

## **“IS OUR GOD A KNOW-IT-ALL?”**

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**First Christian Reformed Church, Lynden, WA**

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**Text for the Sermon: Psalm 139:1-6, 17-18, 23-24**

### **Introduction.**

We are talking this summer about knowing God, really knowing God; drilling as deeply as finite humans can into the nature of the infinite God. One reason for doing this is because the consequences of not knowing God are huge.

When people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing—they believe in anything. One of the first things to go when you don't believe in God is common sense.

The whole thing with the Olympic athlete Bruce Jenner is a perfect example of someone who has fallen into utter confusion about God and himself.

The problem is not that there are troubled souls in our world who are confused about their identity. There have always been and there will always be. The problem is that our culture no longer believes in God or fears God, so it will fall for anything and everything. The problem is a culture that is calling good evil and evil good. The problem is a culture that says the only crazy people are the ones who raise their hand and say, “Excuse me, but ...”

Brothers and sisters, in a world that doesn't know God, we must know God and be able to articulate as clearly as possible who He is and what He is like and what that means for us and our world.

So let's begin with the question, “Is Our God a Know-it-all?” Does God really know everything? Is God omniscient and what does that mean for us?

### **How is what God knows different than what we know?**

Psalm 139 is a wonderful introduction to the truth about God's omniscience. It's not stated here as some cold doctrine, but as an intensely personal truth that leads us to deeper love for God.

David starts by using a human term for gaining knowledge, searching, as in discovering, uncovering, learning. David doesn't mean that God was ignorant of some things and searched them out to know them. He means God knows all things completely and thoroughly as if He had searched them out to the depths.

***God's knowledge is innate***, meaning He simply knows all things. God never learns anything. God is not a student, He doesn't know the way we know by learning, observing, reasoning, deducting, comparing.

You cannot inform God of anything or tell Him something He doesn't know. God cannot acquire new knowledge or gain greater understanding. His knowledge neither increases nor decreases. He simply knows everything.

***God's knowledge is simultaneous***, instantaneous and complete. He knows everything at once and the thinks about everything at once. If you asked God how many stars are in the universe, He wouldn't say, "Let me get back to you on that while I go count them." Nor would He have to think about it to remember since He hadn't thought about for a long time.

All the facts and figures and data and information in the universe are fully and completed and instantly present in the consciousness of God.

David says that God knows when he sits down and when he rises up. He is saying poetically that God knows everything from one extreme to the other and everything in between.

***God's knowledge knows no obstacle***, even from as far away as heaven, God sees all, perceives all, knows all. He knows it without the hindrance of distance, of space or time. God is above and outside of time.

***God's knowledge is infallible***, pure and perfect. He never has a bad thought, never makes an error in judgment, or a slip of the tongue, or has a senior moment. He never forgets.

Yes I know Scripture says He will not remember our sins (Isaiah 43:25). What that means is that God will not let the sins we repent of play any part in how He relates to us. The blood of Jesus removes the sting of sin, removes the power of sin, removes the effects of sin for us eternally. The bill is paid and the debt is cancelled.

***God's knowledge is infinite***, not partial like ours. God knows every word before it is on our tongue, every thought before it enters our brain, every plan before it's conceived, every decision before it's decided, and all our days before we were born.

He knows the totality of all actions, events, places and things. He knows the totality of every emotion, feeling, idea, plan, purpose, motive, aim, doubt, fear and anxiety. He reads us like an open book. There is nothing hidden from His eye, it's vain to try to hid or keep something from Him. He knows the deep things in our subconscious that a trained psychiatrist would have trouble digging out.

God is infinite, He is incomprehensible, He is inexhaustible. God knows more than Google, Facebook, Instagram Twitter and YouTube combined. This is why I have said before heaven can never be boring. Every day in heaven will be a new adventure in discovering new things

about God. God will delight in giving us new revelations of Himself and we will delight in learning new things.

**Psalm 139:6** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.  
17 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!  
18 If I would count them, they are more than the sand.

### **Does God know absolutely everything? What does God know?**

The answer to that question seems obvious to all of us, right? Of course, God knows everything, otherwise God wouldn't be God, right?

So why do I even raise the question? Because there are people in churches in America who actually don't believe God knows absolutely everything. One of the most well-known and popular examples is John Eldredge the author of popular books like *Wild at Heart* and *The Sacred Romance*. He and many others believe in Open Theism that says there are things God doesn't know or can't know like the future which doesn't exist to be known.

Some argue that since God is spirit and doesn't have the five physical senses like we do that He can't know hot and cold or sweet and bitter. They say God takes risks. This is heresy, it is completely false. A risk by definition is an action with an unknown outcome. It is impossible for God to take a risk, because He knows all things before they happen.

This is an open attack of the omniscience of God in the church today. We must not be surprised when important doctrines come under attack, it's what Satan does all the time.

One of the first things Adam did after the fall was deny the omniscience of God. "I heard your voice so I hid" (Genesis 3:10). You can't win playing hide and seek with God.

The church now more than ever needs warriors, men willing to fight for truth and holiness, willing to stand for what's right and righteous. The battle is being brought to the church. Who is prepared to engage the enemy?

Pastor John Piper has been one of many warriors in this fight and has written books defending the truth concerning God and His character and nature. We must be warriors with our kids and grandkids and friends and neighbors. Let no one diminish or rob God of all His glory.

### **Practical Implications and Applications.**

God sees you and knows you intimately and completely. This knowledge carries with it the clear message that God cares about you. He cares about everything about you, your rising up and your lying down, your going out and your coming in, your obedience and your disobedience.

**Moms**, God sees you and knows you and all you are doing.  
God sees you juggling car seats and looking for a lost shoe when you are already late.  
God sees you juggling finances and looking for ways to make ends meet.  
God sees you falling exhausted into bed when your husband has other ideas.

God sees your hidden, unappreciated or under-appreciated work, the endless repetition of laundry, diapers, dishes. God sees the extra mile you go every day.

You may be tempted to despise the work of moms in the home because our culture despises it and says it isn't as important as what is done out in the work place or in public view. God sees the reactions of others and their comments to you or about you. God sees and knows and cares.

Be free from what others may think or say, your mother in law, or other young mothers, be free from competition, from measuring up, from trying to please or impress someone else. God sees, God knows, God cares, God's love toward you is tender and compassionate.

**Dads**, God sees and knows you and all you are doing.  
God sees you worried about the future or getting out of debt.  
God sees you controlling your anger or frustration at work.  
God sees you looking over the fence at the greener grass.  
God sees your concern over what the competition is doing.

God sees your lustful thoughts and your faithful thoughts.  
God sees you when you fall for a temptation and when you resist it.  
God sees your desires for Him and what is true and good and right.

**Kids**, God sees you and knows your concerns and fears.  
God knows when you are hurting over a friend who has turned into a bully.  
God knows when you wrestle in your mind over peer pressures.  
God knows when you are lonely or worried or upset with your parents or siblings.  
God knows your questions and doubts. And because He knows He loves you and cares.  
Kids remember, you can fool your parents, you can even fool yourself, but you can't fool God.

**Senior saints**, God sees and knows all you are going through.  
God sees your tears over the deaths of loved ones.  
God sees your thoughts of regrets over the past.  
God sees your worries over the future, and the future of your children and grandchildren.  
God sees your struggle with failing bodies and memories.  
God sees your daily care of a spouse who can't care for themselves.  
God sees your weariness.

Whatever our sufferings, past abuses, cancer, depression, God sees and knows and cares. We are tempted to think if God doesn't remove it He must not care, but that's not true.

We can't know as God knows, so we trust his omniscience, His time, His thoughts, His ways. God uses our suffering to grow us, to produce a harvest of righteousness. God knows, God really knows, so let us draw near to Him with confidence (Hebrews 4:12).

Let this truth about God's omniscience bear fruit in five ways in your life.

***Let God's omniscience be an incentive to living a more godly and holy life.*** O how deceitful our hearts are when we fear the shame of man finding out our sin, but don't fear God knowing. He knows every idle thought and word, He knows every lustful desire and action, He knows the secret sins of our hearts. He knows our temptations and our weaknesses, He knows the corruptions of our hearts, He knows we are flesh, made of dust.

Be careful little eyes what you see, be careful little hands what you do, be careful little feet where you go, be careful little mouth what you say, there's a Father up above looking down in love.

Beg God's help in this, for we are weak and foolish. Ask God to do this and He will.

**Psalm 139:23-24** Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!  
24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

When Joseph was being tempted to sin by Potiphar's wife he was helped by his awareness of God's omniscience. "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9).

***Let God's omniscience be an incentive to prayer.*** Not because we are informing God of anything He doesn't already know. In fact if God didn't know and had to be informed by us, there would be no point in praying to such a weak and impotent God. We pray as an act of acknowledging our need and dependence and trust. Prayer is an act of worship toward an omniscient God, prayer glorifies God as the giver and blesses us as the receiver.

***Let God's omniscience be cause for humility.*** Knowledge puffs up, knowledge makes us proud. The more educated we are, the more knowledgeable or experienced at something we are the more we boast or strut or drop hints and names. Knowledge makes us proud. But can you imagine a flashlight boasting to the sun? Can you imagine Fish Trap Creek boasting to the Pacific Ocean? Can you imagine a pocket calculator bragging to the NASA space computers?

***Let God's omniscience be an incentive to faith, hope and trust.***

Even Job in the bitterness and misery of his own seemingly out of control life was still able to speak truth to himself, God "knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold" (Job 23:10).

God shows particular care and interest in His own, "He knows them that are His" (II Timothy 2:19). He can't be ignorant of us, He has known us from before the foundations of the earth, He

knows the number of our days and the very hairs of our heads. Take great comfort in this. Without this attribute He could not be God and without this attribute He would be no help to us.

**1 John 3:19-20** This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts and he knows everything.

God knows the very worst about everyone one of us, He knows our worst sins but while we were yet sinners Christ came and died for us. God knows everything and He loves us.

If God were forgetful, if God had Alzheimer's or dementia what comfort or hope would we have? How could we trust Him and depend on Him if He was ignorant of our concerns and situation? We love and trust God because we know He has compassion on us, we know His power is able and His grace is sufficient and His promises are real, He will take care of His children. He has infinite knowledge and understanding to know our needs and what's best for each one of us.

*Let God's omniscience be cause for great worship.* Do we not honor people who are especially smart or knowledgeable or wise? Consider how great a thing it would be to know everything there was to know about one person from their birth to their death, every thought and intention and work. Then consider how great a thing it would be to know everything there was to know about a whole family or even a whole town, or greater still every thought and intention and work of every person in the United States.

But to know the thoughts and intentions, the motives and actions, the good and evil in every person who has ever lived on this planet and all seven and a half billion people now swarming every corner of this globe, to know every wish, desire, dream, hope and step of every soul, isn't that enough to cause to you bow in worship of the only great and wise and all-knowing God.

**Romans 11:33-34, 36** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

34 "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"

36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.