

GOD KNOWS YOU

A sobering thought - God knows everything about you, past, present, future. Yet, He offers His amazing grace to whosoever will put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, in repentance and faith. Even though He knows all, about all. This amazing attribute of God's foreknowledge is often misunderstood.

1- God's fore-knowing involves His will. Know, knew and knowledge in the Bible range in meaning depending on context, including general cognition of information, discernment, experience, or personal intimacy. In Genesis 4:1 "*Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived.*" Matthew 1:25 "*Joseph knew Mary not, until she had given birth to Jesus.*" They knew cognitively, personally, experientially. But the knowing that leads to children involves causation. God "knows" in all of these aspects, as He knows not only who will exist and by whom and their future and every detail of their lives. Not because He peers through the drapes of time to see and know what will happen, but because He chooses to make it so. His knowledge is not fore-see but fore-know, best described as fore-loving. The two instances of human fore-knowledge, Acts 26:5 and 2 Peter 3:17, involve limited prior information. God doesn't calculate or guess, He knows. His fore-knowledge always involves His will, fore-loving, choosing, for His own purposes.

2- God's fore-knowing is fore-loving. Amos 3:2 "*Israel, you only have I known of all the families of the earth.*" Of course God knows every person. But Israel is the special object of His love by election, the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, referenced in Romans 11:2 as "*His people whom He foreknew.*" They are His by sovereign choice, to proclaim and produce the promised Savior. In Genesis 18 the LORD said, "*shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that he shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? v19 For I have chosen him.*" Deuteronomy 7:7 says "*the LORD set His love on you and chose you.*" They were His people because He fore-knew them, choosing them beforehand with His special distinguishing covenant love. And specifically not because of any action He foresaw them take. AW Pink rightly observes, in Scripture "it is persons that God foreknows, not the actions of those persons." Romans 9:11 makes this clear, speaking of Esau and Jacob, "*though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad, in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of His call,*" God said that He had chosen Jacob the younger, not Esau the elder of the twins. This erases the erroneous idea that God elects on the basis of action He foresees. God alone is the divine determiner.

3- God fore-knew Jesus. In Acts 2:23, Peter powerfully proclaims "*this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*" Did God merely foresee this would happen and then foreordain it? Theologians note it would be blasphemous to suggest God had to wait and see what would happen to Jesus before He would know what to do to accomplish your redemption. God fore-knew and fore-loved. 1 Peter 1 addresses "*elect exiles, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, for obedience to Jesus Christ, v20 who was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for your sake, who through Him are believers.*" Likewise in Ephesians 1. God's fore-knowing applies to Jesus and to His followers. SJ Lawson says, "those whom God foreknew, He foreloved, chosen from eternity past. God's foreknowledge toward the elect is the same as toward His Son." This focuses fore-knowing as God's divine choice, fore-loving His own Son as Savior, and all those who by His grace put their trust in Jesus for salvation.

4- Do you know Jesus? Are you known by Him? John 10:14 "*I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know Me, just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father.*" This intimate knowing applies the same to Jesus as to His sheep. v27 "*My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish and no one will ever snatch them out of My hand.*" This the divine dimension of fore-loving. In Matthew 7:21 Jesus says "*I never knew you*" to those who did good works in His name but who did not know Him in saving faith. Jesus and His sheep are fore-loved by the Father. Their names are written before the foundation of the world in the Lamb's book of life, and they are born again by the Spirit from above by the will of God (John 1:12). All this means - you can trust Him! As Romans 8 explains, God works it all out according to His will, grace and love, and v39 "*nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!*"