

# KNOWING GOD

## STUDY 3: GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL, ALL-WISE, ALL-KNOWING, EVERYWHERE-PRESENT

Let's tackle this cluster of characteristics of God by considering some of the ways that He is NOT like us. When we face something BIG that requires strength, we speak in these terms: sweat, muscles, grunts, groans, exertion, exhaustion, oomph. None of those words can be used to describe our God. Zero. And consider these words that cannot ever apply to God's strength: inhale, recover, restore, rest, refill, refuel, rebuild.... God is so all-powerful/wise/known that He never loses anything. When He gives, He never needs to regain. Though we think of Him breathing out, He never has to breathe in to recover.

We, as created beings, are so limited in our ability to understand. God never lacks that ability. He knows all AND understands all. He never says, "What just happened?" And He never misses out on something because He's busy somewhere else. We never have to catch Him up on what's happening in our lives. The very fact that this is mind-boggling reminds us that we definitely are not God! Our brains lack the power and capacity to even grasp the reality of the immense power, knowledge, wisdom, and presence of God.

### READ TOGETHER:

**Job 42:2** "I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted."

**Jeremiah 32:17 (NIV)** "Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you."

**Genesis 1:16 (NIV)** "God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars."

**Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV)** "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

**Philippians 4:6, (NIV)** "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

**Psalms 46:1 (ESV)** "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

**All-powerful** (Job 42:2; Jeremiah 32:17) Our Creator is definitely far beyond us. But it's still worth the effort to try to grasp some more realities about God's power. Energy is a function of our universe. The Laws of Thermodynamics are a part of creation; they are not inherent in our Creator. Strength is a function of our universe. Force, pressure and muscle mass are a part of creation; they are not a part of the Creator.

**DISCUSS:** Read how Job and Jeremiah describe the power of God. If time permits, scan through the Book of Psalms, looking for descriptions of God's power. In what ways do those descriptions help you understand the ALL in all-powerful, the OMNI in omnipotent?

**DIG DEEPER: A post-script** (Genesis 1:16). When it comes to stars, we can never say that when you've seen one, you've seen them all. There are red giants, white dwarfs and main sequence stars, just to name a few. Consider a very old star for a moment – the neutron star. These are aged relics that have collapsed into a very dense sphere. They are so dense that a mere teaspoon of a neutron star would weigh 100 million tons. Mind boggling. On a clear night, you might be able to see thousands of stars. But that is really just a drop in the proverbial bucket of our universe. Within our galaxy, The Milky Way, there are between 100 and 400 billion stars. Sit with Genesis 1:16. The creation of the stars is presented as an "also". It's a P.S.! On the next available clear night, do some stargazing on your own or invite a friend to join you. Keep gazing. Respond to the Creator who "made the stars, also".

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**Never surprised!** (Psalm 139:1-4) When something happens in your day that “takes you aback” and brings anxiety, picture God wringing His hands and saying amongst the Trinity, “Oh no! How did that happen? Now what are We going to do?” Absurd, yes, and not intended to be sacrilegious! It reminds us that WE are the ones startled and bewildered; God never needs to learn anything new. We never have to bring Him “up to speed”. God never has an “a-ha” moment!

**DISCUSS:** Read the passage in Psalm 139. Discuss why these verses are actually comforting rather than intimidating. In what ways can you breathe more easily in your current dilemmas because God is all-knowing? With a partner, pray for each other — for the dilemmas you’re facing and for your ability to trust your all-knowing, all-wise, and all-powerful God.

**Know-how** (Ephesians 3:20-21; Philippians 4:6) Humans can have varying degrees of an old-fashioned term — know-how. But even the handiest of humans sometimes needs to **learn** how because they don’t **know** how. God knows all that there is to know — past, present, future. He also fully contains the “how”. He knows what is best and He knows how to accomplish what is best. Therefore, it stands to reason that God doesn’t need us to tell Him how! Philippians 4 doesn’t say to present our solutions to God. And it doesn’t even say that we should present our suggestions to God. God doesn’t need your advice. Often our prayers could be reduced to – “Help me, God! However You want to do it, I trust You!” Praise God for His grace as He does immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine (Ephesians 3)! God is not restricted by our advice, by our limited view of our situation, by our limited view of Him!

**DISCUSS:** Discuss this idea that the intercessing and petitioning parts of prayer are for presenting our requests to God, not our suggestions! In what ways could your prayer life become richer and more meaningful, knowing that God doesn’t need your advice. Talk through this concept of “know-how” and how it might describe both God’s knowledge and His wisdom.

**Here and there** (Psalm 46:1; Psalm 139:7-12) God is here, as these words are being typed and he’s there as you’re reading them (which isn’t “there” for you... because you are there so it’s your “here”). Our concepts of time exist because of the earth’s rotation and revolutions which are all a result of God’s creative work. He exists outside of creation, outside of time and space. God is present — always and everywhere.

**DISCUSS:** Read Psalm 46:1 and, if time allows, Psalm 139:7-12. In what ways are you impacted by considering that God is everywhere, across both time and space? How does considering HIS perspective help YOUR perspective? Consider ways that you could incorporate moments (maybe three times/day — morning, midday, night) to pause and sit in God’s presence.

**DIG DEEPER: Beyond** (Isaiah 40:25-31; Romans 11:33-36) We are weak. How very refreshing is that truth? Truly! When you get to the place where you are ready to acknowledge your weakness, there is finally hope. You can go to The Source. You can go to The One who does not grow tired or weary. From Him and to Him and through Him are all things. Does that sound too good to be true? Have you not heard? Spend a good quantity of quality time in the Isaiah and Romans passages. What difference does it make to realise that God has no source but He is THE source of all that is good, holy, righteous,... What differences would there be in each day if you began it with a focus on the beyond-ness of God?

## RESOURCES:

- **Book:** Ron Mehl, God Works the Night Shift
- **Book:** Brother Lawrence, The Practice of the Presence of God
- **Book:** A.W. Tozer, The Knowledge of the Holy
- **Book:** Sharon Kohring, Oh My God! Let Me Tell You About Him: A journey through the characteristics of God