



TO KNOW GOD

All Saints

Summer 2025

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY SIN OF THE AMERICAN CHURCH?

- According to RC Sproul

“The greatest problem with the American church is that people simply do not know God nor do they seem as interested in knowing God.”

From a trappist
monk in
Kentucky
(mentored by
Thomas
Merton)



“The greatest
sin of the
American
church is
impatience.”

JI PACKER: ON KNOWING GOD

"The world becomes a strange, mad, painful place, and life in it a disappointing and unpleasant business, for those who do not know about God. Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were , with no sense of direction, and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way you can waste your life and lose your soul." (19)

OUR DILEMMA

- A Holy God cannot dwell with unholy people
- People do not seem as interested in Knowing God as in other subjects
- Man naturally puts himself first and finds other gods attractive if not more attractive....often gods of our own creation rather than the Creator.

MICHAEL POLANYI:

- In his 1948 essay, 'Forms of Atheism,' Polanyi makes an important observation still relevant today:

“There were always people who made fun of priests or doctors, and yet continued to fear the gods and take the medicines. We are concerned with the convinced repudiator in modern times of God as manifested in the Bible, rejecting him in favour of other gods.”

PACKER HELPS US

- “Knowing God involves, first, listening to God’s Word and receiving it as the Holy Spirit interprets it, in application to oneself; second, noting God’s nature and character, as his Word and works reveal it; third, accepting his invitations and doing what he commands; fourth, recognizing and rejoicing in the love that he has shown in thus approaching you and drawing you into this divine fellowship.” (37)

....listening to God's Word and receiving it as the Holy Spirit interprets it, in application to oneself

2 Peter 1:16-21

1 Peter 1: 22-25

....noting God's nature and character, as his Word and works reveal it;

Isaiah 6

Exodus 34:5-7

Psalms 103

John 5:19-47

- accepting his invitations and doing what he commands

John 3; John 14.6

Romans 1-8

Exodus 20

The invitation: no other God, no other way to God, no other work but God's, and that is a Good thing.

.....recognizing and rejoicing in the love that he has shown in thus approaching you and drawing you into this divine fellowship

“This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all”

(this is probably the one aspect of God most people spend time on, but miss out on understanding the God who loves them)

OUR GREATEST PROBLEM

- Is it a lack of gratitude?
- Is it impatience or hurry?
- Is it violence and conflict or partisanship?

Packer: “I wrote *Knowing God* over a period of years, during which I was deeply concerned . . . to help people realize God’s greatness.”