



(1a) Knowing God

Gain and develop a personal relationship with God (1 John 1:3-4)

“I have trouble enough getting to know people. How can I get to know God? I can’t even see or hear Him. And even if I could meet Him, how would I know I would like Him?”

What is God like? Use 2 minutes to write down as many adjectives to describe God.

• Can we really know God?

God is so great. Can He really be known? Elihu rightly reminded Job, “Behold, God is exalted, and we do not know Him; the number of His years is unsearchable” (Job 36:26).¹

• Who or what is God?

Throughout the history of man, many various concepts of God have been suggested and deeply believed. Perhaps it is helpful to begin with a contrast to better grasp these differences on a larger scale.



• 1 John 1:3-4

The Bible holds the special words from our Creator that we need to hear so that we could come to know Him. In exploration of this topic of knowing God, let us focus on three questions from 1 John 1:3-4. Each tackles a significant aspect to knowing God. (1) Can I know God? (2) How do I get to know God? (3) Does knowing God bring a change in my life?

“And indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete” (1 John 1:3-4).

1) Can I know God?

*“And indeed **our fellowship is with the Father**” (1 John 1:3).*

• Knowing God

- Implications of fellowship (*koinonia*) (1:3; Acts 2:42)
- “He (Jesus) was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him” (John 1:10).
- “And so they were saying to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me, nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also” (John 8:19).
- “This is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

¹ All scripture is quoted from NASB unless otherwise stated.

• Knowing A Personal God

- God is personal and to be known on a personal level—in clear contrast to an impersonal force which cannot be known.
- God, the infinite Creator, reveals Himself in the scripture as One who wants to engage in a personal relationship.
- People can know things about God without personally knowing Him.
- God mystically blends aspects of transcendence with immanence without stripping Him of His person and will.
- Persons are distinguished by their desire and purpose.

2) Do I know God?

*“And indeed **our fellowship is with the Father**, and **with His Son Jesus Christ**.*

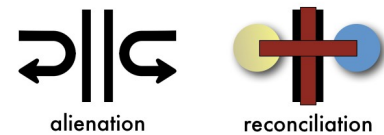
Design – Started off great - in the garden (Gen 2-3)

Historic – The relationship was broken (Gen 3; Eph 2:1-3)

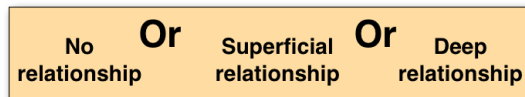
Reality – Man couldn’t fix it (Rom 1; Isa 59:2)

Update – God Himself solved the problem

- Inward corruption (Isa 59:15-16; 63:10)
- His call to seek Him (Isa 55:1, 60:1-3, 62:11, 65:1-2)
- His intervention to help (Isa 53:10, 63:5)



“And I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me; And My wrath upheld Me” (Isaiah 63:5).



3) Does knowing God bring a change in my life?

*“These things we write, so **that our joy may be made complete**” (1 John 1:3-4).*

• Knowing God brings change

“You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit” (Mat 7:16-17).

• Don’t be superficial and confused by religion

Summary Questions

- Do you know God? How do you know for sure?
- What kinds of beliefs do people around you hold?
- Would you say that the purpose of life has to do with knowing God? Why or why not?
- Why is sincerely following a religion not the same as knowing and loving God?
- Why does the genuine knowledge of God and works always lead to worship and obedience?
- What areas of my life should see greater change because I know God?
- What steps do you practically take in your life to better know God?

***“When the Bible speaks of God as being on high’ and ‘in heaven’;
the thought here is not that God is far distant from us in***

*space,
but that He is far above us in greatness, and therefore to
be adored.”²*

(1b) The Revelatory God

We need not seek for Him, but only come (Ex 33-34:6-7)

“Are all the religions the same?” “Do all religions lead to the same goal?” God interrupts this line of thinking by giving us a clear picture of who He is and His special unique character. We should all be glad God is who He says He is and live in His grace while it can be found.

Question: List three things that develop a relationship and three things that are fun about good relationships.

- _____
- _____
- _____

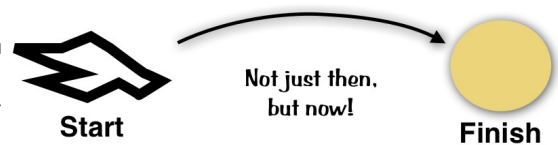
1) The Way to Know God

Joining God’s blog

God reveals Himself through all sorts of means including the created material world (Rom 1:19-20), our consciences (Rom 2:14-15) and God’s Word (Psa 19). Get the hint? God wants us to personally know and be influenced by Him, not just a little, but a lot. Creation, our conscience, and the Bible become our social media to know and interact with God.

Close friendships and spiritual progress

Our relationship with God is like a friendship. Friendships grow when both sides are eagerly excited about meeting each other. While on earth, there is a mystery to our relationship with God and many factors to developing—not very unlike our relationships with those around us. In the future, “We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him” (1 Jo 3:2-3 -NASB).



Distortion of good works

Man wrongly perceives good works, thinking they can satisfy God. They can't. God looks at good works through the lens of relationship. Once gaining that acceptance through faith in Christ, we then do things because we like Him. The girlfriend knows her boyfriend likes a certain snack and so prepares it for him even without him asking.

Spiritual development



Once spiritual rebirth occurs, then we can grow in our relationship with God. Like a child in a family, an individual and that individual’s way of relating to God develops. John mentions the infant, teen, and adult, each stage picturing the way we acquire different skills and knowledge of God’s Word. It is predominantly developing our love and trust for God.

• Question

Do your devotional times best reflect: a personal time with God, an intellectual pursuit, religious habit, or something else?

Explanations for life come as we understand God and His purposes.
Without knowing God, we cannot understand His works.

2) Our Desire to Know God (Exodus 33)

"Then Moses said to the LORD, 'See, Thou dost say to me, 'Bring up this people!' But Thou Thyself hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me. Moreover, Thou hast said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.' Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found favor in Thy sight, let me know Thy ways, that I may know Thee, so that I may find favor in Thy sight. Consider too, that this nation is Thy people" (Exo 33:12-13).

- What did God want of Moses?
- What did Moses want?
- What was he frustrated about?
- What did Moses think the solution was?

Calling upon the Name of the Lord (Exodus 34:5)

One key incident further reveals God's true nature to Moses. Please note that God is revealing this to him so that it can be revealed to us so that we might want to know Him more deeply and respectfully respond to Him.

"The LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he (Moses) called upon the name of the LORD" (Ex 34:5).

Problems with theology

The quest to know God

3) God's Self-Revelation (Ex 34:6-7)

God's Self-introduction

God's holy person is best seen through His own introduction. The world's religions are a poor guessing game of who God is and how it practically influences those living on earth.

"6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations'" (Ex 34:6-7).

Questions on Exodus 34:6-7

- Who is speaking in Exodus 34:6-7? How does he name or entitle Himself?
- What adjectives does the Lord use to describe God in verses 6 and 7?
- Group these descriptions in two or three categories. What do you learn from this list?
- Which attribute means the most to you? Why?
- Many have a hard time understanding the last description. Do you? How do you resolve it?

• Introduced by character traits not works

Character is more important because it shapes the person's abilities and resources. Man cannot be trusted and therefore must limit himself (But even the power to limit others is a power!).

- Personal character more revealing
- e.g. 'God the creator' speaks about His power not His mercy. Today's world wants power, not character.

-Video capability | Cloning power | Detection ability | Genetic capability | Power capability

• Why did God reveal Himself at all?

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7).

- In what ways would you further want to know Him and His ways? Why? How important is this to you?

"Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness" (Rom 11:22).

"Once you become aware that the main business that you are here for is to know God, most of life's problems fall into place of their own accord."³