

God Knows

Have you ever been working on something in one room of your house, then gone to the next room, only to have to return to the initial room to be reminded of why you left in the first place? If you are smiling right now, it is probably for good reason, and if it makes you feel any better, we all do that fairly often. It would be awfully handy, though, if we had some way to heighten our knowledge in these momentary, but frequent, lapses of ignorance, and in the process, eliminate all of those mindless trips throughout the house; however, as long as we exist, so too will our forgetfulness and our ignorance. We struggle in these realms largely because of who we are: we are just human beings, who have substantial limits placed on our knowledge. This is merely one of the countless areas that sets our God so far apart from us. The Psalmist speaks of His majesty in Psalm 147:5, "Great is our Lord, and of great power: **his understanding is infinite.**" Man's knowledge is highly restricted, but God's is unbounded.

The potential destinies of this subject matter are inexhaustible, but we are going to confine them to a lone region, "What does the comprehension of God's infinite knowledge have to do with me?" Well, in short, *everything*. Because of the Lord's infinite knowledge, there is nothing we can do, say, or think, without His knowing it. Furthermore, He is aware of our thought "afar off," that is, long before we start thinking it (Psalm 139:1-4). It is no wonder that in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the Master begins His declarations to each of the seven churches with "I know your works" (2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15). The truth that "God knows" has vast implications for everyone of us.

God Knows if We are Living Wickedly

There are **no secrets** with Him. Multitudes of people today are lulled by the Devil into thinking, "Aha! No one saw me do that. I have gotten away with it!" As has already been enumerated, no matter what we do, what we say, or even what we *think*, there is always One who knows. God knows! The LORD thundered the following admonition to the erring of the Holy City: "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark,

and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Isaiah 29:15). Following Jesus' instruction concerning the impracticality of serving two masters, the Pharisees, who loved their master - money - more than God, ridiculed Him, so "he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but **God knoweth your hearts**: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:13-15). The ones in Jesus' day, as well as the individuals in that of Isaiah's, had fooled themselves into believing that no one could recognize their sinful actions and that nobody could observe their wicked hearts, but they were gravely mistaken. Apparently, the wise man knew what he was saying when he proclaimed, "there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9b). Many of today's world possess that very attitude of the confused persons of Bible times. May the reality never exit our minds that when in the wrong, all along, **God knows!**

For those who persist in ceaseless rebellion, there is no absence of punishment with Him. To five of the seven churches of Asia Minor that were existing in that state, Christ's reprimand to each may be summed up in the correction handed down to the congregation in Ephesus; "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Revelation 2:4-5). The Lord takes no joy in the knowledge of His creation's lost condition. "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" (Ezekiel 18:23). Instead, He uses His awareness to their advantage, pleading with them through His loving extension of grace and mercy, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

God Knows if We are Living Righteously

There is no forgetting of His own with Him. After David had learned of God's covenant with him to build a house and establish his throne forever, which found ultimate fulfillment in the constructed church and the rule of the Messiah

(Acts 2:25-32), the man of God was led to write, "And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord GOD, knowest thy servant" (2 Samuel 7:20). All too often, God's immeasurable knowledge is perceived only to work against humanity. That is regrettable, considering that Yahweh is willing to use it just as frequently for man's benefit as for his detriment. Such is the case with David. With His eyes "as a flame of fire" (Revelation 1:14b), the Lord could peer into David's soul to discover "a man after his own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). As with the son of Jesse, so **He gazes into our spirits today**, searching for the equivalent within us.

For the ones who persevere in endless obedience, there is no loss of reward with Him. Jesus addressed two of the seven churches in Asia of this variety with the sentiment, "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:9-10). Jesus utilizes His immeasurable understanding of the upright's condition to commend their godliness and to encourage further compliance and growth. He knows what awaits the faithful; therefore, He labors to remind them so that they might comprehend it, too.

God Deals with Us Based on His Knowledge of How We are Living

The Lord deals harshly with those whom He knows are wicked. He is not there for them when they cry. The Proverbial writer reveals, "The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous" (15:29). One of the most heart-wrenching sensations a person can experience is in the trials of life, having nobody to whom he or she can turn, no one to listen, no one to care. This is the lot of the wicked in life's distresses. If family and friends abandon, there is nobody left, but if earthly companions forsake the righteous, there is always Someone left, and He is the most excellent One. When all human comrades had forsaken Paul, he calmly asserted,

“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me” (2 Timothy 4:17a). Not only does God not stand with the wicked, but He also battles against them. The Savior warns the faithless, “Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth” (Revelation 2:16). Try to picture in your mind a person much bigger, stronger, and quicker than you waging a fight against you. That is a scary thought for any of us! Now imagine the national army of a world superpower seeking to battle you. That is much worse! Finally, picture all the armies of the world coming against you in a collective effort. That is inconceivable! But do we realize that when we **place ourselves in opposition to Christ**, that is precisely what we are doing. We are **instigating war with “the LORD of hosts [armies]”** (1 Samuel 17:45)! He is in control of all powers, whether earthly or heavenly (Matthew 28:18; Colossians 1:16), so we do well to ensure that in the battle of life, we choose His side (Joshua 24:15).

While the Lord’s dealing with the wicked is harsh, it is gentle with the ones whom He knows to be righteous. He takes care of their physical needs. In Psalm 34:8-10, David exclaims, “O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.” Who among us can in good conscience charge the LORD with a lack of nurture and provision? None can! What a blessed pledge the people of God have, that when they put Him first, they will providentially suffer no material need (Matthew 6:31-33; Psalm 37:25)! One might rightly contend that the physical sanctions alone would merit following Jesus. Yet, the Captain of our salvation still uses His knowledge in a supreme manner, by taking care of our spiritual necessities. There is something that sets Him apart from all persons, both human and Divine. **Jesus is fully human** (John 1:14), as contrasted with the Father and the Holy Spirit, **and fully Divine**, as opposed to all other human beings (Colossians 2:9). Since only He through experience knows what it is like to be completely divine and human, only He is the primary candidate to be Mediator “between God and men” (1 Timothy 2:5). Nobody

understands the temptation to sin, who has also entirely refrained from it as He has (1 Peter 2:22). Consequently, it ought to be of immense consolation that “we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). He knows what it is like to be solicited to do evil at one’s weakest point, and He employs that knowledge to aid us in overcoming all temptation as did He (Hebrews 2:16-18).

God knows whether we are living righteously, and conveniently, He gives us the opportunity to know it, too. In his first epistle, John pens,

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight (3:18-22).

When our hearts, based on God’s teachings, do not condemn us, then we can have boldness before our omniscient Lord, as well as the guarantee that He hears our petitions and that He will grant them accordingly. With this type of assurance in serving our all-knowing God, we can **confidently voice** the expression of David in Psalm 139:23-24. “Search me, O God, and **know my heart**: try me, and **know my thoughts**: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” For the faithful Christian, the fact that “God knows” is indeed one of His most precious promises.

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the 27th Annual Mid-West Lectures, “God’s Precious Promises.” To hear or view the complete lesson go to www.kc-cofc.org/2009Lectures.htm or contact the 39th Street Church of Christ 15331 East 39th Street Independence, MO 64055-4240 USA

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