

The Word of God

Previously

In a previous article, *The Way Things Ought To Be*, I wrote about the divine imprint of the Creator that is built into every person. This imprint should motivate us to seek out more understanding of this Creator.

Revelation From the Creator

The existence of the universe demands that we recognize the existence of a Creator. (Anyone who has chosen to dismiss this obvious truth would not be reading this article.)

And if there is a Creator Who brought everything into existence, including humans, His nature and character would be far beyond our ability to comprehend. It would be like an ant trying to understand Einstein.

Therefore, in order to more fully understand the Creator we must depend on Him to reveal Himself to us. We are forced to depend on revelation from God Himself in order to have any hope of understanding Him, why He created us and what our response to Him should be.

Those who believe in a Creator typically have a reference point on which they base their specific beliefs. Many (if not most) people, accept a specific set of writings they believe contain God's communications to humans. These writings are typically referred to as "the Word of God" by these people.

There are also people who claim to be "religious" or "spiritual" who do not rely on any particular writings. They may choose to take the "smorgasbord" approach and take the parts in various writings that they like and essentially make up what they want to believe. Then, there are those who simply decide on their own, without any external standards, guidelines or references, what they believe is true about God. Those who take these approaches are, in fact, their own gods. They make up their own rules and ideas. They are accountable to no one but themselves. If you are one who takes this approach, this article is not for you. You are, literally, on your own.

I would assert that humans are not qualified to "figure out" the Creator. We **must** rely on His help and respond to His revelation.

Organized religions typically have writings that they believe contain God's words. Jews have the Torah, Muslims have the *Quran*, Christians have the Bible, Hindus have the *Vedas*, Confucianism has *the Four Books*, Catholics have the Bible plus the *Apocrypha* plus whatever the Popes say and write down, Mormons have the Bible plus the *Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price*, Buddhists have the *Sutras*, etc. For each of these religions their designated holy books are considered to contain the words of God. Some refer to them simply as the Word of God.

Within each of these religions, there are subgroups that differ on how to interpret their Word of God. For example, there are Muslims who interpret the Quran to guide Muslims in a peaceful way of practicing their faith. Other Muslims interpret the Quran to practice their faith in the context of a war against infidels (defined as anyone who doesn't agree with them). Christians also are divided on how to interpret their Word of God (the Bible) and how to live out their faith based on its teachings. That's why there are hundreds of "denominations". Some have claimed the Bible teaches pacifism while others use it to justify war. Some have used the Bible to justify slavery, genocide (e.g, Native Americans), colonization (i.e, domination) of other cultures, blowing up abortion clinics, etc.

The Word of God and Faith

Let's admit from the start that there is an element of faith in accepting any writing as the Word of God. There is no scientific test that can be performed. However, that doesn't mean that we must exercise **blind** faith. We can thoughtfully consider the options, look for consistencies, contradictions, etc. The one criteria we should NEVER fall victim to is the opinion of the majority. History is replete with examples of majorities that have been wrong.

Many people accept certain writings as the Word of God because it is what their parents or culture accept. Others make their determination based on another individual that they respect and trust. In either case, these people have not really ever considered the possibility that what they have accepted might not be right. They do not challenge and test for themselves, they abdicate that responsibility to another person. Their faith is essentially in a person rather than in God.

If you have not already done so, I strongly encourage you to step out and challenge what you have come to accept as the Word of God. This is not a blasphemous or heretical thing to do. God will not be offended by your search for truth. Your family and friends might be offended, but you'll have to decide for yourself if this is important enough to take that risk.

For the person who is truly seeking to know and understand the Creator of the universe, we have to decide where we're going to get our information. In other words, this fundamental question must be answered:

Which "Word of God" am I going to accept and follow?

In order to answer this question, we must set aside the influences of our culture, family and friends and set out on our own to seek out the correct answer. If you were to meet a cannibal and they explain to you that they "know" their lifestyle is the right one, would you not encourage them to challenge their assumptions? OK, you're likely not a cannibal. But, doesn't the same challenge hold true?

There is really no way you can lose in undertaking a challenge of what and why you believe. Either you will be confirmed and made stronger in your faith OR you will discover that you were on the wrong track and can correct that. This is a no-lose proposition!

God's Messengers

Most religions have a primary messenger, the person whose teachings are revered and trusted. These teachings are used, by those who believe in that messenger, to understand God and to live the way God wants them to live.

Which Messenger?

Every "messenger of God" for each religion, except one, acknowledges that they are human and that God appeared to them and gave them revelation. They are asking us to accept **second hand information**.

The one exception is Jesus of Nazareth. He claimed that he preexisted humanity and is greater than any human. He claims to have actually come directly from the presence of God. **This is first hand information**. Jesus claimed that he was placed into a human body in order to bring us God's words. He backed up his claims by demonstrating his command over natural laws (miracles) and by rising from the dead. There are also historically preserved prophecies that accurately predicted intricate details of his coming. Not one other single "messenger of God" makes this claim. This difference is too great to ignore for an honest seeker of truth.

If a person were starting out with a blank slate, in terms of religions, and were to investigate all the major religions they would have to put Jesus at the top of the list just because of the audacity of his claims.

However, the truth is that hardly anyone starts out with a blank state in terms of religion. Most of us were born into a family and/or culture that gave us our religious

starting point. Any real seeker of spiritual truth will not just automatically assume that they “got lucky” being born into the right religion, but will investigate other claims in order determine what is really true.

I, myself, was “born into” the Christian religion. But, over several decades, I investigated the claims of many other religions. In the end, I chose to believe that Jesus Christ is the true messenger of God whose words I believe and whose life is the example for me to follow. Even though I have come to this conclusion, I found that I had to abandon the Christian system and its teachings (more on that in the next article).

Jesus and The Way Things Ought To Be

At the beginning of this article I referred to another article called ***The Way Things Ought To Be***. I have found that Jesus completely and perfectly addresses this basic, divine imprint that lives in all of us.

You see, the Creator/Father sent His son to remind us of this universal, imprinted truth and to bring us some really good news: ***the-way-things-ought-to-be*** is coming!!! In fact, it is already among us. Jesus refers to it as the Kingdom of God.

But, it’s not enough to know about this truth. We must practice it. In living out this truth in this life we will be prepared to enter the next life where ***the-way-things-ought-to-be*** is a reality. If we do not attempt to live out this truth in this life, we will not be permitted to enter the next one. The next life is reserved for those who have responded to the Father’s imprint and who have attempted to practice what He placed in us. Jesus teaches us that:

The Kingdom of God is the way things ought to be.

We get to practice and to experience a small piece of the Kingdom on this earth. Jesus tells us that we must become like little children in order to enter this Kingdom.

Every one of us has the ability to understand Jesus' simple teaching. We don't need a formal education or a theology degree. We don't need to rely on the "wisdom" of “spiritual leaders” or man-made institutions. We only need to believe in and practice what the son of God came to teach us.

When we do, we will be ready to enter the eternal Kingdom of God where life is the full experience of the way things ought to be.

For More Reading

I wrote an article entitled ***Jesus - The Word of God*** which dives deeply into the teachings of Jesus and proposes that Jesus, not the Bible, is the true Word of God.

Unless otherwise noted, all quotes from the Bible come from the World English Bible translation (<https://worldenglishbible.org>).