



John 1:14, Matthew 1:18-20 (Psalm 27:4)

“Immanuel, God with Us”

Pastor Patrick Bowler
12-10-2023

Consult the Scriptures:

Psalm 27:4

John 1:1-5, 14

Matthew 1:18-25

(See also Ps. 27:5, 8; Matt. 11:27; Deut. 29:29; Rom. 1:20; Ps. 19:1-2, 8:3-4, 113:4-6; Heb. 1:1-2a)

Consult the Scholars:

[J. I. Packer] *“What are we made for? To know God. What aim should we set ourselves in life? To know God. What is ‘eternal life’ that Jesus gives? Knowledge of God. ‘This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent’ (Jn 17:3). What is the best thing in life, bringing more joy, delight and contentment than anything else? Knowledge of God. ‘This is what the Lord says: ‘Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me’ (Jer 9:23-24). What, of all the states God ever sees man in, gives God most pleasure? Knowledge of himself. ‘I desire... the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings,’ says God (Hos 6:6 KJV).”¹*

¹ J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1993), p. 33.

[Wayne Grudem] *“If we are to know God at all, it is necessary that he reveal himself to us.”*²

[Michael Reeves] *“Just as the Spirit hovered over the waters in Genesis, he would overshadow Mary, that the one to be born might be the head of a new humanity and a new creation.”*³

Discuss:

1. Read Ps. 27:4 and discuss (*see also Ps. 27:5, 8*). For the Christian, is that a reasonable expectation and/or request? For you personally, do you expect a positive answer to that question? Why or why not?
2. What were we made for? See the above Packer quote and discuss. What does it mean to you personally that God is knowable?
3. How is God to be known? In other words, how are we able to know Him? See the above Grudem quote and discuss.
4. Pastor Patrick talked about both general and special revelation. What is the difference between those two theological terms?⁴
5. Pastor Patrick shared a variety of worldviews by which many have sought to explain God, the universe, and our particular place in it. He named materialism (i.e., naturalism), pantheism, dualism, and deism. How does special revelation (i.e., Scripture and the person of Christ) refute these various worldviews?
6. Read Matthew 1:18-25 and discuss. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus’ very name is Immanuel, meaning, “God with us”?
7. Pastor Patrick talked about the glory of Jesus’ humanity. What did he mean? Why is Jesus’ humanity so important? (See Jn. 1:14)
8. Read the above Reeves quote and discuss. Why is the connection between Jesus and Adam so important?

² Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), p. 149.

³ Michael Reeves, *Rejoicing In Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015), p. 46.

⁴ *General Revelation*: that which God has made known to all (i.e. generally) through what can be observed (see Rom. 1:20, Ps. 19:1-2). *Special Revelation*: that which is made known specifically by God to a specific people, namely by speaking (see 2 Tim. 3:16, Heb. 1:1-2, etc.).

9. What immediate applications can be made in light of this sermon? What question do you still have?