

GOD!
Message 10
Scripture: Hebrews 4:11-16

INTRO: We come to yet another important attribute of God, the God we serve; the God who dwells in every believer. It is His omniscience. We looked at God's omnipresence in the last message and saw that He is everywhere present. We also saw that His presence is at least two-fold. It is extensive, or general and it is intensive or special. In the extensive sense He sits on the heavens and the earth is His footstool, and in the intensive sense, He finds His resting place, His home in those who are poor and of a contrite spirit, and those who tremble at His Word.

This morning we add to that attribute another, His omniscience. Last message we saw that the 'omni' in these words has to do with 'all'. Omnipresence is all present. Omniscience is *omni* plus *science*. Now the word *science* is from the Latin word *scientia*, which is from the Latin word *scio*, meaning to know. Science is simply knowledge. So omniscience is 'all knowing'. God knows everything.

6. Omniscient

So, let us consider God as the 'all knowing One'. Omniscience has many similarities to omnipresence but it adds considerably as we will see. But let us begin by giving some biblical evidence that God is omniscient. We may say first, that if we can prove His omnipresence, we have by that largely proved His omniscience as well.

But let me give some Scriptures so that we see that the Bible teaches this. Isaiah 46:9-10 says, "Remember the former things of old, For I *am* God, and *there is* no other; I *am* God, and *there is* none like Me, **Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done,** Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure...'" I have told you about the atheist I sat beside in a flight from Edmonton to Vancouver. As we discussed whether God truly exists I thought about a message I do I called, 'Ten Proofs That The Bible is The Word of God.' Of those I chose one, prophecy. I asked this atheist if he could tell me who our next

Prime Minister would be and of course he had not a clue, and neither did I. Then I began to explain some of the prophecies of Scripture and only someone who knows the end from the beginning, someone who knew from ancient times things that had not yet happened could have foretold those. If I remember right, I spoke to him of some of the prophecies that happened at the crucifixion and no one could have accurately foretold what happened there unless He knew the end from the beginning. You see, God could foretell all that would happen in the future because He is omniscient.

Let me read another verse on God's omniscience, Psalm 147:5, "Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; **His understanding is infinite.**" God's understanding is knows no boundary. It knows no end. You can come to no point and say, "Here God's understanding ends." His understanding is infinite.

Then again, Hebrews 4:13, "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give account.*" One of the holidays our family enjoyed the most when they were young is when we went to the ocean. Early in the morning they would be at the waters edge, and that edge is ever changing, especially at the ocean's edge of Canada. The tide is forever going in and out. And the ocean simply teems with life. Turn over a rock and there are bugs of every description. Watch the water and there are creatures of every description. When you walk on the rocks, you step on all kinds of life. And of all the zillions of creatures, not one is hidden from God. When the tide goes down, you see the shells and starfish clinging to the newly exposed rocks. When the tide comes back and you cannot see them anymore, they are as evident to God as when the tide is out. So it is with everyone of us.

Then listen to Matthew 10:29-31, "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And **not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.** But the very hairs of your head are all

numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."

I want to tell you this morning that the God we believe in knows absolutely everything. There is nothing He does not know. He knew me before I was here, and He knows everything I will yet do. Now I want to tell you that if God does not know everything, we are in danger; we stand in jeopardy every hour. Let us say that some time after creation God had to call his angels around Him and say, "Something terrible has happened. I created man, and now I have recently discovered that some of the cells I made have gone out of control. When I made them, I did not know that man would sin. I did not know that man's sin would result in cancer. Now some of these cells I so carefully designed have gone astray and they're doing things I didn't know they would do, and I don't know how to fix it. We are in trouble. I want you all to put your minds to work. I need you to help Me out on this one. I didn't know this would happen." Can you imagine what danger we would stand in every hour if God was not omniscient?

Let us say God had to call His angels together and say to them, "I gave my Word to man. I said I could never fail. I foretold them what would happen. Now I have some crummy people that have gone out of my control. It now looks like they may well become gods too, and may well take over. It looks like they may be able to make themselves live forever without me. I need you to get your heads together and help Me out. I am in big trouble."

Let us say God got His angels together and said, "I have a problem. I made the sun and set laws in place to keep it so and so far from earth and now, we've got a global warming problem. I did not know that this would happen and I need your help or we might lose mankind, and possibly all of creation." Or maybe He had to say, "You know, I never realized that man would make motors and they would burn up so much fuel, and now it looks

like the O Zone is burning out. You've got to help me out. I didn't know this could happen."

Or let us say God called an angel and said, "I need you to go to the galaxy called the milky way. I've lost track of a star. I don't know what happened to it. It may have burned out or maybe it is a danger to some other stars. Go check it out and see if maybe you can get it back in order. I didn't know this would happen."

What would it be like if there were one thing God did not know, one thing which we could not count on God for because He simply did not know everything. We would stand in jeopardy every hour. I would not be able to preach with certainty any more. But it is not so. Rather we sing the song, "Great is Thy Faithfulness". The song says God does not change. He has always known all things and He cannot change. So we can always count on Him, He is the all knowing God!

Now let me tell you a little about the stars and God's knowledge. Nearly 2000 years B.C. God said to Abraham, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if you are able to number them...So shall your descendents be (Gen. 15:5)." But in Genesis 22:17 God said to Abraham, "...in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply your descendents as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is on the sea shore..." God compares the stars to the sand of the sea shore. As late as 150 A.D., the famous astronomer Ptolemy dogmatically declared the number of the stars to be exactly 1056! Now it would take very little sand in one's hand to add to 1056 pieces. (Show piece of paper and explain.) Now imagine if I had a thimble full of sand. How many would that be? Now imagine a cup full. How many would that be? Now imagine if this auditorium were full to the top! How many would that be? And one auditorium full is not a drop in the bucket compared to the sand on the sea shore.

Now listen to our verse again, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if you are able to number them..." Then in Genesis 22:17 God compares

the number of stars to the sand of the sea shore. He says, "...I will multiply your descendents as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is on the sea shore..." Now that means there are trillions upon trillions of stars. Now if you think that is not possible, let me encourage you to undertake a study of the stars, just what we know of them, and we may have just barely begun.

Now let me add to all that by reading Psalm 147:4-5: *He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.*

What kind of God is this God that knows everything! Think of it this way. Tozer says that Ralph Waldo Emerson said that if a person wanted to read all the books in the British Library, if he started to read when he was born and read day and night for seventy years, non-stop he would read only a small portion.

Now think of it like this. Our bodies contain about 30 trillion cells. I understand if you took just the DNA out of those 30 trillion cells it would fill less than two teaspoons. If you stretched the DNA from one cell out as thin as it will go you cannot even see it under a very powerful microscope, but it would stretch out about 7 feet. If you hooked all 30 trillion cells together it would stretch from here to the moon and back about 100,000 times. Now, if you put the information of one cells worth into writing, it is estimated that it would be about the equivalent of 4000 books. So, multiply 30 trillion cells worth times 4000 books. There is the knowledge contained in one body. How much space would it take to hold those books? Well, let's start with the Grand Canyon. It is from 1-3 miles wide and about 200 miles long. One bodies worth would overflow this canyon 40 times!

Now let me say this; God knows every cell in your body and each cell is as complicated as the city of Tokyo. He knows when you carry a cancerous cell or anything else. God is omniscient! When a sparrow dies, He knows. When you comb your hair

and one falls out, He knows! This is God! This is our God!

Now I want to address a problem with regard to God's omniscience. Here is the problem of God's omniscience. You may have puzzled over it. The Bible tells us that God knows everything. That means then that before I was born, He knew everything that I would ever do. If God knew everything before I did it, how can we then say that man has a free will? You may as well not care much about what you do, because He knew it all before hand, so how can I change it? If God knows everything, how can I yet have a free will because what I will do He already knows.

Now that is a troubling question. How can man have a free will if God already knows everything he will do? Or does man have a free will? Augustus H. Strong, a truly strong Calvinist, says in his systematic theology, and I quote, "If predestination is conditional on man's free will, then God's whole plan may go astray." So then man must not have a free will and God has predetermined everything I do. What is the use of me troubling myself about anything? Why try? There is no use since everything must be predetermined because God knows everything I will do in life even before I am born. In other words, you cannot be an Arminian. If you are, and things are determined by man's free will, then God's whole plan may go where He never wanted it to go.

Well, the subject of man's free will has taken up a lot of ink and a lot of paper space. Does man have a free will? Contrary to Calvinism, yes, man has a free will. Henry C. Theissen writes in his systematic theology, "Free actions do not take place because they are foreseen, but they are foreseen because they will take place. Just because something morally evil has been predicted this prediction does not remove human responsibility from the perpetrator (Matt. 18:7; John 13:27; Acts 2:23; cf. the hardening of Pharoah's heart, Exod. 4:21" (pg. 82).

You see, when God made the angels free moral agents, He knew they would fall. He also knew how He would handle that. When God planned to make man, He knew man would fall. I believe God made man, so that in man He would be able to destroy the devil and still keep all His attributes such as His justice intact. So He made man with a free will to choose to live as he wished. But God put one thing into man's life which He knew that rational man would come back to again and again, and it would have such a power in his rational being that it would cause him in his free will to choose God. It is the truth contained in the Word of God. He gave man His Word. He gave man enough truth in His Word so that if man wished, He could be saved forever and live life on earth as He ought. And God knew that truth is so powerful, that even the devil and all his hordes would not ultimately prevail over His Word.

And God knew that once man had the truth, there would always be those who would live by it once they had tasted it. He knew every thought man would think. He knew we would question our own free will. He knew what influence His Word would play and that ultimately, a remnant of mankind would triumph through the truth of His Word empowered by the Spirit of God.

So God is omniscient. He knows everything, and that makes saved man the safest being in existence besides God! As long as we live by faith, we are the most secure beings in existence! God knows everything. But that also awakens a great truth in us. God knows all my weaknesses, all my hidden parts, all my secret thoughts, all I do when nobody is looking and God has a record of all of that. There is nothing hidden to Him.

Now let me ask you a question: Of what practical value is it to know that God knows everything? Some time ago I read an article by Dr. Vernon Gillenwater called "The Room". Some of you will remember my reading it but I think it would be appropriate to read again since our subject is God's omniscience. Here is what he writes:

"In that place between wakefulness and dreams, I found myself in the room. There were no distinguishing features except for the one wall covered with small index card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly endless in either direction, had very different headings. As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read 'Girls I have Liked.' I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to realize that I recognized the names written on each one.

"And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was. This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalog system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match.

"A sense of wonder and curiosity, coupled with horror stirred within me as I began randomly opening the files and exploring their contents. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching. A file named, "Friends" was next to one marked "Friends I have Betrayed."

"The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird. 'Books I Have Read.' 'Lies I have told,' 'Comfort I have Given,' 'Jokes I Have Laughed At.' Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: 'Things I've Yelled at My Brothers.' Others I couldn't laugh at: 'Things I have muttered Under My Breath at My Parents.' I never ceased to be surprised by the contents. Often there were many more cards than I expected. Sometimes there were fewer than I hoped.

"I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my twenty years to write each of these thousands, possibly millions of cards? But

each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each signed with my signature.

"When I pulled out the file marked, "Songs I have Listened To," I realized the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed tightly, and yet after two or three yards, I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it, shamed, not so much by the quality of music, but more by the vast amount of time I knew that file represented.

"When I came to a file marked 'Lustful Thoughts' I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size, and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed contents. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded.

"Suddenly I felt an almost animal rage. One thought dominated my mind: 'No one must ever see these cards! I have to destroy them!' In an insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took the file at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it.

"Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long, self-pitying sigh. And then I saw it. The title bore "People I Have Shared the Gospel With." The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand.

"And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that they hurt started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my

tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key.

"But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him. No, please not Him. Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus. I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one?

"Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He just cried with me.

Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card.

"'No!' I shouted, rushing to Him. All I could find to say was "No, no, as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But here it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive. The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood.

"He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and continued to sign the cards. I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side. He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, 'It is finished.' I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written.

CONCL: Let us conclude this message. We have looked at the omniscience of God. God knows everything. But there is a very practical side to His omniscience. He knows every card

in my card file. I have taught this truth over and over again in my lifetime of Bible teaching. There is a part of our mind called the 'nous' in the Greek NT. Every scent I have ever smelled, every thing I have ever felt, every sound I have ever heard, every thought I have ever thought, everything I have ever tasted; everything, everything is stored in the nous.

And like the man in 'the Room' we are absolutely powerless to remove one single file and someday I will stand accountable before God for it all! But there is a very wonderful, a very wonderful message in the Bible. John the Baptist gave it over and over again. Then Jesus came and preached it so often that both their messages are summarized in a one word command: Repent!

Now you see, there is a second part to the mind called the 'phreen'. The phreen is where all information is processed before it goes into the mind. And from the Bible I can process this information: If I 'repent', which means 'a change of mind', then the Lord Jesus removes those sins I confess. We may not at the moment be able to comprehend this, but that is the best news anyone could ever give or receive. Just come a little closer to the presence of God and it becomes very clear.

During this message, did the Lord bring something to mind this morning that needs to be dealt with? Right now, by repenting, the shed blood of Jesus Christ can be applied to every part of darkness in your mind. Those horrifying cards can be disposed of.