

Discipleship Foundations - View of God

October 26, 2025

A. View of God and Knowledge of God

- a. View: the way in which we see or perceive God. What does God think about me, my situation, and others around me?
- b. Knowledge: what we know about God.
 - i. Intellectual component and an experiential component.

Greek Word	Transliteration	Part of Speech	Primary Distinction	Biblical Example
Γνῶσις	Gnōsis (29x in NT) "know" or "knowledge"	Noun	General, intellectual, or conceptual knowledge; often a beginning or foundational understanding.	1 Corinthians 8:1: "Now concerning food offered to idols: we know (gnōsis) that 'all of us possess knowledge .' This ' knowledge ' puffs up, but love builds up."
Ἐπίγνωσις	Epignōsis (20x in NT) "know or "knowledge"	Noun	Precise, full, complete, or accurate knowledge; implies a deeper intimacy, practical application, and full comprehension. <u>It often signifies a knowledge that transforms the knower.</u>	Colossians 1:9–10: "...to be filled with the knowledge (epignōsis) of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord..."
Γινώσκω	Ginōskō (200x in NT) "know"	Verb (to know)	Experiential, relational, or intimate knowledge; knowledge gained through participation, experience, or relationship.	John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they know (ginōskō) you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." (Also used for sexual intimacy, as in Matthew 1:25).
Οἶδα	Oida (318x in NT) "know"	Verb (to know)	Intuitive, perceived, or conscious knowledge; a settled, objective, or intuitive certainty. It means "I have seen, hence I know."	Romans 7:7 "I would not have known (oida) sin except through the law..."

B. Key teachings by the apostles is to know God deeply and intimately (Epignōsis)

- a. Peter's first and last words in 2 Peter 1:2-3 and 3:18
- b. Paul: Ephesians 1:17, Ephesians 4:13, 1 Tim 2:4, Col 1:9-10 (above)
- c. How would you explain to a new believer the difference of knowing about God (Gnōsis) and knowing God (Epignōsis)?

Discussion Questions:

1. In the book "*Knowledge of the Holy*" by A.W. Tozer, he famously says, "**What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.**" Do you agree with this statement? In what ways does your mental image of God affect your daily life, your decisions, and your relationships?
2. What are some **views of God** that you have seen – both right and wrong in the following dimensions?
 - a) What does God think about our **sin**? (Psalm 32:5; 1 John 1:9, 2:2; Col 2:13-14; Heb 10:10; 2 Cor 5:21)
 - b) How does my view of God affect my **worship** to him? (1 Chron 29:10-11; Isaiah 6:1-7; Eph 2:10; Jude 1:24-25)
 - c) What does God think about our **relationships with others**? (1 Jn 4:11; John 13:34-35; Matt 22:39; Eph 4:31-32)
 - d) How does my view of God affect my **hope**? (Rom 15:13; Lam 3:21-24, Isaiah 40:31; Titus 2:13; 1 Peter 1:3)
 - e) What does God think about our **suffering**? What is God's role in it? (Rom 8:15-18, 28-29; 2 Cor 1:3-6; James 1:2-4; Isaiah 45:7, Amos 3:6; Psalm 71:20; 2 Cor 12:7-10)

- C. By our nature we are interpreters. We see the world and interpret – we give meaning to what we observe. Tim Sanford's known for saying: "Thinking determines attitude which determines actions." Negative examples of interpreting in scripture:
- a. Galatians interpreting their need for circumcision and works to add to their salvation (Gal 5:2-6)
 - b. Favoritism to the rich (James 2:1-13)
 - c. Pursuing Jewish laws, religious festivals, worship of angels (Colossians 2:16-19)
 - d. Can you think of examples where you or someone you know interpreted life a certain way (Biblical or not Biblical)?
- D. Our enemy knows that knowledge of God has power to change the believer. Moreover, it is our highest goal as believers. Thus, Satan's goal is prevent us from knowing God.
- a. **2 Corinthians 2:11:** "...so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs."
 - b. **2 Corinthians 11:3:** Paul expresses concern that "your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ"(prior phrase) "just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning."
 - c. **Ephesians 6:11-12, 16:** "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."
 - d. How can we reframe Eve's struggle as a struggle with the knowledge of God?
 - i. Genesis 3:1-6
 - ii. V5 – Satan's lie was targeting what God said (knowledge of God)
 - iii. V6 – "desirable to make one wise"
 - e. **2 Cor 10:3-5**
 - i. In what sphere do we wage war?
 - ii. What are our weapons?
 - iii. What are the fortresses?
 - iv. What is Paul stating about his response to this problem?
 - f. What are some lies that Satan uses to trick our thinking?

Case Studies – Imagine you are in a discipleship relationship with each person below. For each person, determine how their current view of God influences their approach to the situation, and identify scriptures that can help them reframe their experience.

- 1) Chuck woke with the familiar, crushing weight of shame. He had broken his promise—the one he made just last week—to overcome his struggle with lust. Now, the sin burdens him; he's convinced God is disappointed, and he feels utterly stuck in this disheartening cycle.
- 2) Maria's anxiety has created a painful cycle: every major exam is preceded by sleeplessness, and the moment she hits a difficult question, her body takes over with sweating and a racing heart. This physical response sabotages her performance. She feels let down by her faith, telling you that God is distant and silent. Since her prayers to remove the anxiety haven't been answered, she's convinced He doesn't care about her struggle.
- 3) Thomas now walks with a limp, the result of a distracted driver hitting him on his bicycle two years ago. While he has recovered enough to walk, running and cycling remain difficult. The accident occurred after he had trained for over a year for a triathlon, which was his dream. Now, Thomas is depressed as he struggles to cope with this shattered dream.

Resources:

- a. Knowing God, J. I. Packer
- b. Knowledge of the Holy, A.W. Tozer
- c. Awe: Why It Matters for Everything We Think, Say, and Do, Paul Tripp
- d. A Shelter in the Time of Storm, Paul Tripp
- e. When People Are Big and God Is Small: Overcoming Peer Pressure, Codependency, and the Fear of Man, Edward T. Welch