

SESSION 1

# *HOW CAN I KNOW GOD?*

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## I. FRAMING QUESTION: HOW CAN I KNOW GOD?

*Because humans are finite and God is infinite, if they are to know God, that knowledge must come about by God taking the initiative to make himself known.*

— Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, pg. 122

<sup>1</sup> Scriptures selected for this survey were taken from pages 31-56 of *Exploring Christian Theology Volume 1: Revelation, Scripture and The Triune God*. Ed. Nathan D. Holsteen and Michael J. Svigel. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2014.

## ◆ II. SURVEY OF KEY PASSAGES

PSALM 19:1-6

The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

<sup>2</sup> Day after day they pour forth speech;  
night after night they reveal knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> They have no speech, they use no words;  
no sound is heard from them.

<sup>4</sup> Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,  
their words to the ends of the world.

In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.

<sup>5</sup> It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,  
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

<sup>6</sup> It rises at one end of the heavens  
and makes its circuit to the other;  
nothing is deprived of its warmth.

**Big Idea:** We know what God is like by observing His creation.

ROMANS 1:18-21

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,<sup>19</sup> since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.<sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

<sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

**Big Idea:** Our sin causes us to reject God's revelation in creation.

#### HEBREWS 1:1-2

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

**Big Idea:** We know God by listening to the Old Testament prophets and to His Son, Jesus.

#### 2 PETER 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things.<sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**Big Idea:** The Holy Spirit caused the prophets and apostles to write in Scripture exactly the words God desired.

#### 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Big Idea:** All Scripture comes from God and gives us the revelation we need to know and follow Him.

#### JOHN 17:17

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

**Big Idea:** God's Word is true in all that it affirms.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14

The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

**Big Idea:** The Holy Spirit must open a person's heart to understand and accept the truth of God's revelation.

### III. SUMMARY OF BIBLICAL TRUTH

1. God can be truly known because He has made Himself known to us. This process is called revelation.
2. The ultimate revelation of God to mankind came in His Son, Jesus Christ, and all other revelation, including Scripture, finds its ultimate fulfillment in Him.
3. The words of Scripture contain the very words of God given through human authors. This process is called inspiration.
4. Everything that Scripture affirms is true. This is often called the inerrancy of Scripture.
5. The 66 books of the Old and New Testaments contain all of the words from God that believers need in order to know and follow God.

### DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas

#### The Scriptures

We believe that the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired of God, in whole and in part, error-free in the original writings and the supreme authority of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ. We further believe that there is but one true interpretation of any Biblical passage and this is only found when one accurately applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation.

— Psalm 119:160; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2, 4:12

### IV. SCRIPTURE TO MEMORIZE

#### 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

## V. DIFFICULT QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIONS

1. What about all of the errors in the Bible?
2. What about all of the different interpretations of the Bible?
3. What about things in the Bible that are offensive to us?
4. What about new revelation given today?

## VI. APPLICATION TO LIFE

- IN WORSHIP  
What should I praise God for?
- IN DISCIPLESHIP  
What should I repent of? or How should I trust and obey?
- ON MISSION  
Why does this matter for lost people?