

“Continuous Revelation”



Jim Choate (Branch President of Seminole, OK “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints”) will present the viewpoint: **“God continues to reveal new things to men today.”**

George Battey (preacher of the Church of Christ) will present the viewpoint: **“Revelation from God ceased at the close of the first century.”**



**Good Hope Rd. Church of Christ
Seminole, OK**

Message changed weekly

'Bible Talk'

24 hours daily

(405) 382-8200

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Bible Answers to Bible Questions

Upcoming discussion:

June 12 – Jerry States (Pastor of the Seminole Seventh Day Adventist Church) → ***"Is the seventh-day Sabbath still binding upon men today?"***

For up-to-date information visit our website:

www.WillOfTheLord.com

These public discussion will be posted on our website as well as additional articles and sermons.

OPEN BIBLE STUDY

Opening Remarks (Allen Bailey)

Prayer (Darrell Fesler)

Song (Daniel Smith)

1st speaker: Jim Choate (30 min.)

2nd speaker: George Battey (30 min.)

10 minute intermission

Song (Tyler Watson)

1st Question Session: Jim Choate (30 min.)

2nd Question Session: George Battey (30 min.)

Closing Announcements (Allen Bailey)

Song (Daniel Smith)

Closing Prayer (Michael Fesler)

Rules of order

- No "Amen's" or other forms of demonstration from audience (please) (1 Corinthians 14:40).
- Only men will be allowed to ask questions publicly. Women must wait till after services and ask privately (1 Corinthians 14:34-35).
- Ask your question and sit down.
- Preachers, please limit your response to questions to 2 minutes.

CONTINUOUS REVELATION

The Bible makes a confession: *It confesses it does not contain all available information.*

John 21:25 (NKJV)

25 And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

In spite of the fact that not all information has been written down, enough has been revealed for men to be saved and live pleasing to God.

Deuteronomy 29:29 (NKJV)

29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

John 20:30-31 (NKJV)

30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

This present discussion hinges on whether we have enough revelation from God in the Bible.

The issue is NOT:

- *Are there things God has never revealed?*
- *Are there things we wish God had revealed?*

The issue IS:

- *Has God revealed enough?*
- *Do we need more revelation to know how to be saved?*
- *Do we need more revelation to know how to serve God?*

The answer to these questions is: ***God has revealed enough; more revelation is not needed.***

- No more revelation has been promised.
- None will be given (according to scripture).
- No more is needed.

MORMONS NOT ALONE

The Mormon Church is not alone in thinking there is more revelation besides the Holy Scriptures.

1) Islam – believes in more revelation than the scriptures.

Mohammed claimed to receive new revelations from God. Shortly after he died his followers wrote his teachings down to produce the Qur'an.

- The Bible was believed to be corrupted beyond hope.
- The Arabic version of the Qur'an is believed to be flawless.

2) The Pentecostal Church – believes in more revelation than the scriptures.

When charismatic groups teach tongue speaking is possible, they teach God is revealing more than what has been recorded in scripture.

- The existence of tongue speaking
- Implies the existence of prophesying
- Both imply continuous revelation.

3) The Catholic Church – believes in more revelation than the scriptures.

They believe God continues to reveal new laws, ordinances and doctrines thru the Pope.

- The office of the Pope is a new revelation.
- Papal infallibility is a new revelation.
- Praying to saints.

There are thousands of doctrines and practices which the Catholic Church claims God has revealed thru the Pope.

4) The Seventh-Day Adventist Church – believes in more revelation than the scriptures.

Ellen G. White claims God revealed to her new revelations which were not recorded in scripture. One of those revelations pertains to the Sabbath Day.

5) The Christian Science Church – believes in more revelation than the scriptures.

Mary Baker Eddy claims God revealed a new book which she wrote down: Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures.

6) The Jehovah's Witnesses – believe in more revelation than the scriptures.

They believe the Watchtower Society is inspired and that in order to understand the scriptures correctly, one must have their writings in addition to the Bible. The Bible alone will leave a soul in darkness according to Charles T. Russell – the founder of the Witnesses.

7) Many non-denominational members – believe in more revelation than the scriptures.

Homeschoolers are notorious for believing that God "*leads them*" in choosing whether to homeschool or not.

FINAL MEANS "FINAL"

One major difference between the church of Christ and man-made denominations is that the church of Christ believes the Bible contains God's final and complete revelation.

By "final" – we mean everything implied by that word. We do not say "final" and mean "mostly."

The Bible is God's final and complete revelation. God is not going to reveal anything to anyone other than what has been revealed in the 66 books of the Bible.

- *He will not reveal to you whether or not you should enter the ministry.*
- *He will not reveal to you whether or not you should homeschool your children.*
- *He will not reveal which person you should marry.*

God is not in the "revealing business" any more. He has revealed His entire will in the pages of the Bible.

<p><u>NOTE:</u> This discussion concerns "<i>special revelation</i>"; it is not discussing "<i>general revelation</i>."</p>
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For example:

Psalms 19:1-2 (NKJV)

*1 The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork.*

*2 Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals knowledge.*

The creation "*reveals*" certain things about God:

- *He exists.*
- *He is infinitely wise.*
- *He is good.*

But there are certain things about God we cannot know without "*special revelation*":

- *What is God like?*
- *What does He want?*
- *How should He be worshipped?*

These things can only be known by "*special revelation*" – i.e. He must tell us.

I am going to present **six reasons** why God no longer gives "*special revelation*" to anyone any more – six reasons why the Bible should be considered the complete and final revelation of God's will to man.

REASON #1

Reason #1: Special revelation has ceased because Jesus said the apostles would be led into "all truth."

John 14:26 (NKJV)

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach *you* ^[apostles] **ALL THINGS**, and bring to *your* ^[apostles] remembrance all things that I said to *you* ^[apostles].

John 16:12-13 (NKJV)

12 "I still have many things to say to *you* ^[apostles], but *you* ^[apostles] cannot bear them now.

13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide *you* ^[apostles] into **ALL TRUTH**; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell *you* ^[apostles] things to come.

Here we learn two things:

- Revelation was incomplete at the time Jesus said these things.
- Revelation was going to become complete during the lifetime of the apostles.

REASON #2

Reason #2: Special revelation has ceased because **The apostles specifically said "all truth" was delivered to them.**

2 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)

*3 as His divine power has given to us **ALL THINGS** that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,*

Everything necessary to live a faithful, godly life pleasing to God has been revealed to the apostles. No more revelation is necessary.

Acts 20:26-27 (NKJV)

*26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men.
27 For I have not shunned to declare to you **the whole counsel of God.***

In previous generations men could not say this.

- **Moses** knew he had not revealed the "*whole counsel of God*" for he said a "*prophet like himself*" would come speaking the words of God (Dt 18:15-18).
- **Isaiah** knew the "*whole counsel of God*" had not been revealed in his day for he said the "*coastlands would wait for the law*" of the Messiah (Isa 42:1-4).

- **Malachi** knew the *"whole counsel of God"* had not been revealed for he prophesied John would come to prepare the way for the Lord and the Lord would bring a new covenant (Mal 3:1).

The OT was:

- Temporary
- Preparatory
- Incomplete revelation

But the NT is final and complete. The *"whole counsel of God"* has been revealed.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV)

*16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
17 that the man of God may be **complete**, **thoroughly** equipped for **every** good work.*

Notice three important terms here:

- **Complete**
- **Thoroughly** equipped
- **Every** good work

The scriptures of the Bible are not lacking. They supply every need man has to live a faithful, godly life pleasing to God.

REASON #3

Reason #3: ~~Special revelation has ceased because~~ **The revelation of God's will was given "once for all."**

Jude 3 (NKJV)

3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all (ἁπαξ) delivered to the saints.

"once for all" (ἁπαξ) – "a single time" (Strong); "once, one time" (Thayer).

Hebrews 9:26-28 (NKJV)

*26 [Jesus] then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, **once** (ἁπαξ) at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

*27 And as it is appointed for men to die **once** (ἁπαξ), but after this the judgment,*

*28 so Christ was offered **once** (ἁπαξ) to bear the sins of many. ...*

Only one time did Jesus come to sacrifice Himself. It will never happen again.

Only one time will men have to die physically. It will never happen again.

(See also: 2 Cor 11:25; Phil. 4:16; 1 Th. 2:18;
Heb. 6:4; 9:7; 10:2; 12:26, 27; 1 Pet. 3:18, 20;
Jude 1:5)

Jude used this same word (ἄπαξ) to describe the revelation of God's will. It was delivered "*once for all*."

Notice again:

Jude 3 (NKJV)

3 ... contend earnestly for the faith which was *once for all* (ἄπαξ) *delivered* to the saints.

"the faith" – the doctrine of Jesus and the apostles.

Galatians 1:23 (NKJV)

23 But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy."

1 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV)

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, ...

"The faith" (the teachings of Jesus and the apostles) was delivered "*once for all time*." It will never have to be done again.

REMEMBER: The same word "*once*" describes Jesus' death on the cross. He did it "*once for all*" time. It will never have to be done again.

Jude 3 teaches plainly that "*the faith*" was delivered "*once for all time.*" There is no need for further revelation.

REASON #4

Reason #4: ~~Special revelation has ceased because~~ **The written revelation of God's will was divinely protected from *LOSS*.**

Psalms 119:152 (NKJV)

*152 Concerning Your testimonies,
I have known of old that You have founded them
forever.*

Isaiah 40:8 (NKJV)

8 ... the word of our God stands forever."

Matthew 24:35 (NKJV)

*35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My
words will by no means pass away.*

1 Peter 1:25 (NKJV)

25 ... the word of the LORD endures forever." ...

It is true that from time to time men have tried destroy the scriptures.

- Bibles have been piled up and burned publicly.
- Bibles were chained to the pulpit and common men were forbidden by law to have their own copies of the Bible.

- Men were put to death for translating the Bible and distributing the Bible.

Yet it is also true the Bible has never been destroyed. Jesus has kept His promise to watch over his word and protect it from perishing.

REASON #5

Reason #5: *Special revelation has ceased because* **The written revelation of God's will was divinely protected from *CORRUPTION*.**

1 Peter 1:23-25 *(NKJV)*

23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

*24 because "All flesh is as grass,
And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass.
The grass withers,
And its flower falls away,*

*25 But the word of the LORD endures forever."
Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.*

"incorruptible" (v23) – divinely protected from corruption.

"the word of God which lives and abides forever" (v23) – alive; perpetually relevant (cf. Heb. 4:12); not susceptible to death.

"the word of the Lord endures forever" (v25) – the scriptures are placed in contrast with things that perish (grass and flowers). The scriptures are not susceptible to perishing.

"Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you" (v25) – the very words of the apostles, which had been preached (past tense) are the scriptures under consideration.

Since the word is divinely protected, we still have what God intended for us to have today. Nothing has been lost.

REASON #6

Reason #6: ~~Special revelation has ceased because~~ **The apostles specifically taught "prophecies would fail."**

1 Corinthians 13:8-13 (NKJV)

8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

*13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three;
but the greatest of these is love.*

Look carefully at each verse in this passage:

VERSE 8

Three spiritual gifts are mentioned:

- *Prophecies*
- *Tongues*
- *Knowledge*

A complete list of all miraculous powers is given in 1 Cor 12:8-10. These three gifts are a sample and represent all the gifts.

Prophecy – refers to the revelation of new truths. This ability would "fail."

Tongues – refers to human languages as Acts 2 makes plain:

Acts 2:11 (NKJV)

*11 ... we hear them speaking in our own tongues
the wonderful works of God."*

Acts 2:8 (NKJV)

*8 And how is it that we hear, each in our own language
in which we were born?*

"our own tongues" (v11) = "our own language" (v8)

The miracle was the fact that the apostles could speak in these human languages fluently without having to study. This ability would "cease."

"Knowledge" – miraculous knowledge – the ability to know things without studying.

Matthew 10:19-20 (NKJV)

*19 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;
20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.*

This miraculous knowledge would "vanish away."

Look carefully at these three expressions:

"Fail"

"Vanish away"

"Cease"



- *"Fail"* and *"vanish away"* are translated from the same Greek word.
- *"Cease"* is translated from a different word.

One word describes what is going to happen to prophecies and knowledge. Another word describes what will happen to tongues.

Prophecies / Knowledge	Tongues
<p><i>"fail"</i> <i>"vanish away"</i> (καταργηθήσονται)</p>	<p><i>"cease"</i> (παύσονται)</p>
<p>Future, passive, indicative of καταργέω</p>	<p>Future, middle, indicative of παύω</p>

"tongues will cease" (παύσονται) – middle voice – to simply *"stop"* themselves *because the goal has been achieved and they are no longer needed*.

ILL: When an Olympic runner crosses the finish line, he stops running because he has reached his goal.

Tongues were destined to stop themselves because they reached their goal.

Notice how this word is used in other passages:

Hebrews 10:1-2 (NKJV)

1 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

*2 For then would they not have **ceased** (παύω) to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins.*

Animal sacrifices could not "*cease*" because they never achieved their goal (forgiveness).

Tongues, however, would stop themselves – because they would reach their goal.

"prophecies will FAIL ... knowledge will VANISH AWAY" (καταργηθήσονται) – passive voice – *rendered inactive because replaced with something else.*

Since animal sacrifices never reached their goal, they could not "*cease*" (παύσονται – stop themselves), but they would "*vanish away*" (καταργηθήσονται – rendered inactive) because replaced with something else – the sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 10:12).

SUMMARY OF VERSE 8

1) Tongues will simply stop themselves.

They will not be replaced with anything. They will stop because they reached their goal.

Tongues were a "*sign*" (Mk 16:17) to unbelievers (1 Cor 14:22). They served to convince unbelievers the apostles and prophets of the NT were genuine spokesmen for God.

They accomplished this purpose and then stopped. Nothing replaced them.

2) **Prophecies and knowledge will be replaced.**

Just like tongues, they will stop, but they will be rendered inactive because something else replaced them.

Q: What is going to replace prophecies and knowledge?

VERSE 9

1 Corinthians 13:9 (NKJV)

9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

Paul knew only part of God's will. He prophesied only part of God's will.

- Matthew knew part
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Peter
- James
- Jude

The part of God's will which each man received was being put together with what others received. It was all progressing toward the complete revelation of God's will.

VERSE 10

1 Corinthians 13:10 (NKJV)

*10 But when **that which is perfect** has come, then that which is in part will be done away.*

"that which is perfect" (τὸ τέλειον) – This word "perfect" is never used in reference to the second coming of Christ. It means "complete, mature."

Matthew 5:48 (NKJV)

*48 "Therefore you shall be **perfect** (τέλειος), just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

Matthew 19:21 (NKJV)

*21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be **perfect** (τέλειος), go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."*

1 Corinthians 14:20 (NKJV)

*20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be **mature** (τέλειος).*

James 1:25 (NKJV)

*25 But he who looks into the **perfect** (τέλειος) law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

(See also: Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor 2:6; Eph. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; 4:12; Heb. 5:14; 9:11; Ja. 1:4, 17; 3:2; 1 Jn. 4:18)

"that which is perfect" (v10) – refers to that which is *"complete."*

- *Used in contrast to partial prophesying and knowledge (v9).*
- *In context, it means the completed revelation of God's will.*

When all the parts have been revealed and made known, when the revelation of God's will has been *"completed"* or *"perfected,"* then miracles will end.

REMEMBER: In 1 Cor 12:31 Paul was going to show the Corinthians a *"more excellent way"* – not a more excellent person. *"That which is perfect"* does not refer to:

- A person (like Jesus)
- But rather to a *"way"* – a *"more excellent way."*

Q: What is the *"more excellent way"* besides spiritual gifts which brought jealousy and fussing?

R: Complete revelation with faith, hope and love!

VERSE 11

1 Corinthians 13:11 (NKJV)

*11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I **put away** (καταργέω) childish things.*

Miracles are being compared to "*childish things*" that are "*put away*." They would not continue forever.

Miracles were for the "*infant*" stage of the church. When the church matured and possessed God's entire, revealed will, these "*childish things*" would be put away (replaced) with something better.

VERSE 12

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV)

12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

Mirrors in those days were simply polished metal (Ex 38:8).

As the mirror was being made, people began to see their reflection. The more the mirror was polished, the clearer the image became. When the mirror was completed (perfected), men could see themselves as clearly as others saw them.

God's revealed will is compared to a mirror:

James 1:22-25 (NKJV)

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

At the time Paul wrote, the "mirror" was in the process of being made. Each time another book of the NT was written, things were becoming clearer and clearer.

"Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known" – Paul himself was polishing the mirror – i.e. he was contributing his part to the NT scriptures. When the mirror was completed, men could look into the scriptures and see themselves clearly – just as others saw them.

VERSE 13

1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV)

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

While miracles would end, faith, hope and love would continue.

The "*more excellent way*" (1 Cor 12:31) than miraculous powers with envy and strife, is living a loving life with the completed revelation of God's will.

SUMMARY

- 1) Jesus promised "*all truth*" would be revealed to the apostles.
- 2) Peter and Paul wrote that "*all truth*" was revealed.
- 3) Jude said the teachings of Jesus and the apostles was delivered to the saints "once for all" time. It will never happen again.
- 4) Jesus promised the revealed word would be protected from loss.
- 5) Jesus promised the revealed word would be protected from corruption.
- 6) The apostles specifically taught that "*prophecies would fail*."

CONCLUSION

FIRST: (Since God has revealed His entire will in the 66 books of the Bible) **Every other book which claims to have come from Him is untrue.**

- *The "revelations" of **Mohammed**.*
- *The "revelations" of **Ellen G. White** (founder of the Seventh-Day Adventists).*
- *The "revelations" of **Mary Baker Eddie** (founder of the Church of Christ Scientist).*
- *The "revelations" of **Joseph Smith**.*

Galatians 1:8-9 (NKJV)

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

The apostle could write this only if he knew "*all truth*" had been delivered to him and the other apostles.

SECOND: (Since all truth has been revealed) **God is certainly not going to reveal trivial, mundane matters to anyone.**

God is not in the revealing business any more. He will not reveal to anyone:

- *Whether they should be a baseball coach.*
- *Whether they should homeschool their kids.*
- *Whether they should marry one person over another.*

God has revealed everything we need to know and it is our obligation to read His revelation and pray for wisdom to apply His instructions in a wise way.

- *When we decide to start a baseball team, we cannot blame God for the decision.*
- *When we decide to marry someone, we cannot blame God for the decision.*

God is getting "*credit*" (blame actually) for a lot of things He does not deserve.

God leads men and speaks to men today **only** thru the written scriptures!

Psalms 119:105 (NKJV)

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

This is how God leads!

All Bible references in this booklet are taken from the New King James Version, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1988.

If you have never been scripturally saved you must take the following steps:

- Believe that Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 16:16).
- Repent of your sins (stop practicing sin – Lk 13:3).
- Confess your faith verbally (Rom 10:10).
- Be baptized in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Mk 16:16).

If you have already been scripturally baptized "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38), but have fallen away, you may still be forgiven by taking the following steps:

- Repent of your sins (stop practicing sin – Acts 8:22).
- Confess your sins (1 Jn 1:8-9).
- Pray and ask God to forgive you (Acts 8:22).