

# Man Can Know God

by Charles S. Price

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*To know God, we must transcend the fleshly realm and enter the realm of the Spirit, where we can worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.*

**Scripture:** John 4:24, Romans 8:1, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:16, 1 Peter 2:5

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Knowing God"

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## Description

Charles S. Price preaches about the possibility of knowing God, emphasizing the need to seek Him sincerely to experience a new day of meeting Him face to face, away from noise and strife, finding perfect peace and satisfaction. He discusses the great gulf between the flesh and the spirit, highlighting the continuous warfare between them and the importance of worshiping in the spirit realm. Price delves into the significance of the living Word dwelling in believers, leading them to spiritual spontaneity and obedience, free from condemnation and liberated to walk in the realm of the Spirit.

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## Transcript

Can a man know God? That question was asked in the first century and it has been asked in every other. If it is true that we can know Him, then it must follow that a new day will dawn in every life which, having sought the Lord in all sincerity, at last has met Him face to face. If it is really possible for one so to do, then we should withdraw from the noise and strife - both external and internal - and enter into that sublime experience which brings perfect peace and which completely satisfies!

What a blessed privilege it is for us to seek the face of the Lord! But why should one seek, if it is impossible for one to find? We can make a bad habit out of good things, and sometimes form a ritual out of what God intended should be only a short road to lead from one experience to another.

### The Great Gulf

How vain it is for the soul to try to reach into the upper realms of the Spirit and pull down" the spiritual verities out of their proper place and setting and clothe them with ritualistic flesh. They forget that between the two realms there is a GREAT GULF. It is just as foolish to try to dress up spiritual truths in fleshly robes as it is impossible to dress up fleshly things in spiritual garments. They belong to two different, distinct, and separate spheres. They are not only different; they are antagonistic.

As a matter of fact, they are in a condition of continuous warfare. The flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against ( the flesh; and between the two stands the soul. Worship in the flesh can become soulish; and we do not have to travel very far to see manifestations of that. Such worship can be made very emotional; it can play upon the feelings and run its fingers across the strings of our sentimental hearts. Too often we call it "getting blessed" and it undoubtedly stirs us to the very depths of our natures; but we go home with nothing more than an emotional impetus which, like other intoxicants, exhilarates for the moment but leaves us afterward with headache and regret.

It is also possible for genuinely spiritual worship to be pulled down into the realm of the soulish. In doing so, however, we rob it of its power to accomplish the beautiful purposes of God. Carnality shouts so loudly that the Voice Divine fades away and soon is lost to the hearing of the Spirit. Never forget, however, that flesh cannot be brought into the realm of the Spirit. God would never allow that. He closes the door.

We can worship in the flesh upward as far as the soul, but not higher into the spirit. Whether the journey is up or down, the soul is as far as the flesh can go up, or the spirit can come down. Flesh cannot get "in the spirit," and the Spirit of God will not deal with flesh. The soul has a door on either side and when one is open, the other is always locked. These are two different, distinct worlds. They are as far apart as the worlds of water and atmosphere. A lamb could not live at the bottom of the sea any more than a fish could live on the green grass of the beautiful hillside.

### The Vision

The reason we emphasize this truth is that for centuries men have been trying to find God in the realm of their fleshly natures. They sent Wisdom out to hunt for God and Wisdom came back empty. Knowledge then sallied forth and returned with nothing but platitudes and empty words. They hunted for Him in the universe of His creation and Pantheism was born. They saw what He had done, but they could not find Him. They saw the things His hands had made but they never received a vision of the hands that made them. They saw proof of His Presence, but never found the Presence of the proof.

God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and can not look on iniquity! How then could you find Him in the world of filth and sensuality and fleshly impulses in which human beings live and move and have their being? God dwells in the ineffable splendor of His own Holiness and between fallen man and the eternal righteousness of God there was a great gulf fixed because of the transgression and the fall.

God, by His very nature, could not dwell in the midst of sin; and man, by his sinful nature, could not enter the presence of God. It was to bridge that gulf that our Savior came. He was BOTH GOD AND MAN! He was the only One who could touch both humanity and deity before the full price of redemption was paid on Calvary's

mountain. Before that, God may have called to man across the abyss, but no one was ever privileged before Calvary to know God as one can know Him today!

### Only In The Spirit

When the glorious truth of the atonement bursts like a sunrise over our souls, then we know that we can march away from those fleshly, sinful realms in which once we lived, through the regions of the soul - onward and upward into the realms of the Spirit - to where we are ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED and can come face to face with God - but only in the spirit realm, never in the realm of the flesh!

We can feel His touch, we can hear His voice, and commensurate with our ability to spiritually and not intellectually apprehend, He unfolds to us the glory of His revealed will, and makes known unto us the mysteries of His eternal purposes. This is the realm in which men literally sit at Jesus' feet! This is the place of which the Master spoke when He told the woman by Samaria's wayside well that God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in SPIRIT and in TRUTH! Not in flesh! Not in ritual! Not even in the realm of reason; nor in the kingdom of intellect. Not even within the boundaries of human accomplishments and the beautiful veneered and superficial something we call "civilization." Not there at all!

If we would meet God, we have to get away from that. That is the "old man" which has to be crucified. We cannot dress that old nature up in a swallow-tailed coat, or even in ecclesiastical garb, and take it into the presence of the Lord. Instead, we must have new hearts. We must have a transformed and renewed mind. We must be made a new creation. The old things must forever pass away. Everything about us must become new! We must have followed Him IN THE REGENERATION. Then and then only, can we ascend to those sublime hills of spiritual glory and enter the presence of the Eternal God.

### The Living Word

Pity the poor people who live only in the realms intellectual and cultural. They are reading the Sermon on the Mount with eyes of flesh, and doing their level best to make themselves like Jesus. Like the woman by the well, they cannot conceive of any water but the kind which comes from holes in the ground. They are "Athenians" - very religious - but empty and void of true spirituality.

When the congregation in the synagogue at Capernaum heard Him talk about bread which would forever satisfy, they could not get away from the thought of material bread. Hunger meant nothing but appetite and they knew no thirst but what could be satisfied by water. Their minds flashed back to the manna which fell in the wilderness; and even we make the same mistake, for getting that the use of the word "flesh" in the Bible refers to more than these physical bodies and these fleshly tabernacles.

The marvelous organism of our bodies has no moral qualities within itself. It is not the house of flesh, in which you live, of which the Bible speaks. It is the man of flesh who dwells within the house. "Flesh" is used to describe that thing in human nature which resists the law of God. It is that fallen nature within fallen humanity which forever fights against the things of the Spirit, and which is so sinful and corrupt that it can never be made subject to the laws of God, nor perform the will of our Heavenly Father.

In dealing with flesh, Paul does not mince any words at all. He says, "Crucify-it. Put it to death. Kill it!" He calls it the "old man, the "body of sin," and the "body of death." Do not try to patch it up. Do not toady to it. Do not try to cultivate it into something richer and better! In the last analysis, "flesh" is the principle of sin within man. It is not you, it is the power which controls you and runs you. It is your enemy, even as Christ is your friend. If we are "in the flesh," we cannot please God!

If we only knew it, Hands Divine - Hands with nail-prints in them - are reaching down, dripping with love and grace, to lift us out of the clutches of this baser self into a higher realm of redemption, regeneration, sanctification and glorification.

### The Indwelling

In the 3rd chapter of Colossians and the 16th verse, Paul says: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly." There is more to this than one perceives upon superficial examination. There is only one LIVING WORD! There was a time when words were put on paper in the form of laws and commandments which man could never fully obey because of the flesh. Paul declared that it was the law which was weak through the flesh; and God condemned sin in the flesh.

But there came a time when the WORD BECAME FLESH! Every utterance by prophetic lips every song by poet and priest of the by-gone days every utterance which fell from the inspired lips of major and minor prophets was touched by the Hand Divine.

A Babe was born in Bethlehem of Judea to the singing of angels to the resounding of the oratories of Glory through the vaulted expanse of the Father's Home. Grace sent a LIVING WORD to accomplish what a written or a spoken word could never do! When we allow the Word of Christ to dwell in us richly, we really allow the WORD WHICH IS CHRIST to take up His habitation within the confines of our being. Because of His indwelling, the Father sees no sin in us, for WE ARE ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED!

Oh, sing my soul, with Horatius Bonar:

"Thy bonds, not mine, O Christ,

Unbind me of my chain;

And break my prison doors,

Ne'er to be barred again.

Thy wounds, not mine, O Christ,

Can heal my bruised soul.

Thy stripes, not mine, contain

The balm that makes me whole.

Thy death, not mine, O Christ,

Has paid the ransom due.

Ten thousand deaths, like mine,

Would have been all too few.

Thy righteousness, O Christ,

Alone can cover me.

No righteousness avails,

Save that which is of Thee."

One can receive the Written Word in the mind and yet not possess the Living Word in the spirit. In these days of intense speed, we take little time to really get acquainted with the Living Word! We cannot rush

through a chapter of words, as we find them in the Bible, and come out laden with THE WORD! I am persuaded that without His help, one cannot find "THE WORD" in the words; but when you have the LIVING WORD, His glorious presence will throw light and revelation upon the meaning of the words.

Dr. Joseph Parker once advised a young preacher never to "gallop through the Scriptures"; but to "go slowly and look around!" In the same manner, what do we see of the flowers by the wayside when we tear along in our modern automobiles at fifty and sixty miles an hour? Do we catch the song of the bird or appreciate the marvels of God's creation in the rocks? Or drink in the music of a waterfall? Or delve into the hidden beauties of the little things which grow in quiet obscurity within our reach and touch?

To some, the parables of Jesus were nothing but stories which contained some truth which the mind of man should grasp. They failed to see the Living Word breathing within the parable. The things which Jesus did were merely mediums of revelation. Not one of them ended within itself; but so blind were the people of His day that they could not behold the road which led onward and upward into the unfolding of the mystery of the Living Word.

The Word is a light unto our feet and a lamp unto our path; but men do not need lights and lamps if they are going to stand where they are! The path must lead us somewhere, and our feet should respond to the Call Divine, which will take us from the place where we are to the place where God wants us to be.

#### The Hidden Treasure

Have you noticed in the teachings of Jesus how many times the treasure is hidden? The thing for which we seek is not always obvious. We have to search UNTIL! No man can reach down and pick up the Pearl of Great Price in the place in which he first receives the light of revelation. Like Abraham, he has to GET OUT from the place where he has lived and trust God so implicitly that NOT KNOWING WHITHER HE WILL BE LED, he still is willing to go. It is always away from flesh - Away from self - away from our baser natures - away from the material and even the intellectual and "cultural".

With what pride do we apply those words to ourselves, for getting all the while that unregenerate man in his culture has veneered himself with an external covering by which he tries to hide the corruption which is still within. God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

We cannot know God unless we come through Calvary and open the door at the upward reaches of our souls which stretch into the realm of the Spirit. It is only in that realm and in that sphere that one can come face to face with the Eternal! Oh man, unregenerate man, born only of the flesh, never can you enter into the realm of the Spirit! Ten million years of preparation would not suffice for a moment in the presence of the Holiness of God! YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN!

There is a realm in which the man of the flesh can never enter, and into which only the man of the Spirit can go. There must be a NEW CREATION! BORN FROM ABOVE! BORN OF GOD! Born to be SONS OF THE ETERNAL! Born to an inheritance that is so vast and infinite that it staggers our mortal imaginations. One must be in the realm of the Spirit to enter even the borderland of perception, so great and wonderful is the marvel of it all. Born of the Spirit, we can discern spiritual realities! There we can offer our bodies a living sacrifice unto God; and there we can enjoy spiritual fellowship. "You also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Peter 2:5.

## Emancipation

The NEW CREATION LIFE has brought us into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, and no longer are we in slavery to those laws which governed, at one time, the baser parts of our human nature; but from which we were emancipated by the Blood of the

Everlasting Covenant! You are a NEW CREATURE! The entire current of your life has been reversed. I pray the Holy Spirit to throw light upon the understanding as I make the following statement. If you will ascend from the lower to the higher, if you will enter into the realm of the Spirit, then your new creation spiritual life will

surely be as natural to your new nature as the fleshly life was to your old. There will be a spiritual spontaneity to your obedient walk in the new realm. It will not be a struggle. It will not be a battle.

The conflict comes in those lives which are so close to the border-line of soulishness, whose portals are ever open to the flesh. As once it was not hard, but perfectly natural for you to sin; so now in the New Creation life it will be just as spontaneous, as instinctive and automatic for you to walk along the sun-lit paths of obedience, led of the Spirit of God; and you will learn to open the ears of your being to the Voice Divine.

## No Condemnation

Have you read it? "There is therefore now NO CONDEMNATION!" It has gone. We are liberated souls. We know how to rise above the sordid, the material and the fleshly. There is a NEW WORLD! We are a NEW CREATION! We can rise in the Spirit where we can talk with God. We can go walking among the clouds, and the glories we encounter there make the material things of earth seem like baubles and trifles which have lost their value.

We may be poor in the things of this world; but, oh, how RICH IN FAITH! Philippians 3:20 tells us: "For our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." That is not in the future. That is in the NOW.

You might call these ASCENSION TRUTHS! The flight is UPWARD, out of self and away from flesh! Into a realm that is not of the natural. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; but the Sons of God can! We must first, however, become a SPIRITUAL BEING. The Lord is not joined to the natural, but to the spiritual, in this HOLY UNION. That is why it is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom; and do not think that the word "rich" means filled with worldly possessions alone. One may be rich in intellectualism, rich in knowledge, proud in the contemplation of attainments; rich in will! Self-satisfied with worldly position!

If we would enter the realm of the Spirit, however, we must UNLOAD our desire for the world and its possessions, for it is absolutely true that the higher we rise in the spiritual sphere, the less important become the things which belong to the natural and the temporal.

## God is a Spirit

Let us remember the words of Jesus to the woman who sat at the well. Worship was not confined to this mountain or to that. The mountains of Jerusalem or any other! Mountains had nothing whatever to do with it. Gone was the day when you could build a temple of bricks and mortar in which to confine God. It was

not in this cathedral or in that church. God was a Spirit and they that worshipped Him must get out of the fleshly, out of the soulish into the realm of the Spirit; and there they could worship in Spirit and in Truth!

There they would meet the Savior face to face. There the breezes of Heaven would kiss their cheeks and there the music of the Glory-world would fall upon spiritual ears. Certainly it was a new realm! But were they not a new creation in Christ Jesus? There is the place where men can be led of the Spirit; and being led, they would have no need of detailed instructions from others. God Himself would speak to them; His arm sustain; and His presence comfort!

Can you know God? If our Heavenly Father could walk and talk with Enoch in the days when we were under Law, how much more is it possible for the children of Redemption to enjoy the same experience! What a privilege it is to participate in the Divine benedictions which cannot help but come from such a sweet and blessed union.

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