

BIBLICAL TRUTH ABOUT GOD THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

Lesson 7: God is All-Knowing

Biblical doctrine is the study of what the Bible teaches about God and other important truths. Our previous lessons have been: The One True God; God is Three in One; God is Eternal Spirit; God is the Creator; God is the Sovereign Ruler of all things; and God is Perfect. In this lesson we will explore the biblical truth that God is All-Knowing or Omniscient.

MAIN TRUTH, CENTRAL SCRIPTURE, AND OUTLINE

God knows all things perfectly—past, present, and future. Nothing escapes His knowledge. God’s omniscience means that He is both limitless and flawless in knowledge and that He is personally involved in everything that occurs. God made man to marvel at His knowledge and wisdom and to worship Him for His perfect character. (Psalm 139:1-6)

1. The extent of God’s knowledge (Ps. 139:1-6)

God’s infinite knowledge covers every detail of life.

- A. God’s all-encompassing knowledge – God perfectly knows and remembers all things. Though people forget things from one moment to the next, God perfectly knows and remembers all things. He knows when someone sits down, when they get up, and everything they do in between. He knows when someone sins and when someone gives Him glory. Nothing is overlooked or hidden from God’s sight. God also understands a person’s thoughts and motives.
- B. God’s foreknowledge – God knows everything that will be, even your words before you speak them. He knows all things because He has determined all things. God actively and sovereignly ordains all of history and all who live in it. Everything fulfills His detailed, perfect plan, yet all people are personally responsible for their choices in life.

2. The wonder of God's knowledge (Ps. 139:1-6)

- A. God's personal knowledge – God knows every detail about every person's life. God's foreknowledge of His elect people causes their salvation. The same divine knowledge that should cause fear in the unrepentant sinner draws worship from the heart that has been changed by God's grace and covered by Christ's perfect righteousness. God knows every sinful thought and deed, but He regards believers with mercy and forgiveness instead of righteous judgment because Christ has taken away our guilt and His righteousness has been imputed (credited) to us.
- B. God's infinite knowledge – God's vast knowledge is far beyond human capacity to understand it.

MEMORY VERSES

Psalm 147:5 *Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.*

Psalms 139:6 *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.*

Proverbs 15:3 *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The following notes are from *The Holy One: A Handbook of Biblical Truth about God*, a book being written by Pastor Stan with a projected publishing date in the early part of 2024.

Who can enumerate all the beings and events, which are incessantly before His eye, adjusted by His wisdom, dependent on His will, and regulated by His power!

JOHN NEWTON (1725-1807)

Divine omniscience affords no comfort to the ungodly mind, but to the child of God it overflows with consolation. God is always thinking upon us, never turns aside His mind from us, has us always before His eyes; and this is precisely as we would have it, for it would be dreadful to exist for a moment beyond the observation of our heavenly Father.

CHARLES H. SPURGEON (1834-1892)

DEFINITION OF GOD'S OMNISCIENCE

Omniscience (from Latin *omni* + *scientia*, all knowledge) means that God has all knowledge. God's wisdom is the correct application of His infinite knowledge to accomplish His perfect will.

1. Louis Berkhof: "The knowledge of God may be defined as that perfection of God whereby He, in an entirely unique manner, knows Himself and all things possible and actual in one eternal and most simple act. The knowledge of God is not only perfect in kind, but also in its inclusiveness. It is called "omniscience" because it is all-comprehensive. In order to promote a proper estimate of it, we may particularize as follows: God knows Himself and in Himself all things that come from Him (internal knowledge). He knows all things as they actually come to pass, past, present, and future, and knows them in their real relations. He knows the hidden essence of things, to which the knowledge of man cannot penetrate. He sees not as man sees, who observes only the outward manifestations of life, but penetrates to the depths of the human heart. Moreover, He knows what is possible as well as what is actual; all things that might occur under certain circumstances are present to His mind" (*Systematic Theology*, 66-67).

2. A. W. Pink: "God is omniscient. He knows everything: everything possible, everything actual; all events and all creatures, of the past, the present, and the future. He is perfectly acquainted with every detail in the life of every being in heaven, in earth, and in hell. Nothing escapes His notice; nothing can be hidden from Him; and nothing is forgotten by Him. His knowledge is perfect. He never errs, never changes, never overlooks anything" (*The Attributes of God*, 12).

3. R. C. Sproul: "Omniscience is a term that is properly applied to God alone. Only a being that is infinite and eternal is capable of knowing everything. God, being infinite, is able to be aware of all things, to understand all things, and to comprehend all things. He never learns anything or acquires new knowledge. The future as well as the past and present are completely known by Him. He is surprised by nothing" (*Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, 45).

4. John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue: "God's omniscience is his perfect knowing of himself, all actual things outside himself, and all things that do not become reality in one eternal and simple (not having any parts but having distinctions) act (exertion of energy)... One should note that this definition does not say that God knows things that are 'possible,' because in God's eternal mind and plan there are only actual things, not possible things. He does know what would have occurred if circumstances had been different, but since in his mind and plan they never would occur, they are not 'possibilities.' Only what is in God's plan is 'possible,' because only that could ever become reality in time" (*Biblical Doctrine*, 174-175).

5. Wayne Grudem: "God fully knows himself and all things actual and possible in one simple and eternal act." He explains that simple definition: "God fully knows himself. This is an amazing fact since God's own being is infinite or unlimited.... Our definition of God's knowledge speaks of God knowing everything in one 'simple act'.... This means that God is always fully aware of everything. If he should wish to tell us the number of grains of sand on the seashore or the number of stars in the sky, he would not have to count them all quickly like some kind of giant computer, nor would he have to call the number to mind because it was something he had not thought about for a time. Rather, he always knows all things at once. All of these facts and all other things that he knows are always fully present in his consciousness. He does not have to reason to conclusions or ponder carefully before he answers, for he knows the end from the beginning, and he never learns and never forgets anything.... This means that God's knowledge never changes or grows. If he were ever to learn something new, he would not have been omniscient beforehand. Thus, from all eternity God has known all things that would happen and all things that he would do" (*Systematic Theology*, 190-192).

6. Steven Lawson: "The omniscience of God means He is entirely all-knowing. He knows everything actual and possible. He knows all matter and all matters. He sees into all thoughts, all desires, all feelings, and all choices. He perceives things visible and invisible as they really are. He understands all peoples and places. He has insight into all mysteries and secrets. He comprehends all principalities and powers, all thrones and dominions. He discerns all causes and all effects. Nothing escapes His knowledge." Lawson explores divine omniscience under these headings: 1) God is all-knowing; 2) self-knowing; 3) all-foreknowing; 4) all-seeing; 5) all-perceiving; 6) all-scrutinizing; and 7) all-remembering" (*Show Me Your Glory*, 119-131).

DEFINITION OF GOD'S WISDOM

A distinction should be made between God's knowledge (omniscience) and wisdom (omniscience).

1. Steven Lawson: "The knowledge of God and His wisdom are not interchangeable terms. Divine knowledge deals with God's possession of all facts about everyone and everything. The wisdom of God deals with the best use of that knowledge for the highest goal. Omniscience is cognitive. Divine wisdom is practical. Wisdom is necessary for God to accomplish all things for His glory and our good" (*Show Me Your Glory*, 145-146). Creation and the natural world clearly highlight God's infinite wisdom, as Lawson describes: "With deft design, God tilted the earth at precisely the exact angle and set it in motion at the right speed and the right distance in its orbit around the sun. If the globe were any closer to the sun, human life would burn to a crisp. If this planet were any farther away, all life would be frozen—incapable of survival. God has even counterbalanced the heights of the mountains with the depths of the ocean. The beauty of the earth's terrain testifies to the carefully designed, divine wisdom that shaped it.

The cycle of weather patterns and the structure of the animal kingdom also reflect the stunning brilliance of God. Only God in His wondrous wisdom could have crafted the universe to function as efficiently as it does" (*Show Me Your Glory*, 150).

2. Louis Berkhof: "God's wisdom is His intelligence as manifested in the adaptation of means to ends. It points to the fact that He always strives for the best possible ends, and chooses the best means for the realization of His purposes." It is "that perfection of God whereby he applies His knowledge to the attainment of His ends in a way which glorifies Him most" (*Systematic Theology*, 57).

3. J. I. Packer: God's wisdom is "the ability to see and choose the best and highest goal, along with the surest means of attaining it" (*Knowing God*, 90). God's wisdom is especially revealed in His works of creation and redemption.

4. John Snyder: "We can speak of God's wisdom as the union of omniscience, goodness, and power. God brings His perfect knowledge to bear upon a situation with irresistible power, guided by His goodness" (*Behold Your God: Rethinking God Biblically*, 83).

5. John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue: "God's wisdom is his perfect knowledge of how to act skillfully so that he will accomplish all his good pleasure—to glorify himself. This definition is based on the Hebrew word for 'wisdom,' *hokmah* ("skill"). The scriptural evidence for this attribute is visible in that God created by his wisdom, redeems by his wisdom, and is the very source of wisdom itself. "He is omniscient meaning that he is all-wise" (*Biblical Doctrine*, 180).

6. Wayne Grudem: "God's wisdom means that God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals." Grudem notes that God's wisdom is specifically seen in creation, the plan of redemption, and in the church.

Psalm 104:24 *O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.*

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are saved, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

Ephesians 3:8-11 *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

BIBLICAL REVELATION OF GOD'S OMNISCIENCE AND WISDOM

1 Samuel 2:3 *Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.*

Job 37:16 *Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?*

Psalms 33:13-15 ¹³ *The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.* ¹⁴ *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.* ¹⁵ *He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.*

Paul Washer comments on God's omniscience: "The Lord is the God who sees and knows all things. Knowledge is not something that God must attain, search for, or gather; but it is something that He always possesses perfectly, immediately, effortlessly, simultaneously, and exhaustively" (*Knowing the Living God*, 74). John Snyder observes: "God is infinite, having no limitations. And God alone, with His infinite knowledge, fully knows Himself" (*Behold Your God: The Weight of Majesty*, 116). MacArthur and Mayhue describe the qualities of God's knowledge: "God's knowledge precedes all things outside God, never being derived from reality outside himself (Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:4-5; 2 Tim. 1:9. God's knowledge is also perfect, never increasing (Isa. 40:13-14; Rom. 11:34). It is definite—clearly defined, precise, certain, sure, and comprehensive (Ps. 139:1-3; Heb. 4:13). And God's knowledge is eternally active, never passive, because God's essence is eternally active" (*Biblical Doctrine*, 175).

1. God has infinite knowledge.

Psalms 147:5 *Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.*

God's knowledge is unlimited and beyond all measure. He knows everything about all things, people, and events. God has infinite power and supreme authority, but He is also infinitely wise in the use of His power. Wayne Grudem defines omniscience in this way: "God fully knows himself and all things actual and possible in one simple and eternal act" (*Systematic Theology*, 190). A. W. Tozer adds: "(God) knows instantly, and with a perfection of fullness that includes every possible item of knowledge concerning everything that exists or could have existed anywhere in the universe at any time in the past or that may exist in the centuries or ages yet unborn" (*Knowledge of the Holy*, 62). Since God's knowledge is perfect and complete it cannot increase or decrease.

2. God has intimate knowledge.

1 Samuel 16:7 *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*

Psalms 139:1-6 ¹ *O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. ² Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. ³ Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. ⁴ For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. ⁵ Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.* God's knowledge is personal and detailed.

Jeremiah 17:9-10 ⁹ *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? ¹⁰ I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

3. God has immediate knowledge.

Romans 11:33-36 ³³ *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! ³⁴ For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? ³⁵ Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? ³⁶ For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

Isaiah 40:13-14 ¹³ *Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counselor hath taught him? ¹⁴ With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?*

1 Corinthians 2:11 *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*

God knows all things directly without any effort or outside instruction. His knowledge never changes or grows. All of God's knowledge is always fully present in his consciousness. From eternity past God has known all things that are both actual and possible. He doesn't acquire knowledge. God alone has complete foreknowledge, whereas human beings acquire knowledge by observation, reading, experience, and instruction. The only things humans know about the future are the things that God reveals through prophecies and promises of Scripture. Humans learn from others, but God does not depend on anyone or anything for information. He needs no counselor or teacher.

4. God has in-depth knowledge.

Isaiah 46:9-10 ⁹ *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,* ¹⁰ *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*

Acts 15:18 *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*

God knows all things past, present, and future. He knows all things possible and actual. He knows not only all that happens, but He knows all that could have happened. Wayne Grudem comments: "This fact is indeed amazing. God has made an incredibly complex and varied universe. But there are thousands upon thousands of other variations or kinds of things that God could have created but did not. God's infinite knowledge includes detailed knowledge of what each of those other possible creations would have been like and what would have happened in each of them!" (*Systematic Theology*, 191). Christ thus demonstrated divine omniscience:

Matthew 11:21 *Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.*

God knows everything from the names of the stars (Ps. 147:4) to the number of hairs on a person's head (Mt. 10:30).

5. God has both secret knowledge and shared knowledge.

God alone knows some things, yet other things He chooses to reveal. God graciously shares the information mankind needs to know. He provides wisdom and guidance through His written Word and prayer (Ps. 119:98-100; Jas. 1:5). Henry Thiessen describes the nature and value of God's revealed knowledge found in Scripture: "Man is not only a sinner and under condemnation of eternal death, but he is also inclined away from God, incapable of returning to God in his own strength. He is, in other words, in a most desperate condition, of which he is only partially aware, and he does not know whether he can be saved from it, or if he can, how he can be saved. The unwritten general and special revelations of God furnish no real answers to this question. Very clearly, therefore, man needs infallible instruction concerning his most important problem in life, his eternal welfare" (H. C. Thiessen, rev. by Vernon Doerksen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, 43).

Deuteronomy 29:29 *The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

Daniel 2:20-22 ²⁰ *Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: ²¹ And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: ²² He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*

RESULTS OF GOD'S OMNISCIENCE AND WISDOM

Having considered what God knows and how He knows it, we will now consider the implications and results of His perfect knowledge and wisdom.

1. God cannot be surprised.

Since God knows all things, nothing can surprise Him. Has it ever dawned on you that nothing ever dawns on God? He never faces an emergency or crisis. He is never overwhelmed.

2. God cannot be confused or mistaken.

Since God knows all things, nothing ever confounds or frustrates Him. There is no problem or mystery too difficult for Him to solve. He never needs any correction or clarification.

3. God cannot be deceived.

Since God knows all things, He fully understands the actual nature of hypocrites and deceivers. No one can fool God. How foolish to play games with God. President Abraham Lincoln famously said, "You can fool all of the people some of the time and you can fool some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time." We may well add that you can't fool God at any time.

4. God cannot forget.

He does not forget about past events. He does not need reminders. When Scripture speaks of God forgetting the sins of His people, this is to be understood as God not holding their sins against them or remembering their guilt.

Jeremiah 31:34 *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

5. God's knowledge and wisdom create flawless plans.

Acts 15:18 *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*

God has a plan and purpose for all things. He plans His work and works His plan. God's wisdom is revealed especially in creation and redemption (Ps. 104:24; 1 Cor. 1:24). His knowledge and wisdom display His glory, grace, and goodness (Eph. 3:10; Rom. 8:28).

6. God's knowledge and wisdom guarantee accurate predictions.

All the predictions (prophecies) in the Bible either have been or will be fulfilled. The Bible is the only religious book in the world that contains predictive prophecy. The reason is obvious: only the one true God knows the future. Someone described prophecy as "pre-written history." In Scripture God revealed things that would take place many years later, and yet He spoke of them in the past tense, as if they had already occurred.

Isaiah 53:5 *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

7. God's knowledge and wisdom produce righteous judgments.

1 Samuel 2:3 *... the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.*

Job 34:21-22 ²¹ *For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.* ²² *There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.*

Psalms 7:9 *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins (minds).*

Psalms 33:13-15 ¹³ *The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.* ¹⁴ *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.* ¹⁵ *He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.*

Proverbs 15:3 *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

Isaiah 66:18 *For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.*

Hebrews 4:13 *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

For a human judge to make wise decisions and render correct verdicts he must have accurate information. As supreme judge, God knows all the facts. He sees our actions, our thoughts, our motives and intentions. Nothing is hidden from His sight. Everything is uncovered and exposed to His eyes and all people must give an account to Him (Rom. 14:12).

8. God's knowledge and wisdom ensure perfect provisions.

2 Chronicles 16:9 *For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.*

Matthew 6:7-8 *But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*

Matthew 6:31-32 *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. God knows our needs even before we ask Him.*

God's impeccable wisdom is most clearly revealed in His plan of redemption, as Steven Lawson states: "The fathomless depth of God's wisdom is best seen in the cross. The infinite genius of God designed the plan of salvation that would require the death of His own Son. The world's best and brightest minds could have never envisioned the spectacular brilliance of this mission. God the Father ordained that His Son would be born of a virgin, to become a man, yet without sin. By His perfect obedience, Jesus fulfilled all the law to secure righteousness for the unrighteous. *Who* but ingenious God could have designed this?" (*Show Me Your Glory*, 155).

GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE

The concept of God's foreknowledge "covers his intimate and intentional knowledge of all things before they become actual in time and space." One proof of this general foreknowledge is predictive prophecy. The concept of foreknowledge as it relates to salvation is a specific kind of knowledge. This kind of "foreknowledge" is used of "God's perfectly purposed relational knowledge of everyone who is in redemptive plan before they exist in time and space. Understood in this way, especially from the New Testament, God's foreknowledge is soteriological. God foreknew elect Israelites as his covenant people (Rom. 11:2); Jesus Christ as crucified and resurrected (Acts 2:23-24; 1 Pet. 1:18-20); and all Christians as predestined, chosen, called, believing, sanctified, justified, and glorified (Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:2). God's foreknowledge is not passive, dependent on foresight of what humans would do. Rather, it is eternally purposed by God." In the context of Romans 8:29-30, those who were foreknown by God were also predestined, called, justified, and glorified. "God's foreknowing is divinely purposed, foreknowing only those who would be effectually called in time to saving faith in Christ. When the New Testament speaks of *God* foreknowing, the object is always people rather than facts, and these people are always objects of his redemption" (MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 177).

Steven Lawson asserts that God's foreknowledge is "the most misunderstood attribute of God" because many people assume that foreknowledge means God's foresight of future events. Lawson illustrates this faulty understanding: "In this view, God is following man's choice—not the other way around. In this scheme, man is in the front seat behind the steering wheel, driving his own destiny—and God is in the back seat merely looking out the window at unfolding events." He writes, "God never looks into the distant horizon of time and discovers what He did not previously know. In actuality, the only thing God foresees is what He has already foreordained before the foundation of the world" (from Lawson's excellent treatment of foreknowledge, *Show Me Your Glory*, 211-221). God's foreknowledge, therefore, is different than mere prescience (knowledge of something before it occurs). Foreknowledge refers to God's intimate, loving, saving relationship with His redeemed people from eternity past.

Romans 8:28-30 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

1 Peter 1:1-2 *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S OMNISCIENCE AND WISDOM

1. God's omniscience and wisdom produce comfort or conviction, depending on our spiritual condition and relationship to God. Pink writes: "The apprehension of His omniscience ought to bow us in adoration before Him. Yet how little do we meditate upon this divine perfection! Is it because the very thought of it fills us with uneasiness?" (*Attributes of God*, 12).

2. God's omniscience and wisdom should influence our prayers. We do not inform God or advise Him. We pray to Him in an attitude of confidence and submission. Pink comments: "Here is an encouragement to prayer. There is no cause for fearing that the petitions of the righteous will not be heard, or that their sighs and tears shall escape the notice of God, since He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. There is no danger of the individual saint being overlooked amidst the multitude of supplicants who daily and hourly present their various petitions, for an *infinite* Mind is as capable of paying the same attention to millions as if only one individual were seeking its attention" (*Attributes of God*, 13).

3. God's omniscience and wisdom should prevent our sinning. Pink states: "Though He be invisible to us, we are not so to Him. Neither the darkness of night, the closest curtains, nor the deepest dungeon can hide any sinner from the eyes of Omniscience. The trees of the garden were not able to conceal our first parents. No human eye beheld Cain murder his brother, but his Maker witnessed his crime. Sarah might laugh derisively in the seclusion of her tent, yet was it heard by Jehovah. Achan stole a wedge of gold and carefully hid it in the earth, but God brought it to light. David was at much pains to cover up his wickedness, but ere long the all-seeing God sent one of His servants to say to him, 'Thou art the man!'" (*Attributes of God*, 12).

4. God's omniscience and wisdom should foster our reverence and worship. Pink ably concludes: "The infinite knowledge of God should fill us with *amazement*. How far exalted above the wisest man is the Lord! None of us knows what a day may bring forth, but all futurity is open to His omniscient gaze. The infinite knowledge of God ought to fill us with holy *awe*. Nothing we do, say, or even think, escapes the cognizance of Him with whom we have to do: 'The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good' (Pr. 15:3). What a curb this would be unto us, did we meditate upon it more frequently! Instead of acting recklessly, we should say with Hagar, 'Thou God seest me' (Gen. 16:13). The apprehension of God's infinite knowledge should fill the Christian with *adoration*. The whole of my life stood open to His view from the beginning. He foresaw my every fall, my every sin, my every backsliding; yet, nevertheless, fixed His heart upon me. Oh, how the realization of this should bow me in wonder and worship before Him!" (*Attributes of God*, 15).

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND MEDITATION

1. What is the difference between God's omniscience and wisdom?
2. How would you describe the content and extent of God's knowledge?
3. In what ways does God's knowledge differ from man's knowledge?
4. What is meant by God's "secret" knowledge and His "shared" knowledge?
5. What are the results of God's omniscience and do they affect your life?
6. Does the reality of God's omniscience bring you comfort or conviction?
7. How can the awareness of God's omniscience restrain you from sinning?
8. How does the reality of God's omniscience foster your worship?
9. What is the specific nature of God's foreknowledge in relation to salvation?

Since God is infinite in knowledge, we should always feel as under His omniscient eye. The consideration of God's omniscience would be preventive of much sin. The eye of man will restrain from sin; and will not God's eyes much more? Viewing ourselves as under the eye of God's omniscience would cause reverence in the worship of God.

THOMAS WATSON (1620-1686)

Wisdom is the flower of knowledge, and knowledge is the root of wisdom.

STEPHEN CHARNOCK (1628-1680)

God's wisdom is seen in the selection of proper ends and of proper means for the accomplishment of those ends.

CHARLES HODGE (1797-1878)