

# The True and Living God

By Tom Hill

**Bible Text:** Psalm 19:1-6

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In the Bible, God has revealed Himself to mankind. These disclosures took many different forms and showed a variety of His attributes.

Of course mankind's finite nature has prevented complete understanding of either His infinite nature or the boundless aspects of any one attribute.

One of the clearest disclosures came from the pen of David in Psalms 19.1-6:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. {2} Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. {3} There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. {4} Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, {5} Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. {6} His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

From this passage I want to examine with you several absolute truths about the existence and revelation of God that it describes. They take the form of five questions, which this text answers.

The absence of these truths lies at the heart of the Church's current, desperate need for Biblical revival. I pray that God will use these truths in your life to start you on the path to spiritual revival.

What speaks?

In this passage, David disclosed three different parts of creation that reveal God to mankind: the heavens, the daily cycle, and the sun.

When he spoke of the heavens in verse 1, David's statement entailed more than just the observable clouds and nearby sky. It included that and more.

He encompassed our atmosphere and the vast space beyond our atmosphere. It stretched to everything in the heavens. His declaration consisted of the vast expanse of air, planets, and stars.

These truths confounded David. The fact that God revealed Himself to mankind caused him to write Psalms 8:3-4:

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; {4} What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

In like fashion, Isaiah recognized God's relationship with His creation. The prophet recorded God's word to him in Isaiah 40.22:

“It is he (God) that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in...”

These expansive realms, which have declared God to mankind for centuries, disclose Him today, too.

Moreover, David's statements in Psalm 19.2 said that the daily cycle of the earth revealed God. He described this time sequence as 'day unto day and night unto night.'

The regular succession of light and dark told of the Almighty. This rhythm divided between light and dark.

This truth is recorded, too, in Psalms 74.16-17:

“The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun. {17} Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.”

Even today, they manifest an established order, an exact method. The daily cycle continues to reveal the Almighty God.

Finally, David described the role of the sun in God's self-revelation in verse 4. David depicted the sun in its brightness and this effect upon all mankind and other creation. He said that it reached from horizon to horizon and nothing escaped its blaze.

Scripture abundantly confirms God's role and self-revelation in creation.

1. Genesis 1.1: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”
2. Psalms 33.6: “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”

In this fashion, David's declaration proclaims an eternal truth: creation demonstrates and reveals God. It makes Him evident and undeniable to reason.

The existence of the heavens, the firmament, the daily cycle of night and day, and the effects of the sun make known God, the Creator, the Originator, the One in control.

When do they speak?

In verse 2, David stated the frequency of creation's divine manifestations. God caused His creation to provide constant and continuous revelation of Him.

He established these abundant signs in the heavens to speak without interruption or intervention. He planned them to provide a perpetual sermon to mankind of His nature.

Like an artesian well, their speech flows unabated to this day. Their ceaseless sound rings as clearly now as in David's era.

Where do they speak?

David clearly stated in verses 4-6 the universal extent of their speech. He stated, for example, that their voice went through out all the earth.

To clarify even more, he said they went to the ends of the world. Still further, David described their voice as reaching from one end of heaven to the other.

To leave no mistake, he finally wrote that nothing could hide from God's self-revelation.

Like David, the Apostle Paul confirmed that God's self-revelation had gone through out the earth. Paul made this issue unmistakably clear in Romans 10.18:

“But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.”

Then, as now, this revelation of the Divine Creator speaks universally. Every culture hears His voice. Every region of creation detects Him. No one in all the earth can escape Him.

What do they tell?

In verses 1 and 2, David pointed out two statements that clarify this question. He said that creation showed God's handywork and His knowledge, in other words, His nature and attributes.

God's creation displays a multitude of His attributes. The following list specifies some of them.

1. His existence: The existence of creation confirms the reality of a Creator.
2. His glory: The glory of the design shows the glory of the Designer.
3. His omniscience: The complexity of creation displays the all knowing wisdom and knowledge of God.
4. His transcendence: The excellence and wonder of creation reveals God as above and beyond that which He created.
5. His sovereignty: Creation discloses God's control over all things: their existence, as part of creation and their ongoing life cycle; their operation; and their function.
6. His eternity: God existed before His creation, which initiated time. Therefore, God existed prior to time in eternity.
7. His infinity: The multifaceted variety of creation makes known an infinite God.
8. His omnipotence: The magnitude and inherent powers of creation demonstrate an omnipotent God.
9. His goodness: The beauty, usefulness, and effects of creation upon other parts of that creation express the goodness of God.
10. His immensity: The vast expanse in size communicates His immensity.

To this list other Scriptures speak of how creation unveils God to mankind. For example, it manifests His righteousness as stated in Psalms 50.6:

“And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.”

Further, it confirms His power, wisdom, and discretion, as confirmed in Jeremiah 10.12:

“He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.”

In fact, God has so sufficiently revealed Himself in creation, that its message and the comprehension of it by His creation makes them without excuse before His justice and judgment for their sin.

Paul made this truth clear in Romans 1.19-20:

“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. {20} For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:”

Indeed, creation shows God's handywork and His knowledge, in other words His nature and attributes.

Although it does not reveal everything about God, what it discloses exceeds mankind's ability to comprehend.

Why do they speak?

God always works purposefully. Therefore, He works through the heavens, the daily cycle, and the sun to accomplish His ends. God's great design in these creations is to glorify Himself.

The first verse of the passage makes that very clear:

“The heavens declare the glory of God...”

In revealing Himself in and to His creation, God seeks honor, praise, glory, and exaltation from that which He made. In so doing, He obtains pleasure.

The Scriptures give abundant evidence for this conclusion. The clearest reference comes from Revelation 4.11:

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

Further evidence comes from Isaiah 46.10:

“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:”

In opposition to idols and false gods, God decreed what He desired to do. He asked counsel from no one. He purposed it in His own heart for His own pleasure.

Part of His decrees included the election of a people for Himself.. He did it for His own good pleasure.

The Bible confirms this truth in Ephesians 1.5, 9:

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will... Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:”

Further, God works in His chosen people to accomplish His good pleasure. You probably know the verse in Philippians 2.13:

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

In conclusion, God revealed Himself in creation and designed it to accomplish this purpose: to elicit praise, honor, glory, and exaltation to Himself for His own good pleasure. What purpose or difference should these truths accomplish in your life today?

Of the numerous effects that they can have, I will mention only three of them.

First, God desires for mankind to glorify, worship, honor, praise, and fear Him. Sadly, few believers accomplish it. Thus the Church of Jesus Christ misses this purpose.

Too often Christians concentrate upon His gifts instead of Him. They seek God only for His benefits and blessings.

God has become the grand supply sergeant in the sky. He exists to meet our needs. We concentrate almost exclusively upon self-satisfaction of our needs, wants, and desires.

But, seldom do the followers of Christ accomplish His purpose for them: to glorify God. Worship and praise has indeed become big business in the Church. Talk of it fills our services, but little of it happens.

We have this notion that if we desire to worship God, whatever we do honors and glorifies Him. Further, we believe that if we say that we are doing a certain thing to honor and worship God, it means that we have.

Seldom do believers study Scripture to discover what God says glorifies and honors Him. Worse yet, Christians rarely consult the Word of God to confirm that what they desire to do will actually fulfill what God declares will honor and glorify Him.

The Bible clearly gives examples of those who meet these descriptions of failure.

Genesis 4.1-8 recounts the story of Cain's offering to God. Cain brought an offering to God. He had an admirable purpose, to make an offering to God.

But God rejected it, because it did not honor and glorify Him.

In 1 Samuel 10.1-8, the Bible records Samuel's directions to King Saul. It chronicles the time when Samuel instructed King Saul to go to Gilgal and wait for him seven days to offer burnt offerings to God.

1 Samuel 13.8-16 tells how King Saul presented offerings to God in disobedience to the prophet, which led to Saul's loss of the kingdom.

The Apostle Paul offers a final picture of false honor and worship to God. No doubt you recall how Paul, because of his zeal for God, persecuted and murdered Christians before his conversion, thinking it would please and honor God.

Obviously it did not.

In fact, wrong worship of God brings God's judgment upon false worshipers.

The Bible warns of this very sin in Romans 1.21:

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”

Right desires and purposes do not sanctify wrong actions. God desires true worship, praise, honor, and exaltation from mankind.

To offer it correctly requires enlightened study and application of God's word by the Holy Spirit. The self-revelation of God in His creation will spur believers on to worship, honor, praise, and glorify God as He desires.

Second, these truths revealed in creation can mold the behavior of the child of God into holy living.

A statement by Dr. A. W. Tozer describes this use.

“We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God.”<sup>1</sup>

The concept of God directly affects and determines spiritual behavior and conduct. A faulty belief of God produces faulty actions. But, a true belief of God brings forth correct conduct.

The truths of God revealed in creation help direct believers in this direction.

Third, the revelation of God in creation urges believers to know Him.<sup>2</sup> Too often Christians substitute knowledge about God for knowledge of God. Unbelievers, even the devil and his angels know about God, and even tremble.

To know God aright means to have intimate knowledge of Him, to personally trust Him, and to appropriate Him and His provision in Jesus Christ to everyday life by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The revelation of God in creation urges the child of God to know God personally.

I pray that the Holy Spirit has clarified and revealed these truths to your mind and heart. They provide instruction to believe. Conformity to the truth will affect daily life.

Where has the Spirit convicted you of your failure to believe the truth? If He were to judge you by them today (which He does), would He find you innocent or guilty? Has He reproved or approved your condition?

The work of the Spirit in your life comes to correct you from your unbelief. His reproof leads to repentance unto spiritual revival.

I pray that you will experience the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life today.

I pray that He will clarify the truth to you, convict you of your unbelief, and correct you unto repentance.

May the Holy Spirit come to you in grace and bring a spiritual transformation in your life today.

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### **References**

1. Tozer, A. W. *The Knowledge Of The Holy* (Harper & Row: New York, NY; 1961) p. 9.
2. Watson, Thomas. *A Body Of Divinity* (The Banner of Truth Trust: Carlisle, PA; 1992) p. 45.