



HOAW Newsletter

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HELPING MEN LIVE LIVES OF INTEGRITY AND HONOR

Where is God?

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Have you ever wondered why God has not appeared in any form since the time of Christ walking the earth? I often hear this question, *“Where is God? If only he would show us. If only He would make an appearance.”*¹ He, however, makes His presence known through **general** and **special** revelation.

Certainly, God is present through general revelation (i.e., nature, conscience). In regard to **general revelation**, Ecclesiastes 3:10-11 informs us that God has placed eternity in the hearts of men, yet we cannot fathom what God Has done from beginning to end. In other words, every human being has embedded in his mind the idea that there is more to existence than what we can actually see. Every human

being has a sense of the existence of the ‘eternal.’ This God-ordained awareness compels men of every era, culture and ethnicity to wonder about their existence. Why am I here? Does my life have any meaning? Will my life have any lasting impact? Questions of purpose, progress, and permanence visit our minds frequently compelling us to seek answers to the all-important questions. That divinely inspired search will continue until the end of time as we know it.

Psalm 19:1-4 declares, *“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”* According to

this passage, God’s existence and power can be clearly seen through observing the universe. The order, intricacy, and wonder of creation speak to the existence of a powerful and glorious Creator.

“General revelation is also taught in Romans 1:20, *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”* Like Psalm 19, Romans 1:20 teaches that God’s eternal power and divine nature are “clearly seen” and “understood” from what has been made, and that there is no excuse for denying these facts. With these Scriptures in mind, perhaps a working definition of general revelation would be “the revelation of God to all people, at all times, and in all places that proves that God

¹ Adapted from numerous resources including GotQuestions.org.

exists and that He is intelligent, powerful, and transcendent.”

“**Special revelation** is how God has chosen to reveal Himself through miraculous means. Special revelation includes physical appearances of God, dreams, visions, the written Word of God, and most importantly — Jesus Christ. The Bible records God appearing in physical form many times (Genesis 3:8, 18:1; Exodus 3:1-4, 34:5-7), and the Bible records God speaking to people through dreams (Genesis 28:12, 37:5; 1 Kings 3:5; Daniel 2) and visions (Genesis 15:1; Ezekiel 8:3-4; Daniel 7; 2 Corinthians 12:1-7).”

“Of primary importance in the revealing of God is His Word, the Bible, which is also a form of special revelation. God miraculously guided the authors of Scripture to correctly record His message to mankind, while still using their own styles and personalities. The Word of God is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). The Word of God is inspired, profitable, and sufficient (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God determined to have the truth regarding Him recorded in written form because He knew the inaccuracy and unreliability of oral tradition. He also understood that the dreams and visions of man can be misinterpreted. God decided to reveal everything that humanity needs to know about Him, what He expects, and what He has done for us in the Bible.”

“The ultimate form of special revelation is the Person of Jesus Christ. God became a human being (John 1:1, 14). Hebrews 1:1-3 summarizes it best, “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son ... The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.” God became a human being, in the Person of Jesus Christ, to

identify with us, to set an example for us, to teach us, to reveal Himself to us, and, most importantly, to provide salvation for us by humbling Himself in death on the cross (Philippians 2:6-8). Jesus Christ is the ultimate “special revelation” from God.” Back to our question...

In these difficult times, why has He not made a physical appearance?

You would think that current chaos and the ever-increasing influence of the Enemy in the world would warrant His presence. We long for some physical manifestation of Him in these troublesome times. Satan’s influence in and over the world cannot be denied. But God is patient, wanting to bring everyone who believes into His kingdom before the door is closed forever at Christ’s second coming.

There have been unsubstantiated declarations of His presence in the form of tears from statues, blood flowing from His wounds on crucifixes, near death experiences and the like. I find such accounts troublesome. For instance, one common feature of near-death narratives state that ‘winged angels’ escort the person down a tunnel of ever-increasing light before they are pulled back to their earthly existence. Except for the seraphim and cherubim, there is no biblical evidence that angels have wings. Risking offending people who claim to have such experiences, these events are not verifiable or replicable. In my view, they are simply the outworking of fertile minds and hearts longing for something to worship; a sought-after demonstration of reality of the eternal.

My Premise: The absence of a physical manifestation of God requires our need to exercise obedient faith in what cannot be seen and may or will not be seen until Christ’s second coming.

I believe the answer to the absence of physical appearances of God in human form can be found in Scripture. ***It has everything to do with an understanding of faith—what faith is and what faith requires of believers.***

Let’s dig deeper. In an article posted in GotQuestions.org we read the following clarifying comments.

“Where does faith come from?”

Faith is not something we conjure up on our own, nor is it something we are born with, nor is faith a result of diligence in study or pursuit of the spiritual. Ephesians 2:8-9 makes it clear that faith is a gift from God, not because we deserve it, have earned it, or are worthy to have it. It is not from ourselves; it is from God. It is not obtained by our power or our free will. Faith is simply given to us by God, along with His grace and mercy, according to His holy plan and purpose, and because of that, He gets all the glory.”

“Why have faith?” God designed a way to distinguish between those who belong to Him and those who don’t, and it is called faith. Very simply, we need faith to please God. God tells us that it pleases Him that we believe in Him even though we cannot see Him. A key part of Hebrews 11:6 tells us that “he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” This is not to say that we have faith in God just to get something from Him. However, God loves to bless those who are obedient and faithful. We see a perfect example of this in Luke 7:50. Jesus is engaged in dialog with a sinful woman when He gives us a glimpse of why faith is so rewarding. “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” The woman believed in Jesus Christ by faith, and He rewarded her for it. Finally, faith is what sustains us to the end, knowing that by faith we will be in heaven with God for all eternity. “Though you have not seen him, you love him;

and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:8-9).”

“According to the Bible, **faith is essential to Christianity** (*all other world religions require some regimen of works to attain divinity of one form or another*). Without demonstrating faith and trust in God, we have no place with Him. We believe in God’s existence by faith. Most people have a vague, disjointed notion of who God is but lack the reverence necessary for His exalted position in their lives. These people lack the true faith needed to have an eternal relationship with the God who loves them. Our faith can falter at times, but because it is the gift of God, given to His children, He provides times of trial and testing in order to prove that our faith is real and to sharpen and strengthen it. This is why James tells us to consider it “pure joy” when we fall into trials, because the testing of our faith produces perseverance and matures us, providing the evidence that our faith is real (James 1:2-4).”

In the time of Christ, people badgered Him to show them a sign He was from God. Even miracles performed in their presence did not entirely convince them of His deity. The requests kept coming having more to do with our lack of belief. I suspect that even today people witnessing a miracle unmistakably from God would want more. If Jesus appeared today, people would still ask for more proof, a greater miracle. Some might believe, but most would not. Therein lies the depravity in every man – the sin of unbelief.

Faith Defined

Biblical scholarship defines faith as belief, firm persuasion, assurance, firm conviction, and faithfulness. Faith is the confidence in what we

hope for and the assurance that the Lord is working, even though we cannot see it. Faith knows that no matter what the situation, in our lives or someone else’s that the Lord is working in it.

Let’s explore the scriptural evidence for my premise.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1

Faith is the connecting power into the spiritual realm, which links us with God and makes Him become a tangible reality to the sense perceptions of a person. Faith is the basic ingredient to begin a relationship with God.

Faith is the assurance that the things revealed and promised in the Bible are true, even though unseen, and gives the believer a conviction that what he or she expects in faith, will come to pass. Faith is the tangible evidence of what is hoped for – so tangible that the faith itself, is the evidence/reality of those things that are not yet visible.

It is impossible to be saved without faith and “without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him” Hebrews 11:6

Everything in salvation is based on faith. We have to believe in that which we cannot see. Faith is the spiritual force that overcomes great opposition and can carry a person through great trials and triumphs over circumstances in the natural realm. Such faith is displayed in the life of Abraham. He is cited as the ‘father’ of faith. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Abraham heard the Word (Romans 4:13), he turned (repentance) (Romans 4:18, 19), he embraced the hope (Romans 4:18),

he did not waver in his commitment (Romans 4:20), and he rejoiced in it as an accomplished fact (Romans 4:20).

Once biblical source identified three essentials of faith.

(1) Knowledge – the engagement of the mind;

(2) Response – the stirring of the emotions; and

(3) Commitment - a commitment of the will.

Other scriptures supporting my premise.

For we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways James 1:5-8).

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith (1 John 5:4).

Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong (1 Corinthians 16:13).

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith (Romans 1:17). “...the righteous shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4).”

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls (1 Peter 1:8-9).

So, we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:6-7).

But my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him (Hebrews 10:38).

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Romans 5:1-5).

For in this hope, we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience (Romans 8:24-25).

So, what can we gather from this?

- We are to live by faith and not by sight.
- Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
- Christ will finally become visible at His second coming.
- Until then, believers are to live by faith and faith alone.
- Rely on the Bible and trust in God's existence by faith.
- Faith in what is not seen requires obedient trust.
- Such faith is proof of our commitment to Him.
- Requiring a visible demonstration of His existence is not faith at all.

The day of His physical appearance will come but until then we are to live by faith and faith alone.

OTHER NEWS



Heart of a Warrior Ministries offers four journeys you can take to become who God created you to be.

The Foundation (Ground Zero) helps establish strong biblical foundations for the battles ahead.

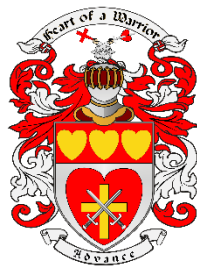
The Compass (Phase I) calibrates a warrior's heart and tunes that heart to the heart of God. I am currently leading 45 at Calvary Church WBL Campus on this journey.

The Map (Phase II) helps men focus on what matters in accordance with their unique divine wiring.

The Guide (Phase III) develops the spiritual discipline of being mentored and mentoring others.

Go to our website for more details.
www.heartofawarrior.org/journeys/

If you would like to contact me directly, email me at HOAWMinistries.com.



Donations

Please consider giving to Heart of a Warrior Ministries. HOAW Ministries needs your financial support. Our ability to help men live God-honoring lives

depends on the resources we can use to that end. Simply go to the donations tab on heartofawarrior.org. Thank you for being a subscriber.

Check out **The Store** on our website (www.heartofawarrior.org). There are downloadable resources you can use to lead a group through Phases I, II, or III, Foundations of a Warrior, and Bible Study Guidelines.

NOTE: Throughout the course of the year, I will be adding helpful and informative resources to Heartofawarrior.org. They may be found on the **RESOURCES** page of the website.

Websites for Men

Heart of a Warrior Ministries
www.Heartofawarrior.org

Legacy Minded Men
www.legacymindedmen.org

Church for Men
<http://churchformen.com/>

Resolute
<https://beresolute.org/>

Life Way Men
<https://blog.lifeway.com/leadingmen/>

Men's Fraternity
<http://www.mensfraternity.com/>

Man in the Mirror
<http://maninthemirror.org/>

Men with No Regrets
<http://www.menwithnoregrets.org/>

National Collision of Men's Ministries
<http://ncmm.org/>

Every Man's Battle
<https://newlife.com/emb/>

Iron Sharpens Iron
<http://ironsharpensiron.net/>

Ransomed Heart Ministries
<http://www.ransomedheart.com/>

Band of Brothers
www.bandofbrothers.org/

Man Up God's Way
<http://www.manupgodsway.org/>

Iron Works
<http://www.ironworksmen.com/>