

The Omniscience of God

By Michael Huskey

There is not a word we whisper but God hears it. “There is not a word in my tongue—but lo, O Lord, you know it altogether.” There is not the most subtle thought that comes into our mind—but God perceives it. “I know their thoughts.” Thoughts speak as loud in God’s ears—as words do in ours. All our actions, though ever so subtly contrived, and secretly conducted, are visible to the eye of Omniscience. “ Thomas Watson ¹

- What do we mean when we say that God is omniscient?
 - ❖ God possesses infinite knowledge of past, present, and future things. He is all knowing.
 - One of the first things we should combat is the idea of open theism.
 - What is open theism?
 - ❖ A new teaching made popular in the 1990’s that God does not know the future.
 - ❖ Open theism teaches that human beings are truly free. If God absolutely knows the future humans could not truly be free. Therefore, God is reactionary rather than sovereign. He is pacing the floor of heaven ringing His hands, hoping someone will accept Him as Savior.
 - i. This idea comes from biblical passages in which God seems to be surprised and sometimes changes His mind.
 - a. These types of passages are anthropomorphisms. Remember that God speaks to us in ways we can understand.
 - If God changed His mind, His first plan would be what? Imperfect.
 - God does not change His mind because He knows all things, controls all things, and is perfect in all things.
- Psalm 139:4** *Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all.*
- Psalm 139:16** *Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; . . .*
- Open theism basically exists for two reasons:
 1. To reconcile human free will with God’s omniscience and foreknowledge.
 2. To defend the character of God.

¹ Watson. *The Attributes of God*. The Omniscience of God.

- Does God need His character vindicated?
- The proper definition of open theism should be this: To defend the open theist view of a god made in their own image.
 - i. We are dealing with idolatry from the beginning. Who are we . . . to charge God with imperfections . . . just because we do not understand the way that He works in His own creation?
 - a. This isn't the only view of God that is distorted because there is something about Him that isn't liked. God doesn't have to conform to the way we want Him to be.
- I suffered through watching open theists teach their own view and wrote down some direct quotes:

“God is perfect in knowledge, but that doesn't mean that God as definite knows something which in reality is indefinite.”

 - i. Discuss this statement.

“The future is the realm of possibility for God.”

 - i. Discuss this statement.

“God only knows fully the reality that is.”

 - i. Discuss this statement.

“This (open theism) is what gives us significance.”

 - i. Discuss this statement.

“We are co-creators with God.”

 - i. Discuss this statement.

“The future must be undecided, or you could not have free will.”

 - i. Discuss this statement.
- In the open theists mind, they want to defend the character of God because they believe that a God who doesn't give autonomy isn't a good God.
 - i. They accuse us who hold to God knowing and controlling the future of having a God that is the author of evil.

- a. Read: 1 Corinthians 1:20–25. Isaiah 44:7. Isaiah 40:12–14. Isaiah 55:9
 - The Pelagian view of human free will also exists in an attempt to make God look good. God is good and when people cannot understand something about Him they start making things up by comparing Him to themselves.
 - i. Pelagius taught that every person is born in the same state that Adam was created.
 - The Bible teaches that humans have free will but their free will is tainted by sin. Therefore, they always choose what they want to do, but they cannot choose to do anything good because of the fall of Adam.
 - i. They always choose to do evil because evil is their greatest desire. God must intervene and give us a new heart to set us free of the slavery to sin.²
 - a. We will talk more about Pelagius when we get to the sovereignty of God.
 - There are things that God cannot do and one of the things that God cannot do is to learn.
 - i. Nothing new ever enters the mind of God. Nothing suddenly dawns on Him. Nothing catches Him off guard.
 - a. This is a part of God's immutability that we will talk about when we get to the chapter on the immutability of God.
 - God has perfect self-knowledge within the Trinity.
- Will we know God perfectly when we get to heaven? No.

Matthew 11:27 *“All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.*

John 10:15 *even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father . . .*

- i. There are no surprise parties within the Trinity. There is nothing that the Father does that surprises Jesus. They work perfectly together in each and every thing.

Ephesians 2:4–7 *4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

² Romans 5:12–21; Ezekiel 36:26

“But if they retain but one idea for one such vast period, their ideas shall be millions of times more in number than when they first entered into heaven, as is evident, because by supposition the number of such ages will be millions of times more in number; therefore, their knowledge will increase to eternity; and if their knowledge, their holiness; for as they increase in the knowledge of God, and of the works of God, the more they will see of his excellency, and the more they see of his excellency, *ceteris paribus*, the more will they love him, and the more they love God, the more delight and happiness will they have in him.” Jonathan Edwards³

- There is perfect unity of communication and knowledge within the Trinity.
 - i. We can be married to our spouse for years and learn something new about them. We can be guilty of not knowing our spouse well because of a lack of communication.
 - a. The Trinity knows no such thing because the Trinity is perfectly united.
- **1 Corinthians 2:11** *For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.*
- God the Father has never told Jesus “I have already done that” or “I wish you wouldn’t have done that.”
- The oneness of marriage is but a shadow of the relationship within the Trinity.
 - i. Marriage is a huge part of our sanctification. We each enter marriage with an idea of what it should be— what our spouse should be. When we are disappointed sanctification begins.
 - ii. We struggle with believing we have certain rights and deserve certain things. Our sin nature demands an inward draw, and our pride is aroused when what we deem as injustice is pointed at us from the one we love.
 - a. The Trinity is our source of sanctification and has no need of the process of sanctification because of the perfect unity shared among each of the Godhead.
- God knows all things outside of Himself perfectly.
 - i. God knows you perfectly. God knows every ant perfectly, every insect, every animal, He knows all things created and He knows them perfectly.

³ *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*. Volume 2. Heaven

Job 37:16 *“Do you know about the layers of the thick clouds, The wonders of one perfect in knowledge,*

Psalms 147:5 *Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.*

- ii. God’s mind isn’t limited. He does not forget.
 - a. God remembers every detail of the lives of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and every person who has ever walked the face of the planet.
- What does it mean that God remembers our sins no more?⁴
- That God is revealed as light throughout the Scriptures not only calls attention to His holiness, but to His omniscience.
 - i. Light reveals all things. There is no darkness, nothing hidden in light.
 - a. Satan lives and works in the darkness.
- God is eternal and His knowledge is eternal. Everything that He knows He has always known, even before He created time.
 - i. God does not know some things better than He does other things.

Romans 11:33–34 *33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?*

Isaiah 40:13–14 *13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him? 14 With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding?*

Proverbs 5:21 *For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He watches all his paths.*

- God never has to calculate a process; He already knows every result.
- We need to combat what is referred to as God’s **middle knowledge**.
 - i. Middle knowledge teaches that God is reactionary to running various calculations, knowing the ending of every scenario, and choosing the best course of action.
 - a. God is influenced by something outside of Himself.

⁴ Isaiah 43:25, Hebrews 8:12

- Why is it wrong to say that God is influenced by something outside of Himself?
 - i. This view is held by what is called Molinism.
- Molinism is an attempt to bridge the gap between Arminianism and Calvinism but creates an even worse problem, that God isn't sovereign and God isn't omniscient.
 - i. We will talk more about Molinism when we get to the sovereignty of God.
- That God knows everything should be both encouraging and convicting to us.
 - i. When our intentions are misjudged by others, God knows the truth.
 - ii. When our intentions are wrong and we are praised by others because it looks good in their eyes, this should bring conviction.
 - a. God sees through the mask that we wear. Through the persona that we project to the world to bend their view of us in the direction that we wish.

1 Samuel 16:7 *But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

- Why is it good that God looks at the heart of Christians and why is it bad that God looks at the heart of the world?

Psalms 139:1–4 *I O LORD, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. 3 You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. 4 Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all.*

- God knows the worst about us and still loves us.
 - i. It is amazing that before the foundations of the earth, God knew that Adam would betray Him and that all of mankind would hate Him because of the curse upon us, yet He still created us.
- He knows our temptations, sorrows, pains, joys, and all that we face in life, and He cares, and He is there with us through them all.

Questions

- What is open theism?
- Have you ever held to a theology you believed defended God's character that was wrong?

- What is middle knowledge that Molinism holds to?
- Why is it wrong to believe that God can learn something?

Notes