



Class 3: The Knowledge of God
How Can We Know God and Ourselves?

Conclusion

If God is God, and if we are his humble, obedient servants, then he is not a ball to be juggled. He is not an agenda item that we try to push a bit further up the list, hoping that it will keep him happy.

He is the owner of the company, and the chairman and CEO of the meeting. He is the boss, not us. He sets the agenda, not us. Our role is not to type and distribute the agenda, but to have it handed to us when we file into the room.

This is the essence of becoming a Christian: repenting of the foolish, sinful fantasy world we've been living in, where we think we run the company and that life revolves around us. Becoming a Christian means dying to this fantasy, and rising to a new life in which we treat God as God. (Tony Payne, "God's Agenda," [matthiasmedia.com/briefing/2011/06/god's-agenda])

Course Outline:*

- Mar 9 The Reason for Existence: Why Did God Create the World?
- Mar 16 The Futility of Sin: What's Wrong with the World?
- Mar 23 The Knowledge of God: How Can We Know God and Ourselves?
- Mar 30 The Mission of God: What is God Doing in the World?
- Apr 6 The Death of Christ: How Does the Cross Change My Life?
- Apr 13 The Transformation of Christians: What Are We Fighting For?
- **Apr 20 No Class (Resurrection Day)**
- Apr 27 The Methods of God's Mission: What Should Christians Do?
- May 4 The Mission of the Church: What Should the Church Do?
- May 11 Our Mission at Work: What about Monday through Friday?
- May 18 Our Mission with the Church: What about the Lord's Day?

Questions?

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* This course is based on Tony Payne, *The Course of Your Life* (Matthias Media, 2011).

Introduction

Scripture will prove sufficient if we are able to receive from it all that God has put into it. That, though, is not as simple as it sounds. The reason lies in what Paul says elsewhere. We are to be 'transformed by the renewal' of our minds - which is surely what happens when we take hold of the truth God has given us in his Word - but also, he says, we are not to be 'conformed to this world' (Rom 12:2). The shaping of our life is to come from Scripture and *not* from culture... This is a two-sided practice: 'Yes' to biblical truth and 'No' to cultural norms if they damage our walk with God and rob us of what he has for us in his Word. Being transformed also means being unconformed (David Wells, *God in the Whirlwind* [2013], Kindle Loc. 254).

Class Aims:

1. Understand how we are able to truly know God and ourselves.
2. Appreciate the radical claim of the sufficiency of the Bible.

I. The True Knowledge of God: How Can We Know Him (and Us)?

A. Our God can _____.

B. Our God has spoken _____.

D. Our God does not promise to speak to us, *except* _____.

C. Our God speaks by the Son through the Spirit _____.

II. The Shock of Scripture's Sufficiency: Do You "Believe the Bible"?

A. Scripture is God's _____.

There is no substitute for submission to Scripture. Your spiritual health depends on placing the utmost value on the Word of God and obeying it with an eager heart. If you think you can find answers to your spiritual problems through human counsel or worldly wisdom, you are forfeiting the most valuable and only reliable source of answers to the human dilemma. Do not relinquish the sweet, satisfying riches of God's Word for the bitter gall of this world's folly (John MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency in Christ*, p. 90)

The Bible always assumes that God's written word continues to live and speak to God's people *today*. The words of the Bible are not dead letters trapped in ancient parchments; they are the living and enduring words of God.... By his Spirit, God unstops our deaf ears, and opens our blind eyes, and as the words of the Bible come to our minds, we experience an extraordinary thing - we realize with a shattering certainty that we are not simply reading words on a page, or listening to some nonentity speak; God himself is speaking to us, and calling upon us to repent and believe.... As we read the Bible, or hear it read or taught, we hear God calling us to go a certain way - his way. Through the work of the Spirit applying the word to our hearts, he awakens a response in us and leads us to follow him. This may not seem very mystical or magical, and it therefore might lack some fascination for unspiritual minds. Yet it is an extraordinary thing - that the living God should speak to us in this way. It is a privilege we can barely describe. And it is a challenge we cannot ignore, for if it is *God* who is speaking to us, the only right response is to turn around and trustingly follow him (Tony Payne and Philip Jensen, *Guidance and the Voice of God*, Matthias Media, 1997, pp. 88-89).

B. Scripture is God's _____.