming to a close:

***1 Corinthians 13:8–12** - ⁸ Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.*

- Prophecy was the direct, verbal revelation of God (clearly connected to the gift of Knowledge):

***Deuteronomy 18:18–19** - ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹ And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.*

- Tongues were untranslated prophecy:

1 Corinthians 14:5 - Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

1 Corinthians 14:2 - For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit.

- ▶ “Mysteries” were not hidden riddles.
- ▶ “Mysteries” were new, authoritative Revelation.

Romans 16:25–26 - ²⁵ Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith.

- Paul says that tongues, prophecy, and its attendant knowledge will cease.
 - ▶ When? When “the perfect” comes.
 - ▶ What is “the perfect”?
 - ❖ It is what fixes the problem of 1 Cor. 13:12.
 - ❖ That problem was the partial, hazy knowledge that characterized the days of tongues and partial prophecies (13:9).
 - ❖ What else could “the perfect” be but the final and full written Revelation of God?

- Implications:

- Continued searches for new Revelations from God (even 2nd-level versions that modern charismatics talk about) blur the importance of God’s completed written Word.
- It’s a blessing that we do not have to go searching for more Revelation from some random person!
- This, again, challenges us to value God’s Final Word above all else!