

KNOWING GOD Why We Are Called to Know God **Jeremiah 9:23-24**

Five Tragic Results of Not Knowing God

– Bill Turner

Introduction:

1. **There is no greater study than the study of God—
and no great understanding than knowing God...**
 - No Other Study Will **Humble** the Mind more than understanding His perfect Holiness
 - No Other Study Will **Expand** the Mind more as we realize His awesome power and glory
 - No Other Study Will **Strengthen** the Mind more as we accept the Truth of God
 - No Other Study Will Bring more **Comfort and Peace** to the Mind than that of Knowing God
 2. **What Does the Lord Delight in? (Jeremiah 9:23-24)**
 - a. Not in Worldly Wisdom... Not in Physical or Political Strength...
 - b. God Delights That We Know and Understand Him!
 3. **This is what God invites us to! (Jeremiah 24:7 > 29:12–13)**
 - a. And the Best Source of Who God is — is from God Himself!
 - b. Because Nothing Else Can Compare to Him (**Isaiah 40:25–26**)
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I. FIVE TRAGIC RESULTS OF NOT KNOWING GOD

A. **IDOLATRY: Not knowing God results in creating our own gods.**

1. **There is a Modern Pantheon of many false concepts of God:**
 - a) That God is a **Tyrant**, a **Great Engineer** or **Architect** or **Pure Mathematician**
 - b) Some think of God as a **Santa Clause**, or **Vending Machine** for what they want.
 - c) Some as an **impersonal, invisible life force** or **cosmic energy force**
 - d) Or a **stern old man** who scrutinizes everything you do waiting to condemn you
 - e) Or a **grandfatherly figure** who just wants us to get along and have a good time
2. **You Could Call This PROJECTION:**

When we assign ideas and emotions from one person to another

 - a) *“(project something onto) transfer or attribute one’s own emotion or desire to (another person), especially unconsciously.” (Oxford American Dictionary)*
 - b) Such as Projecting Feelings or Fears Onto Objects, Animals or Others.
 - c) Someone grew up with a father who was distant and hardly ever around:
 - d) Now God feels distant. Or a father who was so strict they could never be pleased...

The French agnostic, Voltaire, said, “God created man in His own image, and then man promptly returned the favor.”

3. **Our opinions of God does not change who He is. (Psalm 50:21)**
 - a) This is the Tragedy of Trying to Transform God into Something He Isn’t
 - b) *“Exchanging the Truth of God for a Lie” (Romans 1:25)*
4. **The Very First Lie—in Garden of Eden—Was a Lie About God...**
 - a) This Problem/Temptation Led to the First Sin in the Garden...
 - b) Satan’s Lie to Eve was a Lie About God’s Character...
 - c) Satan lied to Eve that God didn’t want her to be wise or to be like Him.

5. The Tragic Ironic is that it was Satan...

- a) that Didn't Want Eve to Have True Wisdom...
- b) It was Satan who Didn't Want Eve to Be Like God
- c) It was Satan Who Didn't Want Eve to Have Eternal Life with God!

6. Everything Satan said about God was a Lie—it was what Satan Wanted!

- a) God Wants Us to Have True Wisdom!
- b) God Wants us to Be Like Him!
- c) God Wants us to Live With Him for Eternity!

7. What you think about God is the most important thing about you...

And a wrong conception of God is Idolatry

B. IGNORANCE: Not knowing God allows others to create God for us.

1. Ignorance of God is not a virtue... (1 Corinthians 15:34)

“A virtuous man may be ignorant, but ignorance is not a virtue. It would be a strange God Who could be loved better by being known less. Love of God is not the same thing as knowledge of God; love of God is immeasurably more important than knowledge of God; but if a man loves God knowing a little about Him, he should love God more from knowing more about Him: for every new thing known about God is a new reason for loving Him.” (Frank Sheed)

2. Example: Even Well Intentioned People Are Ignorant of Who God is!

- a) Job's Friends went to see their friend Job to help in his suffering
- b) But the Problem was they Were Full of Bad Information and Advise
- c) They Assumed the Cause and Effect of Job's Suffering Was Job Must've Sinned
- d) First God dealt with Job, But then God dealt w/ his friends (Job 42:7–10)

3. Ignorance of God Results in False Forms of Salvation [CHART]

—SALVATION AS SELF-FULFILLMENT / SELF-ACTUALIZATION

(1) Hinduism (2) Buddhism (3) Gnosticism (4) New Age belief systems

—Each of these belief systems seek salvation through Self-Actualization “Enlightenment”

—Salvation here is not to be saved from separation from God because of sin...

—But to be saved from ignorance of your true self — your true identity:
that you are Divine and All is a part of the Divine...

—That there is no being called God—but that everything is God including you

—Therefore God does not save—you must save yourself...

Today people like to take the best parts of SELF FULFILLMENT and Bundle Them Together

EXAMPLE: The author of a popular book “The Secret” said it this way:

“The earth turns on it's orbit for You. The oceans ebb and flow for You. The birds sing for You. The sun rises and sets for You. The stars come out for You. Every beautiful thing you see, every wonderful thing you experience, is all there for You. Take a look around. None of it can exist, without You. No matter what you thought you were, now you know the Truth of Who You Really Are. You are the master of the Universe. You are the heir to the Kingdom. You are the perfection of Life. And now you know The Secret.”

People Eat This Up! All the benefits of Deity, w/ no inconvenient God looking over your shoulder

CS Lewis called This: “All the thrills of religion and none of the cost.”

THE PROBLEM is Divinity comes with a price, one you might not have expected:

Since you are the Master of your own fate: any ill that befalls you—any anguish, any disaster, any tragedy—is no one's fault but your own. You are responsible for your entire reality

(b/c you are god after all) You have to cure your own cancer, heal your own problems and prevent your own death, you have to maintain the universe. (Greg Koukl, *The Story of Reality*)

—SALVATION AS THE HEALING OF SOCIETY

(1) Marxism (2) Christian Liberalism / Liberation Theology (3) Secular Humanism

—Each of these belief systems define salvation as the healing of society, not saving a soul

HUMANIST MANIFESTO states: “the Universe is self-existing and not created. That man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as the result of a continuing process.”

But because even Humanists cannot escape the concept or even name of God...

“I suggest we call the basic physical substance of the cosmos, the ‘Supreme Being’, and save the word God, for the ideal of man’s highest good.” (Humanist Gardner Williams)

—This Salvation has little or no need for God—we must save ourselves for heaven on earth

—This Secular salvation sees man’s problems not in himself—but in social structures.

—A Liberation Theology that wants to Liberate man from unjust social structures, economic and racial oppression. Unjust social structures must be destroyed and replaced

—If salvation is achieved it will be by man himself.

—Even Liberal Christians who take this view believe in evolution—

thus the evolutionary progress of man, with science and technology, with social justice...

—Man will save himself and be politically enlightened to the truth.

—SALVATION AS FORGIVENESS AND ACCEPTANCE FROM GOD

(1) Judaism and (2) Biblical Christianity

—Only the people of God who Know God will understand the true nature of salvation.

—That our sins have separated us from God who is holy—

—Our God who is light, and no darkness is in Him

—But who gave us free-will, even with it’s terrible price, so we have the capacity to receive His love and love Him in return

—But who does not want any to perish but all to come to repentance

—Who send His Son to die for our sins and has a New Heaven and New Earth for His people

—But who will one day separate the good from the evil, so the forgiven can be free from the oppression of darkness and works of evil

B. DENIAL OF GOD: Not knowing God allows us to live in denial of God.

**1. The concept of God is found in every culture and language in world...
even the denial of God is a testament to the truth God exists.**

2. This can be called the “Illusion of Knowledge”

a) In his book, *The Discoverers*, Daniel Boorstin wrote, “The greatest obstacle to discovering the shape of the earth, the continents and the ocean was not ignorance but the illusion of knowledge.”

b) The Illusion of Knowledge Causes Us to Think We Know More Than We Do
(Proverbs 12:15 > 18:2)

3. Atheists Claim to know the answers to our deepest questions...

Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going?

a) **Where did we come from?** —A random chance chemical accident...

b) **Why are we here?** —There is no reason why... why would you ask such a dumb Q.

c) **Where are we going?** —We’re going to die, that’s it, did you think there was more?

“In a universe of blind physical force and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, and other people are going to get luck; and you won’t find any rhyme or reason to it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, and no good. Nothing but blind pitiless indifference.” (Richard Dawkins)

“Nature only has one commandment, not ten, eat or be eaten.” (Dennis Prager)

4. Atheists want you to think it is an Intellectual choice... But it is not!

Atheism is a moral choice (Romans 1:18–22; 25)

- a) God’s Incredible Universe Shows His Power, Design and Glory...
- b) But Man Suppress the Truth to Normalize His Own Unrighteousness

5. But Since God gave us a Conscience (awareness of guilt and sin) and placed eternity in our hearts (awareness of something bigger than ourselves)

- a) Humanity (even atheists) seeks to Worship Something bigger than themselves,

6. To worship Creation rather than the Creator

- 1. **PARADISE:** (Not Garden of Eden) The utopia garden of mother earth
- 2. **ORIGINAL SIN:** Harming the environment (that gave gave us life, not God)
- 3. **JUDGEMENT:** A global flood of rising sea levels (Consequences of climate sins)
- 4. **REDEMPTION:** Salvation of Planet (need \$\$ & Power to save you from yourselves)
- 5. **THE SAVED:** Enlightened environmentalist & global prophets
- 6. **THE LOST:** Unenlightened Climate Deniers covered by guilt of climate sin
- 7. **CONFESSION:** Confess your climate ‘sins’ we may atone for you w/ carbon credits
- 8. **PRIESTHOOD:** of Global Prophets, Climate Scientists, intellectual atheist elites
- 9. **A RELIGION:** Worship creation—NOT the Creator
- 10. **TEMPLE:** A Temple of Power and Control—New Money Changers in the Temple

7. We Are Called to Worship the CREATOR, NOT the Creation

“The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship.” (Psalm 19:1)

“Nature has perfections in order to show that she is the image of God, and defects to show that she is only His image” (Blaise Pascal).

C. NEGLECT OF GOD: Not knowing God allows us to neglect God.

1. (Jeremiah 2:11–13) God revealed Two Evils Committed by His People...

- a) They Forsook God the Fountain of Living Water
- b) They Chose Broken Cisterns Instead of God

2. When we neglect God—the fountain of living water,

We turn to broken wells that run dry...

- a) Wells of the world that Cannot hold water
- b) That’s when WE Run Dry... Tired, Discouraged, Empty...

3. But God doesn’t want you empty and discouraged! (Isaiah 40:28–31)

- a) He want to help you and to save you

D. DESPAIR: Not knowing God leads to despair.

1. Man on 6th start across from post office holding a sign...

- a) “If you needed a sign 2 not take your life today, this is your sign.”

2. Howard Hughes was the great grandson of three generations of gospel preachers in the Churches of Christ.

- a) He became a billionaire in his twenties and later became the richest man in world. He had so much potential for good.

- b) But much like King Nebuchadnezzar, he left God out of his life...
 - c) And let himself go to the point that his hair grew like an animal and his nails grew out like bird's claws. He died a lonely and miserable man who could not find peace.
- 3. What would it profit a man to gain the whole world, and loose his own soul?**
- 4. Even we as christians experience the Despair in the Battle Over Our Mind**
- a) God created us in His image with a spirit and a conscience
 - b) We all experience the guilt/shame spiral
 - c) but without access to grace this guild/shame spiral leads to despair...
 - d) b/c we are condemned by our own sin (**Romans 7:21–25a**)
- 5. Who Will Save US? GOD Can—through Jesus Christ our Lord!**
- a) If We Draw Near to Him, He Will Draw Near to Us!

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The Ultimate Result of Not Knowing God is Eternal Separation from God**
- 2. But this is NOT what God wants for you!**

God wants us to know Him (John 17:3-5)

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