

HOW TO KNOW GOD!

(Matt. 11:27)

In Matthew 11:25, Christ's emphasis is on the Father's absolute sovereignty, but now in verse 27, Jesus says that "*all things*" have been delivered to Me by My Father.

Matthew 11:27 (NKJV)

27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

The One Who is sovereign over all has delivered all into Christ's sovereign care. To be sovereign over all in the case of both the Father and the Son speaks to the reality of Deity. Only God is sovereign over all.

And to further show you that the deity of both the Father and the Son is in view, note the phrase "***My Father***". This indicates that Jesus shares in the very nature of God the Father.

John 5:18 (NKJV)

18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that **God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.**

Christ, in saying that God was His Father, was emphasizing that He shares in the very nature of God. As such, He has a unique relationship with God the Father. And His Father (the all-sovereign One) has delivered all things to Him, showing that He is sovereign over all things.

And in context, the "***all things***" speaks of revelation. Jesus is now the exclusive agent over the entire revelation of God. All divine knowledge is now committed to the Son. Jesus is in charge of who gets to know!

Colossians 2:3 (NKJV)

3 in whom [Christ] are hidden **all** the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

And then Jesus says, "***and no one knows the Son except the Father.***"

There are incomprehensible mysteries about Christ. As Paul says in 1 Timothy 3:16: "***And without controversy great is the mystery...God was manifested in the flesh...***" The union of Deity and humanity in Christ boggles the mind. Where does one leave off and the other begin? For example, what about the issue of death? God cannot die. And yet Jesus is

God, and He did die. His divine nature and His human nature are distinct, and yet somehow they are mysteriously brought together in one person in the person of Christ. There is great mystery here.

“Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son”. The Father and the Son have an exclusive **“knowing”** relationship. No one completely knows the Son with perfect intimate knowledge except for the Father, and no one completely knows the Father with perfect intimate knowledge except for the Son. No one ultimately knows them except for themselves, and they know each other perfectly.

Ultimately, only God is great enough to understand God. Man cannot know Him by his own strength or intellect. – **William MacDonald**

If this is true, then how can God be known? Well, only by God revealing Himself. And since the Son is now in charge of all things revelatory, the only ones who can know God are those **“to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”** Thus, we are completely dependent upon Jesus to disclose God to us. Want to know God? You can only know Him through Jesus.

So, when the Jews rejected Jesus, they closed themselves off from the only source of revelation that could really make God known to them – that being Jesus!

People can know something of God’s power and wisdom from nature, but they can’t know His heart – they can’t know His plans – they can’t know His love. This is only known through the Son. To really know the intimate character of God, we have to know Christ.

Back in the OT, Moses asked to see God’s glory. God said He would make His “goodness” [that is His character] pass before Him and proclaim the name of the LORD (cf. Ex. 33:18-19). As the LORD passed before Moses, He proclaimed His attributes such as merciful, gracious, longsuffering, goodness, and truth. In other words, God revealing His glory to Moses involved showing Him the essence of His glorious character – the kind of God that He truly is (cf. Ex. 34:5-9).

And yet, note that Moses only saw the backside of God’s glory because God said, **“You cannot see My face, for no man shall see Me, and live.”** (Ex. 33:20) In other words, no one can see God in His full frontal glory and live. Only the Son knows the full glory of the Father, and only the Father knows the full glory of the Son. And yet Jesus came to make God known to us on a level previously unknown. Jesus came to make God known to us by presenting the PERSON OF GOD in a human body!

John 1:18 (NKJV)

18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom [most intimate of relationship] of the Father, **He has declared Him.**

John 14:9 (NKJV)

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father;** so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

This is totally unique to the Lord Jesus Christ. No one else in the history of all the prophets ever said, "To see me is to directly see God." No apostle ever made such a claim.

"The Son as the image of God is the revealer of the invisible God (Col. 1:15); he is the Logos, the expression of the unseen God (Jn. 1:1, 18)." – ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

2 Corinthians 4:6 (NKJV)

6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the **knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Colossians 1:15 (NKJV)

15 He is the **image of the invisible God...**

1 John 5:20 (NKJV)

20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an **understanding,** that we may **know** Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

John 17:3 (NKJV)

3 And this is **eternal life,** that they may **know You,** the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

The way we know the one true God is through the agency of Jesus Christ. And the KEY to what we know of God through Jesus Christ is the LOVE of God. We only know the extent of God's love through Christ.

Romans 5:8–9 (NKJV)

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

1 John 4:9–10 (NKJV)

9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

In verses 25-27, there is a tremendous emphasis on the Father, who is mentioned 5 times in these verses. The concept of God as Father and sovereignty go together! And there is a tremendous emphasis on the sovereignty of the Son over the administration of knowing God. God is known only in accordance with whom the Son wills to reveal Him. That is a great emphasis on sovereignty.

And whom does the Son will to reveal Him to? Well, in context, the answer is “babes” - those who humbly come to Christ – those who take Christ’s yoke upon themselves. It is these who are shown the truth of God by the Son.

Sovereignty is emphasized (v. 27) and yet immediately in the very next verse (v. 28), Jesus goes on to speak in terms of human responsibility as He extends the invitation to ALL to come to Him. We see this interwoven tension between God’s sovereignty and human responsibility throughout the Scriptures. Both are true, and the combination thereof is inscrutable.

“The Scripture furnishes numerous instances where God’s sovereignty and man’s free will interplay with each other. Both are biblical teachings. For man to try to alter either one to find a reconciliation is an attempt to eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, an attempt of man to escape his finitude so as to become like an infinite God. ...The best we as humans can do is to accept the Bible’s teaching about both the absolute sovereignty of God and freedom of men to make their own moral decisions whether to believe in Christ or not, without changing either teaching. From the standpoint of human logic and philosophical reasoning, the two teachings are in conflict, but from a biblical standpoint they are not.” **-Robert Thomas**

In context, Christ has just expressed condemnation in the previous verses on those cities that saw His mighty works. There was accountability for the

light they had. It's not that they never had any light – they did, and for that reason they are especially accountable.

As Jesus said in John 12:36, “***While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.***” *They can never say, “Well, the blame is on Jesus because He didn’t will to reveal the truth to us.”* The accountability is on them because in their proudful self-wisdom they rejected the truth. In PRIDE, they rejected the light that was given to them, and therefore the light was withdrawn, and consequently they were left in the darkness of human pride.

The overall emphasis in context is on how God sovereignly works in relation to human responsibility. God sovereignly makes His truth known through the Son. That is His plan, His mode of operation, and no one can thwart it. He calls people to repent and accept the Son for Who He is and gives ample evidence to support this demand.

However, the truth is ultimately HIDDEN from the proudly self-wise, but it is REVEALED to humble, dependent babes. This is how God works! The Son wills to reveal the truth of God only to those who humble themselves and depend on Him.

In Luke 18:9-14, Jesus told a parable about a self-righteous Pharisee and a humbled tax collector. The Pharisee prayed about how great he was, and I am sure he could have added about how smart he thought he was. The tax collector was humbled before God, admitting he was a sinner in need of the mercy of God. Jesus concluded by saying this:

Luke 18:14 (NKJV)

I tell you, this man [the humbled repentant tax collector] went down to his house justified rather than the other; for **everyone who exalts himself will be humbled**, and he who **humbles himself will be exalted.**”

Only those who humble themselves can know God and His salvation! Being proudly self-wise defined the generation of Christ’s day as a whole, and yet Christ held out the invitation to all to come to Him and find rest in Him. The ONLY way to KNOW the Father is through the Son! There is no other way!