

## **News for All Know-It-All Theologians**

by Mack Tomlinson

What's the news? That we don't know much about God. Not really, not compared to what there is, not compared to what there is to know, not compared to all that He is and does. The Bible only reveals in part who and what God is; we have been shown only the "edges" of His person and ways. Yes, it is true that the Bible reveals an amazing amount of truth about who God is and what He has done in creation, progressive revelation, in providence and history, and in the person and work of His Son, Christ Jesus. An amazing amount has been revealed.

But all those who love truth and theology must remind themselves that the church, throughout church history, has been grappling with all of Scripture to see the depths and riches of the Bible, and we haven't plumbed its depths yet, even with all our knowledge and scholarship. Nor will those depths ever be plumbed before the Second Coming of the Son of Man. We still, and always will, see through a glass darkly, and we only know in part and will always only know in part until we are with Him. So any theologian who comes across as if they have it all figured out, and always seem to have good sufficient answers for every question, the fact is, they don't.

### **Psalm 139:6**

There are no "know-it-alls" in the kingdom simply because there is perhaps more about God that has not been revealed than has been revealed. And even the Bible says that some revealed knowledge in Scripture is too much for us to comprehend. David says this in Psalm 139:1-6, where he says in vs. 6 that the truths found in verses 1-5 are so wonderful, they are "too" wonderful and high for him and he cannot attain to it. The word "attain" in vs. 6 is the consistent translation in most all Bible translations. It is simply a fact that the knowledge of God is exceedingly beyond our humanness to attain or comprehend it fully.

### **Romans 11:33**

Paul says something similar here--"Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways are past finding out." Unsearchable and past finding out; so there is a realm of the knowledge of God that the Bible gives us. That is the realm of Deut. 29:29--the "things revealed to us", but the "secret things" that belong to the Lord are not ours. There is much truth about God, creation, providence, eternity, and much more that belong to the "secret" things, to the "past finding out and unsearchable" realms.

It is always a humbling fact to remember that we know less about God than there is to know; there is much more that we don't know than what we do know; such knowledge is not to keep us from seeking, growing and increasing in continuing to plumb the depths of God's Word. It simply means we should always humble ourselves and remember that we don't know much, even with all our knowing.

### **Job 36:26**

Job pretty well sums it up for us in 36:26-- "Behold, God is great, and we know Him not."

I like the way this verse reads in other translations--

- NIV- How great is God--beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out.
- ESV- Behold, God is great, and we know him not; the number of his years is unsearchable.
- NASB- "Behold, God is exalted, and we do not know Him; The number of His years is unsearchable.
- KJV- Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.
- Holman Christian Standard Bible- Yes, God is exalted beyond our knowledge; the number of His years cannot be counted.

### **This has some personal implications for us.**

**1. Repentance** - We should repent of any "know-it-all" attitudes we have developed and of acting this way toward others in any capacity. We know nothing as we ought to know.

**2. Humility** - We should always take an attitude of true humility, living in the reality that we "know not" God yet in the way He truly is and in the way we will know him in our glorification. If we don't know it all, why do we act like we do at times?

**3. Dependence** - We should cultivate conscious and continual dependence upon the Holy Spirit for His ministry of increasing us in the knowledge of God and Christ. There are vast oceans to be experienced, and we are yet probably ankle-deep.

**4. Progressive Growth** - We can progressively know God and His truth more and more. Let us press on to know the Lord continually.

**5. Thankfulness** - We should be abundantly thankful that God has chosen us, included us, allowed us, and privileged us to know Him. He opened our eyes, not us. We would still be in dark Egyptian night, lost in our sins and in spiritual blindness, if God had not opened our eyes to behold to beauty and glory of God in Christ. Thankfulness that we do not yet know as we are known is a good thing.

Job 36:26, Psalm 139:6, Romans 11:33 all tell us something that really needs to shape our lives more, especially all the "know-it-all" theologians out there. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of the unknowable and knowable God!