

## God IS Knowable

It is a repeated theme from Genesis to Revelation, God is knowable, and He wants to be known. The God of all creation is not an isolationist who is content to be separate from His creation and unknown. Yahweh does not live in secret behind closed doors with access denied to everyone. The very opposite is true. The God of creation has painted “Identification” notices across the entire universe for all to see and respond to.

Romans 1:19-20 *For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.*<sup>20</sup> *For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.* The universe is God’s ID Card. Creation not only tells of the Creator; it speaks with remarkable detail of the Creator’s character. The universe cries out to the entire world ‘*look at me and read about your creator!*’

Creation is a powerful and confronting invitation by God, but pales by comparison with the revelation of God’s Son, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 1:2-3, *in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all*

*things, through whom also he created the world.* <sup>3</sup> *He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.* These powerful words often get overlooked or downplayed by God's people. But I suggest that these verses are the rock on which we build our right understanding of God. God wants to be known, not as the God of our imaginations, but as the God who has revealed Himself with clarity and with focus on His glorious greatness, His holiness, and His mercy.

Solomon prayed that God would bring Gentile foreigners to Israel for prayer, and that God would answer them *in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you* (1 Kings 8:43). God has never wanted to be known by Israel only. Even though, as Solomon confesses, *there is no one who does not sin* (1 Kings 8:46), when people repent of their sin, God will forgive and grant them compassion (1 Kings 8:46-53).

Through all Yahweh's interactions with Israel, including His punishment of their idolatry, it was so that *they shall know that I am the Lord* (Ezekiel 5:13). In fact, the Lord repeats this approximately 70 times throughout Ezekiel's prophecy.

God wants to be known, even by rebellious Israel. God restores and cleanses sinners so that by His grace those washed sinners can intimately know their God.

At the beginning of human history, the Lord God fellowshiped with Adam and Eve and was known by them. Following Adam and Eve's sin *they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*<sup>9</sup> *But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"* (Genesis 3:8-9). It was man who broke the relationship with God. Even though God knew what they had done, He graciously walked the garden calling for them so that they knew He wanted their fellowship. God had been known by Adam and Eve before they sinned, and God still wanted to be known by them following their sin.

Moses was caring for his fathers-in-law's sheep on the west side of Mount Horeb. Minding his own business, glad that he had escaped the terror of Egypt to enjoy peace in the wilderness. Then God stepped into Moses' life and demanded Moses' attention. *The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush*

(Exodus 3:2). *God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am"* (Exodus 3:4). God initiated what would be a spectacular friendship with disinterested Moses which changed the future for Israel. God's law was introduced through Moses (Ex 19-20), and we are still dependent upon that same law to show us what sin is (Rom 3:20). Yahweh had to be known by Moses, so Yahweh made it happen.

The Lord has often gone to remarkable lengths to get people's attention. Jonah is possibly the world's best known Bible character who preferred running from God instead of knowing and serving Him. He was an unwilling prophet running from a determined and gracious God.

Having survived three days and nights in the dark acetic belly of a smelly fish, Jonah is projectile vomited across the beach onto dry land (Jonah 2:10). Having poured out his heart to God in prayer from within the fish's digestive juices, Jonah is now beached with no prophetic response from the Lord (Jonah 2:1-9). Then, Jonah is confronted by the Lord with the same instruction for the second time; *"arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you"* (Jonah 3:2). Jonah just could not escape an evangelistic God who first wanted to be known by the evangelist.

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God won, and complaining Jonah discovered the God of all mercy. Jonah's final conclusion was that this God who wants to be known by sinners, is *a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster* (Jonah 4:2). The Lord, although terribly offended by our sin, actions His loving grace so that there will always be a way for sinners to know Him.

Jesus prayed, *this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent* (John 17:3). God the Father wants to be known, and Jesus wants to make the Father known just as the Father wants His Son to be known.

In Matthew chapter 7, Jesus explains that in the coming day of judgment, *not everyone who says, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven*. Sadly, in that day, Jesus *will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness'* (Matthew 7:21, 23). To be known by the Lord and to know the Lord is a matter of eternal importance.

God can be known through His Son Jesus, who is the incarnation of God (Col 2: 9). *For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself* (John 5:2). *In him was life, and the life was the light*

*of men* (John 1:4). Although *the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.* <sup>11</sup> *He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.* <sup>12</sup> *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God* (John 1:10-12). Belief in Jesus Christ does NOT begin a casual friendship with God. No, faith in Christ is the beginning of an eternal and intimate relationship with God that sees us adopted as children of God.

As is always true of God, He mercifully does everything needed to be personally and intimately known by mankind. To know God is to experience God. Think of New Testament Saul. Here was a man who used all his energies, his brilliant intellect, and his religious influence to fight God's Son and destroy His Church. *Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison* (Acts 8:3). But Saul never counted on God's mercy. God wanted to be known by Saul, and God would have His way with him. No amount of resistance by Saul would stop God fulfilling His sovereign will in Saul's life. The trouble was, Saul was *still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord* (Acts 9:1).

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So, Jesus Christ steps into Saul's life without an invitation. Saul had no say in the matter, Jesus imposed His sovereign will upon Saul in such a way that Saul had to yield. Now, it happened like this; as Saul *approached Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven shone around him.* <sup>4</sup> *And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"* <sup>5</sup> *And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting"* (Acts 9:3-5). What an incredible introduction. Saul now knew exactly who it was that was dealing with him. Consequently, *for three days Saul was without sight, and neither ate nor drank* (Acts 9:9). The strong love of Jesus for Saul was willing to do whatever it took for Saul to respond correctly.

A few days later the Lord used Ananias to tell Saul what the Lord had planned for him. The Lord said that Saul *is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.* <sup>16</sup> *For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name* (Acts 9:15-16). Upon receiving this message from Ananias, Saul *regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;* <sup>19</sup> *and taking food, he was strengthened* (Acts 9:18-19).

The change in Saul's life was immediate, and it was dramatic. The change could not be argued against because it was so obvious. *For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus.* <sup>20</sup> *And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God"* (Acts 9:19-20).

**Saul now knew Jesus Christ!** From now on, Saul would be known by his other name, Paul. You see, when you truly know Jesus, you cannot keep the friendship to yourself, others must know.

### **Application:**

- ~ May our lives be like Abraham's life, who *believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness - and he was called a friend of God* (James 2:23). May we strive to know the Lord just as we are known by the Lord. By God's grace and His Holy Spirit, may we effectively introduce others to Jesus Christ the Lord.
- ~ Worship God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who are knowable.
- ~ May we be enthusiastic and passionate about telling the world that God wants them to know Him. Let's tell the world that God has made a simple way for this to happen – through faith in His son Jesus Christ.

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