



Week Three - The God We Worship

6/5/22

Isaiah 45:18-25

Doctrine is the _____ of _____ that are found throughout the Bible, revealed by God to us, that inform us of distinct information and images of the truth of our faith.

1. God's existence is known to all even if _____ by all.

When it comes to God's existence it isn't a _____ of _____ - it is our _____ of the evidence.

2. Personal knowledge of the true God is _____ for _____.

A. Our _____ are exposed in it and revealed through it.

B. The _____ is observed by it and understood through it.

C. The _____ is matured in it and strengthened by it.

D. _____ is entered by it and centered on it.

Eternal life - the life of ages - this higher than earthly, linear life - this isn't only something that happens when we die; this is a _____ experience with us _____.

Taking It Home: Use the following simple discussion starters to discuss what you have learned and further conversations in your home, friends group, or small groups!

Of all that I've heard today,

1. What thought or truth really stands out in my mind the strongest?
2. What thought or truth am I struggling with, or having a difficult time accepting?
3. How was my mind changed on something I thought I previously understood?
4. What piece of truth do I need to share with someone else this week!

UPCOMING EVENTS TO PUT ON MY CALENDAR!

FRI. JUNE 10TH @ 6:00PM - 50&UP POTLUCK "TRAVELING WITH TED"

SAT. JUNE 18TH - ANNUAL OSBC CAR SHOW

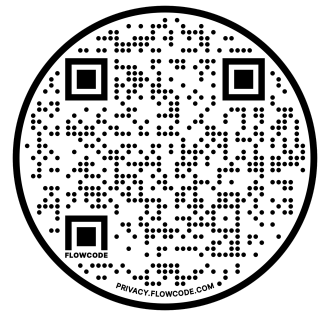
TUE. JUNE 28TH @ 6:30PM - "TASTE AND SEE" LADIES EVENT

JULY 4-9: MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP

JULY 18-23: HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP

Details and sign-ups for these events, as well as all upcoming events, can always be found under the [events page of our church APP](#) or on the Welcome Center Info wall!

**You can also get direct access to our
EVENTS PAGE by scanning this link!**



Thank you for joining us today!

Back to Basics—The God We Worship

Isaiah 45:18-25

We are journeying through the God-revealed doctrine this summer in this set of messages called Back to Basics.

Doctrine is the set of teachings that are found throughout the Bible, revealed by God to us, that inform us of distinct information and images of the truth of our faith.

These doctrines of faith (these beliefs given in Holy Scripture) inform our Christian identity, shape our worship and they can transform our actions.

The study and knowledge of sound doctrine belongs right in the middle of our life of faith as a church-body.

Jesus reinforces the command to love God with our heart, soul, strength *and mind*. Jesus throughout the Gospels was a doctrinal stone-builder. He continually taught doctrine upon doctrine upon doctrine in His teachings, stressing their importance and their essential need in our life of faith.

The learning of doctrine is an act of love and worship of God.

We are spiritually saved by it, formed by it, our worship is transformed by it, and our service in the world is equipped by it.

Learning biblical doctrine is like learning a new language —it requires learning words, ideas, concepts from another region and then having plenty of engaged conversations to go further in our understanding and practicing of it in our life.

This morning we are going to begin exploring the doctrinal language of the God we worship.

The prophet Isaiah broadcasted a clear message from God in our text this morning—there is only one God and is the only God with the power to rescue the human soul. He tells us to call out to Him for salvation. Nothing else we have or can do or might worship can save us.

God also says He speaks the truth about Who He is and His identity is not hidden from us. He does not speak in secret.

God actually says in verse 19 that a failure to know Him isn't at all God's fault for God doesn't call out to anyone to seek Him in vain. God can be found and known.

I hold onto this doctrine about God firmly in faith—(Hebrews 11:6 gives its truth to us also)

But our seatbelt on this ride towards God must be made of humility.

Because as we come to the revealed truths about God in Scripture, and believe that *He is*, and come to a personal knowledge of God that God invites us to, we must be

reflectively mindful also that we are still dealing with *That* which is Ineffably Other, *That* which is Inexhaustible Mystery.

We can personally know God, but we need to understand that we cannot *exhaustively* know God.

It was Christian theologian Blaise Pascal in the seventeenth century who said, “**The religion that does not, first of all, assert the mystery of God, is a lie.**”

And so, the framework to teach this foundational doctrine concerning God and who God is must be very simple because as an old proverb humorously states, “**He who hammers above his head will always hit the nail...right on his thumb.**”

If I attempt to go too deep here, or too lofty, or too exhaustive or too high beyond the text of the Sacred Scrolls over the next few weeks— we all will walk away with bloody and swollen thumbs.

(image of hitting thumb with hammer)

Let me also say that as walk this path over the next few weeks I will do my best to not make this sound like **an autopsy of the anatomy of God as we look at the God we worship through the lens of sound doctrine.**

We are finite creatures seeking to understand our Creator and to relationally know Him based on the revealed doctrine of God in Scripture.

This morning there are two preliminaries necessary to understand.

1. God's Existence is Known to All Even If Not Accepted by All.

When we come to the first sentence in the Scripture, **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..."** it is crucial to point something out about the existence of God.

And that is this: Scripture makes no rational argument for God's existence. God makes no demonstration of His own existence by way of argumentation or principled speech.

God declares His existence. God doesn't argued it.

There is no need for God to argue His existence.

God is the unquestionable Reality of (1) why anything exists at all, (2) that it exists the way it does—it is intelligible, law-full, full of potentiality, includes relational risks and it is observable—thus providing the platform for (3) why there are intelligible human minds within it arguing over or delighting over the intelligible things that do exist and attempting to understand them and many relishing in the sense of the divine within that directs us to God as the reason and pleasure of our existence.

The existence of God is an *axiomatic truth*, meaning, that *it is self-evident for every single human* that there is a Creator. This is fully blossomed from the conscious human mind observing the cumulative evidence that surrounds us and accepting of the clear information.

Albert Einstein once said that "Everyone who is seriously committed to the cultivation of science becomes convinced that in all the laws of the universe is manifest a spirit vastly superior to man, and to which we with our powers must feel humble."

Now, the Scripture points out the problem though that is found here on earth when it comes to our human observations.

The letter to the Romans addresses this issue that we humans have with this unquestionable witness that is within us and evidenced in the creation around us.

Read Romans 1:18

See what scripture says here? Scripture says here that humanity, due to its own fallenness, doesn't have *a lack of evidence for God's existence*, but Scripture says here, humans *suppress the evidence*.

And this is a doctrine of Scripture.

When it comes to God's existence it isn't a lack of evidence—it is our *suppression of the evidence*.

I believe that if God thought we needed more evidence, then God would have provided it. But its easy to see that we humans would just dismantle, deny, and disembark from any and all evidence as sinners no matter what that evidence might be to convince us.

Read 1:19-20

Scripture says here that there is an internal witness of God's existence and of His power *signaling within us* as conscious humans, and then, there is a further *external witness* of God's existence and of His providence over all things in the creation all *around us—and with these we are without excuse.*

But sadly, due to our own brokenness, with the limited providence we have over our own minds and wills—(*that was given to us by the gracious God*)— *we can suppress all the evidence for God Who gave us life and freedom and a sustainable creation to enjoy and witness.*

I love how the popular and respected Professor of Mathematical physics, Paul Davies, ended his stimulating book *The Mind of God*—a book dealing with theoretical physics and the obvious enigmas when it comes to human life and *what are we doing here(?)* In the book he basically observes, as a leading scientist, as an agnostic, he wrestles in a confessional manner, **essentially what the Apostle Paul was articulating in these verses in Romans two thousand years ago.**

Paul Davies comes to a conclusion that echoes the Scripture, but yet Davies still doesn't arrive all the way there:

Read page 232, The Mind of God

Listen, when it comes to the God we worship—God declares His existence. And then, creation within and creation without signals God's existence to us—and we as humans either acknowledge it by faith or we simply deny it.

And if we deny it, the fault doesn't lie with God and all that is here before us. The problem lies with us.

God's Reality is Known to All Even If Not Accepted by All.

This is a clear doctrine in the Scripture and it also proves other doctrines like *humanity's fallenness* that often leads to our own intellectual dishonesty of suppressing the evidence of what is within us and outside of us concerning God's existence or distorting God's true nature.

2. Personal Knowledge of the True God is Significant for Us.

- a. Our true selves are exposed in it and revealed through it.**

Read Isaiah 6:1-5 (Contextualize it)

The prophet caught sight of the majesty and mystery of God and this vision of God boomeranged back to Isaiah and he caught sight of the madness of himself.

This is what happens when we get closer and closer to God.

One of my favorite poets, Rainer Rilke, writing in his work ***Book of Hours***, says something that over twenty years ago became one of my best-loved lines of poetry because I have tasted its meaning—

**“I circle around God, the primordial tower
And I circle ten thousand years long;
And I still don’t know—
Am I falcon? A storm? *Or an unfinished song?*”
—Rainer Rilke, *Book of Hours***

(Explain it personally)

But it is interesting that Rilke in his search of God, which he stresses in poetic language that it seems so intensely prolonged, he like Isaiah the prophet, comes to a revelation of himself.

And this is part of the true spiritual journey in personally knowing God.

John Calvin in his major work the Institutes of Christian Religion wrote: **“Without knowledge of self, there is no knowledge of God. Our wisdom, insofar as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But as these are connected by many ties, it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes and gives birth to the other.”**

Knowledge of ourselves comes through the personal and relational knowledge we have of God and this experience can be severely humbling. (Job also, Peter also)

And then, what happens more through personally drawing nearer to God and facing ourselves is that...

b. The world is observed by it and understood through it.

This factor just extends from the the first truth.

We see ourselves differently as we come to know God and then we begin to look at the world in a different way through our growing knowledge of God.

Knowledge of ourselves through learning more about God draws us to see the world as it rises and falls, swells and deflates, wrestles and relaxes generation after generation— **as a steady moving history that has a special relationship with God**—even as it rebels, breaks down, or rises to great things to crumble again—achieves noble things and acquiesces to cruel things at its own hands— **we learn that**

Scripture affirms God's overarching providence enduring over all of this and purposely leading it and storing up wrath against all that is evil within.

We also begin deepening in the sensibility that things are definitely not as random as they might appear.

A growing relationship with God and gaining knowledge of Him in His Word increases our radical amazement at creation and its undeniable order that makes life possible.

And we begin a higher level engagement with it.

The great Jewish mystic theologian Abraham Heschel declared **"Never once in my life did I ask God for success or wisdom or power or fame. I asked for wonder, and he gave it to me."**

There is a wonder that can come from knowing God.

In learning more and more of Him and meditating of what we do learn of God can lead us to see that what we at first think is random is actually only possible because it is first, firmly settled on a secure foundation of fundamental laws and order in the universe God created—from the laws of the universe to the experience of the societal mind to the revelatory history of God.

There is a purpose and a meaning to it all.

It all goes back to what we heard last week in **Acts 17:26-27**.

The ultimate truth is that **wherever** we are, and **whenever** we are, we are not there by accident in geography or in history and the ultimate goal is that where we are and when we are—**we would seek God in that place and in that time *and that we would find Him* and we would find God—and we would find out that we were never far from God at any time, even when our hearts were spiritually lightyears away.**

God wants us to find Him and to know Him so much that He became one of us so He could come looking for us and to save us.

So as we yield to the impulse to search for God and to know God more, we will find out that our search is the only the effect of being one who is being sought.

And therefore,

c. The Church is matured in it and strengthened by it.

“...the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.” Daniel 11:32

This verse is dealing with the future event of when the Antichrist comes against the people of God.

And the Scripture declares prophetically here a truth—that it will be our personal relationship with God *and our sound and steady knowledge of God* that will deepen our strength and direct our actions for the sake of others who have yet to come to Christ in a time of turmoil and unbelief.

This is the creative power given to us in being the ones who know the living God.

And then, most importantly, knowing God is crucial because...

d. Eternal life is entered by it and centered on it.

Read John 17:1-3

This line in Jesus' prayer comes packed with a beautiful truth for us.

The truth of it is that **Eternal life—the life of the ages—this higher than earthly, linear life—this isn't only something that happens when we die; this is a present experience with us now.**

Knowing God *is* eternal life, *now* and ever after.

Do you have eternal life? Do you know God?

This eternal life is now and forever and it isn't religion—it is knowing the true God.

1 John 5:20

And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Personal Knowledge of the True God is Significant for Us.

And all of this is found in the doctrine of the God we worship.

So let us come and know God more today.

Jesus encourages us to do this.

Read Matthew 11:28-30

This is the wisdom and privilege of the true follower of Jesus who is in pursuit of personally knowing God.

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