

If God Knows Everything  
August 7, 2016

This morning I want you to use your imagination. Picture in your mind's eye a shepherd boy. He is a teenager, about full grown, but not yet a man. He is up late, watching over his family's sheep. His brothers are all asleep. Since he is the youngest they decided he would take the first late night watch, while everyone else gets some sleep.

So here he is looking up into the night sky and marveling at the stars. He thinks to Himself that it is like a giant painting that God has created in the night sky. In a few hours the sun will come up and run its path across the sky. He marvels at the sky and all the things God has made. And he begins to compose a poem in his mind of what he sees and thinks. Later, it would be written down. It went like this...

**Psalm 19:1-6 (NIV)** The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat.

But there is more to his poem, for he turns it into a prayer. In his prayer he affirms the wisdom of God's commands. He asks for forgiveness. He asks for help in resisting temptation. He expresses his commitment to God. Both the poem and the prayer began with evidence of God through nature.

Evidence of God often moves mankind to prayer. We might define prayer as the following. **Prayer is our response to the revelation (revealing) of God.**

**There are two categories of revelation about God.**

The first is general revelation. This includes a knowledge of God through nature (Romans 1:20) and conscience (Romans 2:14-15).

The other type of revelation is special revelation. This is God revealing Himself through the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16) which came to us through prophets, in Jesus (Hebrews 1:1-3), and through miracles (John 14:11).

Our shepherd had experience of both kinds of revelation. He experienced general revelation out under the night sky. He experienced God's special revelation because he was an Israelite and had been taught how God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and gave them the Law of Moses.

Our shepherd boy, David, marveled at the wonder that God is. And in that wonder, he prayed to God.

We do too. One thing we learn about God through special revelation is the knowledge of God. God has perfect knowledge of everything in the universe. Thinking about the knowledge of God raises a question in the minds of some. It goes like this:

**If God Knows Everything, why should I pray?**

Let me give you some reasons to pray, even in the light of God's perfect knowledge.

**The first reason to pray is that God tells us to pray.**

All through the Bible we see commands to pray. For example, Paul, the missionary, in a letter to the Christians in the city of Philippi writes,

**Philippians 4:6 (NIV)** "... present your requests to God."

God commands us to pray. That is the first reason to pray. Pray because God wants you to pray. God welcomes prayer.

**The second reason to pray is to build a relationship with God.**

God created the world, but He isn't just sitting back watching it spin. God wants a personal relationship with each of us. God wants a personal relationship with you. God created you different from the animals so that you could have fellowship with Him. In one of his letters, the apostle John writes...

**1 John 1:3 (NIV)** We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

God calls us, through Jesus, into fellowship with Himself. How can we not pray to the one with whom we have fellowship, our creator, sustainer, redeemer, and God? Yes, we are commanded to pray. But having experienced God's love for us in Jesus we also want to pray. We want to fellowship with the God who loves us. So we pray.

**The third reason to pray is to get help for our needs.**

Jesus demonstrated this in His model prayer. He teaches us to pray for the food we need today.

The help we need may be of many kinds. One of our biggest needs is the need for help in resisting temptation. The world we live in is broken because of sin. There is much sin around us. We are tempted to engage in sin every day. We are tempted to do the wrong thing in some situations. We are tempted to ignore the right things to do in other situations. We face temptation every day, many times a day. We all struggle with temptation. We do not all struggle with the same temptations, but we all struggle with temptation.

We need help in our battle against temptation. And all the help we need is in Jesus, as it declares in Hebrews 4.

**Hebrews 4:14-16 (NIV)** Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For

we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Jesus wants us to resist temptation and sin. He is ready to help us do so. But He does not force help on us. He responds to our prayers for help, if we will pray.

There are many other needs you may have. You may have a financial need, a relationship need, or a need for wisdom in making an important decision. These and other needs you can bring to God in prayer.

**The fourth reason to pray is that some things God wants to do, He does only in response to our prayers.**

Let's look at an example of this. In the story of Job we see a man who started out rich and ended up poor. On one single day, all of his children were killed, all of his herds were stolen, and most of his servants were killed. Then shortly after that, he lost his health. His three best friends heard what happened and came to sit with him in his grief.

They spend several days in silence. Finally, Job breaks the silence of his grief and voices his wish that he had never been born. Then his three friends begin to argue that he must have committed some horrible sin to have suffered so much pain and loss. They reasoned that God was punishing Job for some hidden sin. Most of the rest of the book is a long dialogue between Job and his friends. Job keeps maintaining his innocence and questioning why this has happened to him. His friends keep maintaining that Job sinned and declare that God always punishes great sin with great pain.

Finally, at the end of the book, God shows up. And God speaks to, and about, the three friends.

**Job 42:7-9 (NIV)** After the LORD (Yahweh) had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz..., "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." So Eliphaz..., Bildad..., and Zophar... did what the LORD (Yahweh) told them; and the LORD (Yahweh) accepted Job's prayer.

Here we see an example of God connecting something He will do to the prayer of one of His followers. If Job had not prayed for his friends, God would not have forgiven them. But Job did pray, and God forgave them. Job prayed as God wanted him to pray, and God acted in response to Job's prayer.

In the same way, we are told to pray for each other. It may be that many of the blessings God has for us to experience, we have not received because of our lack of prayer for each other.

Now God responded to more than just prayer in our last example. God was also expecting Job's three friends to humble themselves before God, to repent of their false beliefs, and to bring a sacrifice. Then, and only then, would Job pray for their forgiveness. And then, and only then would God grant forgiveness.

**As you encounter the true God, or truth about God, shape your prayers by that truth.**

For example. If, while reading the Bible, you read about a sin and realize that you are guilty of that sin, then confess that sin to God. Do what Job and his friends did. And then God will bless you. This is a promise to believe and count on. John the apostle testifies to this in one of his letters.

**1 John 1:9 (NIV)** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Confessing your sin to God is you agreeing with God about your sin. Once you have that out in the open and forgiven by the blood of Jesus, you have removed a roadblock in your relationship with God. Your relationship can grow stronger.

**Correct prayer always reflects back to God, with faith, the truth revealed.**

**Correct prayer is always backed by repentance.**

**Correct prayer is always humble before God.**

If God knows everything why should we pray? We can't help ourselves. We don't pray to tell God what He knows. We pray to agree with God. We pray to agree with God that we have come around to seeing something of us and our world as God sees it.

We pray our belief in Him. We pray our submission to Him. We pray our love for Him. We pray our commitment to Him. We pray our repentance. We pray our needs. We pray to live smack dab in the middle of His will.

As we encounter the presence, the power, and the wisdom of God in the world, how can we not pray? How can we ignore Him? How can we depend only on ourselves and not His power? How can we live our will instead of His? How can we attempt to live our piddly bit of understanding instead of seeking to live in His wisdom?

In light of all that God is doing in our world, how can we NOT pray? As you encounter God this week, pray.

Earlier I said that part of God's special revelation comes to us in Jesus. I referenced a verse in Hebrews. It says...

**Hebrews 1:1-3 (NIV)** In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,

whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

God sent Jesus to die in your place so that you could be forgiven, in Jesus, of all your sins. Jesus did die for us. And then God raised Him from the dead as proof that His death paid for our sins. God made Jesus Lord of all the earth and brought Him to heaven. One day Jesus will return to earth to gather all of His followers, giving us our resurrection bodies like His so that we can live forever with Him.

Today, won't you admit to God your sin against Him?

Won't you believe in and receive Jesus as your rescuer?

Won't you turn from your sinful behavior and give yourself to Jesus as Lord to live in obedience to Him?