

Heaven's Means of Communication



Teacher's Guide

Surveying the Source

Gen. 18:1–15; 32:30; Exod. 4:10–17; Ps. 19:1–6; John 1:14; 3:16, 17; Col. 2:9.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Be able to explain the three major ways in which God reveals Himself to us.
- ▶ Understand that Christ is the most complete revelation of God, and that

other revelations point us to Him.

- ▶ Be able to explain why Christ is the only direct path to God, even with the other revelations available to us.

Preparing to Lead

In the beginning, Adam and Eve talked and listened to God face to face. Nothing more was needed until the day they deliberately disobeyed Him. In the years following, people stopped hearing God's voice and developed strange and erroneous ideas about who He was and what He

wanted. But even though we tried to forget Him, He never forgot us, and He continues to reveal Himself to anyone who wants to know Him through His creation, His Word, and the person of Christ. Are you listening?

Getting Started

A. Give each member a copy of the activity sheet (p. 31). Instruct them to jot down ways God has used His Creation, His Word, and the Person of Christ to communicate with them personally. Emphasize that there are no wrong answers. Allow at least five minutes for them to collect their thoughts and complete the assignment.

When everyone has completed the survey, take five to ten minutes to discuss the answers and to allow members to express any thoughts they may have. Make clear that God is always seeking to estab-

lish a relationship with us—collectively and as individuals.

B. This variation may be more effective if you think that class members might be reluctant to share their thoughts and opinions individually, and if your class is fairly large. Ask class members to break up into groups of three to five, and give each group a copy of the survey (p. 31). The members will discuss the survey and suggest answers to fit into the categories. Each group will then appoint one member to report back to the class as a whole with the answers.

Delving Into the Word

A. Say: “When we read the Old Testament, it may seem that God's lines of communication with His people at that

time were more direct. We tend to identify with figures like Noah, Abraham, Moses, etc., who spoke directly to God

Materials

Bibles; pens or pencils

and who were considered prophets for that reason. Most people, however, were not prophets, and did not receive direct communication from God. They received communication from Him through the prophets, with perhaps some signs and wonders to confirm that God had approved the message. Today, God has given us the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Through Jesus, we can each communicate directly with God.” Explain that even the prophets themselves looked forward to God’s greatest revelation (John 8:56, for example). Ask the class how they can relate directly and individually with God through Jesus. Discuss what is necessary to have this relationship.

Ask individuals to read the following texts: ●Heb.1:1, 2; ●John 1:14; ●Col. 2:9. Note that all of these writers seem quite confident that the fullest and most direct revelation of God’s nature and character came through Jesus Christ. Ask your class if they share that confidence. If not, ask what we as individuals can do to better appreciate and take advantage of this precious gift we have been given.

B. Ask: “What do Hebrews 1:1, 2 tell us about God and His means of revealing

Himself to us?” Point out that all three means of revelation are included in this passage: (1) prophecy, (2) the Creation, and (3) the life, death, resurrection, and continuing ministry of Jesus Christ.

God’s message, the author says, was given in “various ways” by the prophets, and has culminated in His revelation of Himself in the person of His Son, who is much more than a prophet, and through whom the world itself was created.

Ask: “What is the relationship of God’s revelation through nature and the prophets (Scripture) to His greatest revelation in the person of Jesus?” Refer your class to John 5:39 and Psalm 19:1.

Say: “All the forms of revelation tell us something about God, and if it was simply a matter of believing that He exists, knowing what He wants us to do, and resolving to do it, the prophets and the witness to God seen in nature would be enough. But because of sin, we are incapable of consistently acting on what we know is right. Jesus reveals Himself not only in terms of giving us information, but in the action of saving us when we can’t save ourselves.”

Discussing the Ideas

1. If we are to use nature as a way of understanding God, how do we explain the aspects of nature that do not match up with what we know about His character?

2. In the Old Testament, God reveals His character, His concern for the human race, and His laws and requirements. Why can’t we please God by learning this information and trying very hard?

3. Why do you think so many people failed to appreciate who and what Christ was when He lived on earth? How can we avoid taking this gift for granted and failing to comprehend its infinite value?

4. Revelation culminates in the supreme message of Christ. Given this fact, what standard should we hold for anyone claiming to have “new light”?

Closing the Activity

Ask: “Does God want to make His presence known in your life? How can you make it easier for Him to speak to you and for Him to speak through you to others?”

Say: “God wants us to be the vehicle

for His revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ, but He won’t force us. We have to be willing to be used by Him, and we have to keep the channels open through regular devotion, prayer, and study.”

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Directions: Below are three means of revelation God often uses today. List ways in which He has used each one to communicate with you personally.

