



Wednesday nights  
Country Bible Church  
February 19 to June 24, 2020  
Introductory Lesson

Lesson Schedule:

February 19	Introductory Lesson
Feb 26	Welcome to the Weight of Majesty (video)
March 4	Knowing the God Who is Incomprehensible (video)
Mar 11	Discussion and Review – some teaching
Mar 18	Knowing the God Who Cannot Change (video)
Mar 25	Knowing the God Who is Infinite & Eternal (video)
April 1	Knowing the God Who is Everywhere (video)
Apr 8	Knowing the God Who is Almighty (video)
Apr 15	Discussion and Review – some teaching
Apr 22	Knowing the God Who is Knows All (video)
Apr 29	Knowing the God Who is Rules All (video)
May 6	Knowing the God Who is Holy (video)
May 13	Knowing the God Who of Wrath (video)
May 20	Discussion and Review – some teaching
May 27	Knowing the God Who is Good (video)
June 3	Knowing the God Who is Love (video)
Jun 10	Knowing the God Who is Patient and Zealous (video)
Jun 17	VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – no class
Jun 24	Make up day

Introduction to the class

“The world becomes a strange, mad, painful place, and life in it a disappointing and unpleasant business, for those who do not know about God.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, p. 19

We are going to take a journey together to learn of God.

In terms of theology, this is called “Theology Proper”.

This is a pretty large subject... dealing with the existence of God, the triune nature of God, the attributes of God.

For our purposes... to know God better... we will be looking at certain attributes or characteristics of God. (first page gives you the subjects)

Jeremiah 9:23–24

[23] Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, [24] but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.” (ESV)

### The Need for this class

How well do you know God?

Do you relate to Him?

Do you find Him to be near?

Do you find Him to be helpful?

Do you find yourself longing to be with Him?

Do you think of how glorious Heaven will be because God will be there?

What does it mean for God to be Holy?

What does it mean for a Christian to ‘fear God’?

It isn’t common for an average Christian to know God well.

In fact, it is very common for Christians to have a very misshapen understanding of God. (we all live here to some degree)

J.I. Packer, in his book, *Knowing God*, said this, “The conviction behind the book is that ignorance of God – ignorance both of His ways and of the practice of communion with Him – lies at the root of much of the church’s weakness today.”<sup>2</sup>

He goes on to share:

Our world carries with it a predominant view that, “spawns great thoughts of man and leaves room for only small thoughts of God.”

What do you think?

How is this done by the average man? (set Him at a distance; deny Him; don’t consider thoughts of death, eternity, judgement, the greatness of the soul...)

How does this bleed over to the church and Christians (maybe even some of us)? (He is remote... detached from daily living... desire to please or appease our fellow man than to submit to and cling to truths about and from God)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12

“Churchmen who look at God, so to speak, through the wrong end of the telescope, so reducing him to pigmy proportions, cannot hope to end up as more than pigmy Christians.”<sup>3</sup>

I hope you want something more than this!

If the church doesn't provide this, than those who long for this will go looking somewhere else.

This class is meant to be a help.

- A corrective
- A source of grace – fountainhead of life

### The assumptions about students taking this class

My first assumption is that you have a desire to know God.

This comes at conversion.

John 17:3 - And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

This is the essence of faith.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Faith believes that God exists

- Not a God of your making, but the God of the Bible

Faith believes that God rewards those who seek Him

- Colossians 3 this past Sunday – seek and set your minds on things above

“Would you lose your sorrow? Would you drown your cares? Then go, plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea; be lost in His immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest, refreshed and invigorated. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief, so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead.” (Spurgeon as quoted in Packer, p. 18)

My story... early on in my Christian experience (maybe define)

- Desire to know God
- One of my very earliest (and rare) journal entries – in high school... I want to know God
- In my dorm room in college – a poster with all the names of Jesus
- Philippians 3:7-10 expressed my longings
- College – (Bible College) – favorite class = doctrines
- Even pushed me to go on to seminary... to study more of the God of the Bible
- Now, as a pastor... this is my heart

Do you long to know God better?

Do you feel that your knowledge of Him is too small?

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Do you relate to these Psalms:

Psalm 27:4

[4] One thing have I asked of the LORD,  
that will I seek after:  
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD  
all the days of my life,  
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD  
and to inquire in his temple. (ESV)

Psalm 63:1

[1] O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. (ESV)

Psalm 73:25

[25] Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. (ESV)

Psalm 84:1–2

[1] How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O LORD of hosts!  
[2] My soul longs, yes, faints  
for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and flesh sing for joy  
to the living God. (ESV)

Psalm 130:6

[6] my soul waits for the Lord  
more than watchmen for the morning,  
more than watchmen for the morning. (ESV)

Psalm 143:6

[6] I stretch out my hands to you;  
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. (ESV)

*pant and thirst and seek and desire and long and faint*

## R.C. Sproul – chapter 1 – *The Holiness of God*

I was compelled to leave the room. A deep, undeniable summons disturbed my sleep; something holy called me. The only sound was the rhythmic ticking of the clock on my desk. It seemed vague and unreal, as if it were in a chamber, submerged under fathoms of water. I had reached the beginning edge of slumber, where the line between consciousness and unconsciousness is blurred. I was suspended in that moment when one hangs precariously on the edge, a moment when sounds from the outside world still intrude on the quietness of one's brain, that moment just before surrender to the night occurs. Asleep, but not yet asleep. Awake, but not alert. Still vulnerable to the inner summons that said, "Get up. Get out of this room."

The summons became stronger, more urgent, impossible to ignore. A burst of wakefulness made me jerk upright and swing my legs over the side of the bed and onto the floor. Sleep vanished in an instant, and my body sprang into resolute action. Within seconds I was dressed and on the way out of my college dormitory. A quick glance at the clock registered the time in my mind. Ten minutes before midnight.

The night air was cold, turning the snow of the morning to a hard-crusting blanket. I felt the crunch under my feet as I walked toward the center of campus. The moon cast a ghostly pall on the college buildings, whose gutters were adorned with giant icicles—dripping water arrested in space, solid daggers of ice that resembled frozen fangs. No human architect could design these gargoyles of nature.

The gears of the clock atop Old Main Tower began to grind, and the arms met and embraced vertically. I heard the dull groan of the machinery a split second before the chimes began to ring. Four musical tones signaled the full hour. They were followed by the steady, sonorous striking of twelve. I counted them in my mind, as I always did, checking for a possible error in their number. But they never missed. Exactly twelve strokes pealed from the tower like an angry judge's gavel banging on metal.

The chapel was in the shadow of Old Main Tower. The door was made of heavy oak with a Gothic arch. I swung it open and entered the narthex. The door fell shut behind me with a clanging sound that reverberated from the stone walls of the nave.

The echo startled me. It was a strange contrast to the sounds of daily chapel services, where the opening and closing of the doors were muffled by the sounds of students shuffling to their assigned places. Now the sound of the door was amplified into the void of midnight.

I waited for a moment in the narthex, allowing my eyes a few seconds to adjust to the darkness. The faint glow of the moon seeped through the muted stained-glass windows. I could make out the outline of the pews and the center aisle that led to the chancel steps. I felt a majestic sense of space, accented by the vaulted arches of the ceiling. They seemed to draw my soul upward, a sense of height that evoked a feeling of a giant hand reaching down to pick me up.

I moved slowly and deliberately toward the chancel steps. The sound of my shoes against the stone floor evoked terror-filled images of German soldiers marching in hobnailed boots along cobblestone streets. Each step resounded down the center aisle as I reached the carpet-covered chancel.

There I sank to my knees. I had reached my destination. I was ready to meet the source of the summons that had disturbed my rest.

I was in a posture of prayer, but I had nothing to say. I knelt there quietly, allowing the sense of the presence of a holy God to fill me. The beat of my heart was telltale, a *thump-thump* against my chest. An icy chill started at the base of my spine and crept up my neck. Fear swept over me. I fought the impulse to run from the foreboding presence that gripped me.

The terror passed, but soon it was followed by another wave. This wave was different. It flooded my soul with unspeakable peace, a peace that brought instant rest and repose to my troubled spirit. At once I was comfortable. I wanted to linger there. To say nothing. To do nothing. Simply to bask in the presence of God.

That moment was life transforming. Something deep in my spirit was being settled once for all. From this moment there could be no turning back; there could be no erasure of the indelible imprint of its power. I was alone with God. A holy God. An awesome God. A God who could fill me with terror in one second and with peace in the next. I knew in that hour that I had tasted of the Holy Grail. Within me was born a new thirst that could never be fully satisfied in this world. I resolved to learn more, to pursue this God who lived in dark Gothic cathedrals and who invaded my dormitory room to rouse me from complacent slumber.

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### The goals of this class

To know God better and so – deeply affect your life.

J.I. Packer shares three fruits of knowing God (he calls it, evidence of knowing God):<sup>4</sup>

1. Those who know God have great energy for God
2. Those who know God have great thoughts of God
3. Those who know God show great boldness for God
4. Those who know God have great contentment in God

Our hope – for you to grow in your knowledge of God so that these evidences begin to show

### The plan for this class

The video series – Behold Your God

- Look at schedule on first page

The workbook

- Explain how it works
- Look through first day (together, in brief)

This is going to be challenging!

(me watching first video; workbook)

Some options for you all...

- If you are committed to coming each Wed. – and you feel overwhelmed at this
  - o First – labor now... rake = leaves; dig = gold!
  - o Second – go to another class, maybe

My call – labor at this for the great benefit of your life!

### Book sign up

### Questions

Close in prayer

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 27-32