

# Knowing God

**“This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent —Jesus Christ.”** (John 17:3 CSB)

What is meant here by the word *know* is very important, since it is, according to the quoted verse, eternal life. It goes deeper than simply believing. As we all know, the devils believe and tremble. What would the God of us require from His creature? I think the answer is stated in Proverbs 23:26: **My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways.**

(CSB) This suggests more than an intellectual knowledge, although that is included. A relationship that is intimate and continuous is what the Lord desires. Most of us at NUMA know this and desire this also; but if you are like me, many times I catch myself trying to

understand God with my mind rather than with my heart. Both are necessary if I am ever able to Love the Lord, my God, with all my heart, soul, mind and strength.



I have been reading some of A. W. Tozer's wisdom this week. I do not agree with everything he said, but some of his shared insights about God are reflected through some of the thoughts I am writing about today.

A mind is incapable of understanding God. A God who is infinite cannot even be measured. We might believe we have a big God, even a very big God, but we cannot understand His unlimitedness. God showed us His unlimited love when He sent His son to die for us. Many songwriters have confessed that they couldn't understand this kind of love. We can grasp it somewhat when the Holy Spirit enlightens little by little what the word shows us about this God—our God.

When Jesus resurrected He said to Mary Magdalene, **“...But go to my brothers and tell them that I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”** (John 20:17 CSB) Our “Father and our God,” not just a God, which is tremendous in itself, but a **Father**. He relates to us this way. Don't think about Him as you might an earthly father with imperfections, who was possibly harsh or abusive, or lacked the kind of insight or love you needed to be able to thrive in life. Think about the Father who is infinite in perfection, absolutely flawless, infinite in goodness, infinite in caring, love, and everything about Him is infinitely *delicious*, for lack of a better word. If I think about God this way, I can start to delight in Him. He certainly is able to make us thrive.

From Psalm 37 (of David) verse 4: **Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.** (NKJV) I recall this verse often. It suggests a joy that I should have in Him—a joy that we don't always walk in because we can't see beyond momentary afflictions or obstacles that God allows in our lives. We don't see the purpose in suffering, or we could delight in that too. But, if we would have joy in each situation, instead of complaining, what a light we could shine to those in our world who don't know Christ. **Do everything without grumbling and arguing, so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a crooked and perverted generation,**

**among whom you shine like stars in the world, by holding firm to the word of life.** (From Philippians 2:14-16 CSB) If we walk in gloom, arguing and complaining, no one will want what we have.

The Lord said, **“You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth.”**

(John 4:22-24 CSB)

Who is this Spirit God Who desires worship in Spirit and in truth. We need to know Him. He is the same one who has given us the Spirit, the Holy Spirit who is capable of this kind of worship in us and through us. This Holy Spirit is our hope and shows the way to all that our Father desires from us. As I wrote to a sister this week:

*“I am glad the Lord still speaks to us when we are unworthy, or I would never hear Him at all. Sometimes I can “feel” more worthy, but that is religiousness. He desires worship in spirit and truth. Our only worthiness is the worthiness Christ gave us, so it is never mine of my own. No guilt—no shame—we just get up and walk in Him the best way we know, and always remember He is with us even in our worst moments. Until we pass, there will always be room for improvement. He is the only complete perfection. We are just created beings, growing more like Him, as He destined us to be transformed into His image. It is a process!”*

I will add now that **the process includes repentance** when we miss the mark—*sin*.

Do we know God as delightful? David did. There are many reasons to delight ourselves in God. I recall a passage that brings much joy to me:

**“For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.”** God finishes what He starts!

The verse preceding this passage is the well-known, **“We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”** So often this verse is taken out of context, or the part I have highlighted isn’t included, but it too is a reason for joy.

As we experience the truth of God’s word in our lives, we come to know Him—that word that Jesus said is Spirit and life. (See John 6:63) We come to know Him through His word. As we come to know Him we also come to trust Him and live life as *a new creation*.

Knowing God does include both mind and heart. David had the heart and mind to write Psalm 37 which the CSB entitles, ***Instruction in Wisdom***. Here is a small portion, verses 3-8:

Trust in the Lord and do what is good;  
dwell in the land and live securely.  
Take delight in the Lord,  
and he will give you your heart’s desires.

Commit your way to the Lord;  
trust in him, and he will act,  
making your righteousness shine like the dawn,

your justice like the noonday.

Be silent before the Lord and wait expectantly for him;  
do not be agitated by one who prospers in his way,  
by the person who carries out evil plans.

Refrain from anger and give up your rage;  
do not be agitated—it can only bring harm.

There is a **cost** to know Him (and delight in Him). **“Buy—and do not sell—truth, wisdom, instruction, and understanding.”** (Proverbs 23:23 CSB) God in His immeasurable goodness, mercy and patience, through the Holy Spirit will reveal to your spirit what that cost is little by little, but in the end the complete cost is, as is stated often by Paige and Doug, “A life for a life.”

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