

Thus far in our short series on The Glory of God we've considered The Knowability of God, The Spirituality of God, and The Triunity of God, this brings us this week to begin to specifically consider a few of God's attributes or perfections (His knowledge, power, patience, love, goodness, etc.).

Now, oftentimes theologians classify God's attributes into various categories (which can be very helpful), as long as we keep in mind while Scripture distinguishes between His attributes, there are no distinctions between them in God. Remember, each attribute is merely God viewed in a specific way. They are not merely true of God, they are God.

Thus, in coming to the knowledge of God, I want to do three things: first answer the question, What does God know, secondly, answer the question, How does God know, and then thirdly apply God's perfect knowledge to Himself, sinners, and saints.

- I. What Does God Know?
- II. How Does God Know?
- III. Applications

I. What Does God Know?

- 1. In the broad sense we can answer the question (what does God know), by asserting that God knows everything.
- 2. But, I want to be more specific this morning and suggest, God knows Himself, all things possible, and all things past, present, and future.
- 3. (1) God knows Himself—this is where we must begin—God knows Himself in a way no creature can ever know Him.
- 4. 1Cor.2:11—"Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God"—no one knows God except God.
- 5. Matt.11:27—"All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."
- 6. Here our Savior speaks of two kinds of knowledge—first, there's the knowledge the Father and Son have of each other.
- 7. Secondly, there's the kind of knowledge that we have of the Father through the Son—obviously these are different.
- 8. The Father and Son know each other natively, eternally, and perfectly, whereas we know God in part by grace.
- 9. Thus, the Father obviously has a perfect knowledge of Himself, but He also perfectly knows the Son and Spirit.
- 10. This is also true of the Son and Spirit—they not only perfectly know themselves, but they perfectly know the other Persons.
- 11. Thus, the fact that God knows Himself is a cause of great blessedness within God—because God knows Himself perfectly, He's perfectly blessed in and with Himself.
- 12. (2) God knows all things possible—that is, He not only knows what He chose to do, but what He chose not to do.
- 13. Because God knows Himself perfectly, He knows what He can do perfectly—He knows what He will and can do.
- 14. Now, I understand that this point is difficult for us to grasp, but remember, God knows more than what happens.
- 15. God's knowledge is not limited to what He willed or decreed—His knowledge includes what He does and can do.
- 16. But if you think about it, there was a time, before creation, when all things were but possible and not actual things.
- 17. Thus, out of all possible things God chose or willed to make actual things, and these are things that come to be.

18. God knew everything before He created anything—put another way—God's knowledge is not limited to things that are or will be but includes things that are not.
19. Now, here I need to point out the mere fact that God knows whatever is possible, doesn't mean it all becomes actual.
20. God's knowledge of all that's possible concerns His power—God knows the extent of His infinite power (might).
21. But, what actually comes to be, doesn't concern God's knowledge but His will—He wills to bring into existence all that actually is.
22. In other words, God knows all that He can do because of His infinite power, but He only wills to do what actually happens.
23. John Dagg—"God has perfect knowledge of things possible, and these depend on His power. He has, also, perfect knowledge of things actual, and these depend on His will. He knew how many worlds He could create, and how many kinds of plants and animals; and out of these He chose what worlds, plants, and animals, should exist."
24. (3) God knows all things past—that is, He knows the past, not merely from creation onward, but from eternity.
25. Acts 15:18—"Known to God from eternity are all His works"—that is, He's known them before He created them.
26. Now, if God's knowledge goes back to eternity, then obviously, it goes back 6-8 thousand years from creation.
27. Perhaps another way of saying this would be—God doesn't forget anything—He sees and knows the past as if present.
28. Now, this isn't to deny that Scripture sometimes speaks of God as remembering somethings and forgetting others.
29. For example, Gen.8:1—"Then God remembered Noah, and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided."
30. Here we find that God remembered Noah—does this mean that He forgot about Noah—does God have a bad memory?
31. Well, surely brethren we understand, that Scripture here speaks of God in human ways to teach God's faithfulness.
32. When Scripture says that God "remembered Noah" it means that God fulfilled the promises He made to Noah!
33. (4) God knows all things present—He knows and sees every hair that falls, every bird that die, every blade of grass that's mowed.
34. He knows everything within moral creation, including every thought, word, and deed, on earth, in heaven, and in hell.
35. Heb.4:13—"There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."
36. "All things are naked and open to the eyes of God"—good and bad things, secret and public things, big and small things, all things are naked and open to the eyes of God.
37. (5) God knows all things future—He knows all future events as they come to pass because of His sovereign will.
38. Remember brethren, God doesn't merely know the future, He determines the future including the good and evil.
39. Isa.46:9-10—"I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure."
40. To "declare the end from the beginning" simply means God declared or determined what will happen from the beginning to the end.
41. Everything that happens, beginning with creation all the way through eternity future, has been declared by God.
42. All of these events are described as God's "counsel" and "pleasure"—these refer to God's eternal and sovereign decree.

43. Now, I have suggested five things that God knows—He knows Himself, all things possible, past, present, and future.
44. But there's another sense in which we could boil these down into two categories—God knows everything in Him and outside of Him.

## II. How Does God Know?

1. Having addressed the question WHAT God knows, I now want to address the question, HOW does God know (or, in what way does God know)?
2. And I want to suggest that God knows in three closely related ways—He knows all things natively, presently, and perfectly.
3. (1) God knows natively—by this I mean, God knows everything by Himself and is not taught anything from without Himself.
4. This of course is opposite of man—for everything we know, we have learned it from outside sources or causes.
5. God does not know anything by observation—He is not informed of anything but knows everything by nature.
6. Man learns by way of information—we are informed by someone or something outside of ourselves—we need information.
7. Perhaps I can put this as follows—God is not informed about anything—God needs no information to know everything.
8. Put another way—God is not educated about anything—God is un-informed and un-educated, and yet, all-knowing.
9. 2LBC (2:2)—"in His sight all things are open and manifest, His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain."
10. Our Confession says three things about God's knowledge—"His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature."
11. This last phrase is important—"God's knowledge is independent upon the creature"—that is, God's knowledge isn't dependent upon the creature.
12. This simply means—God's perfect knowledge doesn't come from anyone or anything outside of His own Being.
13. Or, put another way—God's knowledge is native to Himself—all that He knows, He knows solely of Himself.
14. Job 21:22—"Can anyone teach God knowledge, since He judges those on high (those highly exalted among men)?"
15. Here Scripture provides a reason or proof for God's perfect knowledge—He has the ability to judge all men (including the high and lofty).
16. No man will escape God's judgment, and here's the reason—because God alone knows everything without fail.
17. Isa.40:12-14—"Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, measured heaven with a span and calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or as His counselor has taught Him? With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him knowledge, and showed Him the way of understanding?"
18. God created all things without the need of any instruction—no one has ever given Him counsel, taught Him knowledge, or showed Him understanding.
19. (2) God knows presently—by this I mean, God knows all things possible, past, present, and future all at the same exact time.
20. God knows all things at once—He doesn't learn them consecutively—but He knows all things at the same time.
21. Perhaps I can put this another way—not only does God know all things presently, but by inference—eternally.
22. Acts 15:18—"Known to God from eternity are all His works"—that is, He's known them before He created them.

23. God has known all that we will do, from eternity, before He actually willed to bring these things into existence.
24. Thus, we must guard against the notion, that God learns things in a progressive sense—He doesn't learn consecutively.
25. This of course is different from man, who first learns his ABCs and then learns words, and then makes sentences.
26. God has a knowledge of all things, possible, past, present, and future, all together in a one single and present act.
27. Perhaps I can put it like this—God's knowledge is simultaneous and concurrent—He knows as one single act.
28. A.A. Hodge—"God's knowledge is total and simultaneous, not successive. It is one single, indivisible act of understanding, beholding all things in themselves, their relations and successions, as ever present."
29. Wayne Grudem—"God fully knows Himself and all things actual and possible in one single (simple) and eternal act."
30. (3) God knows perfectly—by this is meant, God's knowledge is without fault or flaw—He has perfect knowledge of all things.
31. Job 37:16—"Do you know how the clouds are balanced, those wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge."
32. God is perfect in knowledge because He can neither increase or decrease in knowledge—He knows everything.
33. And yet, His knowledge is also perfect because it's flawless—He has universal and infallible knowledge of all things.
34. Ps.147:5—"His understanding is infinite"—literally, His understanding is without limits—it's without bounds.
35. This means God knows every act, word, deed, thought, and motive, regardless if it's good or evil, big or small.
36. Ps.33:13-14—"The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. From the place of His dwelling He looks on all the inhabitants of the earth; He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works (Prov.15:3—"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good')."
37. Now, before I come to some applications, I want to briefly answer an objection—Doesn't Scripture speak of God learning through observation?
38. I've just asserted that God can learn nothing—He does not know by observation—He does not know by information.
39. And yet, Scripture speaks of Him as not knowing certain things, and learning about them by way of observation.
40. For example, after Adam sinned and hid himself from God, we find God asking Adam—"Where are you" (Gen.3:9)?
41. Well, obviously brethren, God didn't ask Adam this question because He was ignorant as to Adam's whereabouts.
42. Because God is all-present He is all-knowing—and it's for this reason God came to Adam and asked this question.
43. The question was obviously for Adam's sake and not God's—God wanted Adam to know where he was and why.
44. Gen.18:20-21—"Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."
45. Here we find God speaking about the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah—He speaks of Himself after the nature of man.
46. He speaks about coming down to earth in order to learn, whether or not things were as bad as reported to Him.
47. Well brethren, obviously the Lord does not need to come down to earth in order to know what takes place on earth.

48. He speaks of Himself with human language to assist us in understanding Him—it's God condescending to our weakness.

### III. Applications

1. Here I want to apply the perfect knowledge of God to God Himself (as it relates to His wisdom), the sinner, and saint.
2. (1) God's knowledge and His wisdom—Scripture often puts these two together as His knowledge and wisdom go together.
3. Rom.11:33—"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"
4. Simply put, wisdom refers to the ability to apply knowledge—perhaps we can say, God's knowledge is practical.
5. He not only knows all things, but He knows how to use that knowledge to accomplish all that He intends to do.
6. J.P. Boyce—"Wisdom is that power which enables one to put to practical use the knowledge and skill which he possesses, to choose wise ends of action, and to attain these ends by wise means."
7. God's knowledge is a well-order knowledge; it's a knowledge that accomplishes successfully all that it intends.
8. O brethren, what a blessed thought—the One governing this world has perfect knowledge of Himself and every created thing.
9. (2) God's knowledge and the sinner—if the sinner was thinking rightly, he would be terrified at God's perfect knowledge.
10. But this is something that man by nature denies or ignores—he believes the lie that God does not see nor does He know.
11. Ps.73:11—"They say, How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?" Ps.10:11—"He has said in his heart, God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see (Ps.94:8-11)."
12. These are the thoughts of the ungodly—they fool themselves into believing that God does not see or know them.
13. But let me remind you this morning, that God knows you—He knows who you are and He knows what you do (we may be able to fool man but we cannot fool God).
14. (3) God's knowledge and the saint—Scripture speaks of God's perfect knowledge as a means of encouragement.
15. The fact that God perfectly knows us, every thought and fear, is a reason for personal comfort and encouragement.
16. Ps.139:1-6—"O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it."
17. This is a very wonderful passage, and typical of the Psalm writer applying God's attributes to his personal life.
18. In particular, he's applying God's perfect knowledge to himself—God knows everything about him—his actions, words, and thoughts.
19. Dear brethren, this is how high and lofty theology is practically applied to our own hearts and lives—the two are friends (theology and practice).
20. The first thing I want to point out from Psalm 139, is that God knew David—"You have searched me and known me."
21. It wasn't merely that God knew about David—He didn't merely know what David did and said—He knew David.
22. And because He knew David, He knew everything about David—He knew his every action, thought, and word.
23. V6—"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it"—he can not fully grasp such knowledge,

24. Thus, in closing, I want to suggest three things that God perfectly knows, that should be a blessing to every Christian.
25. (a) He knows our needs—that is, He knows our present circumstances, and thus He knows everything we need.
26. Matt.6:31-32—"Do not worry, saying, What shall we eat? Or What shall we drink? Or What shall we wear? For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."
27. Your heavenly Father knows your needs—He knows your physical and spiritual needs—He knows them more than you.
28. He knows you need a job—He knows you struggle with school—He knows you desire to be married—He knows your finances are tight.
29. He knows the struggles you have with your spouse—He knows the sins you struggle with—He knows your health issues.
30. And remember brethren, God not only knows our needs, but He alone is able to help us and provide for our needs.
31. (b) He knows our works—by this I mean, God knows our deeds that often go overlooked by those around us.
32. Heb.6:10—"For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister."
33. Rev.2:19—"I know your works, love, service, faith, and your endurance; and as for your works, the last are more than the first."
34. What a wonderful cause of encouragement—though my husband may not appreciate what I do, there's One who does.
35. Brethren, while we don't work for the praise of men, I think most of us need an occasional "well-done" from those around us.
36. Well it's very possible that your husband, wife, parents, children, parents, and parishioners, fail to see your works.
37. But my dear Christian friend, you can be assured that God sees them—they are not wasted on unthankful men.
38. (c) He knows our hearts—by this I mean, God knows every single thought, motive, and activity of our hearts!
39. Now, you might be tempted to ask me—How can this be comforting—the fact that God perfectly knows my heart?
40. Well, let me suggest to you, it brings comfort for two reasons—first, even though He knows our hearts He loves us.
41. One of the most amazing things about marriage, is that it allows you to know your spouse in the most intimate way.
42. My wife knows me in a way no other person ever will—she knows better than any person on this entire planet.
43. And yet, for all that knowledge she loves me—my wife often says she loves me "with knowledge"—that is, with full knowledge of all that I am.
44. Well, brethren, what a blessed thought, that Christ loves us, even though He knows us better than our spouses know us!
45. But secondly, the fact that God perfectly knows our hearts should comfort us, because He knows that we truly love Him.
46. For all of our failures and weaknesses, He sees and knows our love for Him, because it's the product of His Spirit.
47. Jn.21:17—"And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You"—You know that I've denied You.
48. You know that I am often fearful and needy—You know that I am often inconsistent in my witness of You before others.
49. And yet, Lord Jesus, you know all things—You not only know my sins and failures, but You also know I love You.