

# Knowing God Eng to Korean

by Peter Maiden

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*Knowing God is vital for a holy and loving Christian experience, and it can be achieved through creation, conscience, Scripture, experience, and relationship.*

**Duration:** 44:28

**Scripture:** Job 11:7, Psalm 103:1-5, Matthew 6:33, Romans 11:33

**Topics:** "Knowing God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by reading the first five verses of Psalm 103. He then poses the question of whether it is possible for finite human beings to truly know and comprehend the infinite God. He references Job's friend and Paul's words in Romans 11 to emphasize the unfathomable wisdom and knowledge of God. The speaker also shares a personal anecdote about relying on God's promise for provision and encourages the audience to take time to meditate and listen to God's voice through creation and in their hearts.

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## Transcript

This is also a great day because of a book which is really off the press today. How many of you have got a copy of Operation World, the old copy of Operation World? It's so out of date, isn't it? It's unbelievable. There's 49 new countries since Operation World was last printed.

And our friend Patrick Johnston has been working for nine years on the new edition. And it's now off the press. It actually arrived here today.

It's an incredibly important book. Already 300,000 copies of it have been pre-sold even before it's on the shelves. And we believe this book is going to make a real impact on the world situation.

Now, we can't officially sell it until the 22nd of September. But we can sell it to distributors. So we are going to make you distributors tonight.

And you'll be able to buy immediately after the service your copy of Operation World from the table here. As long as you commit yourself to really get excited about this book and make sure that other people get copies too, then you're a distributor yourself. Normally it sells for nine English pounds, nine pounds sterling.

Tonight we're going to sell it for five pounds. That's about 13 guilders 50. So rush to the book table afterwards.

And make sure you don't just buy it. And don't just read it. But use it prayerfully.

Along with the book, you can buy the map. It is, as of a few days ago, absolutely up to date unless they've added some new countries. It has all Yugoslavia divided into the new countries.

We were going to do a prophetic map and help Dr. Rowan, but we decided not to do that. That's available also on the book table afterwards. Now you'll find a man coming to the platform tomorrow carrying more than one book, I would imagine.

You probably won't be able to see him for books. But I'll leave him that privilege. I just want you to concentrate on that book tonight.

Now let's turn to the book, which is even more exciting than that book. I hope you're excited about scripture. Let's turn to Psalm 103.

I imagine many of you are tired, is that right? You've traveled a long way. And you'd rather like to get to bed, is that true? The best sermon I could preach would be a two-point sermon, wouldn't it? First point, good night. Second point, God bless.

The second point might be God bless. Good night, God bless. Two points.

Well, it won't be quite as short as that. But we're not going to be talking for long this evening. Just read the first five verses of the 103rd Psalm.

I'll read the first two verses in English. And then I'll ask Brother Joseph to read from verses 3 to 5. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Can a man know God? That's what one of Job's friends asked Job. He meant, is it possible for us, finite human beings, to ever comprehend the infinite God? Paul, at the end of Romans 11, he says, all the depths of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments.

His ways are past finding out. The Apostle Paul asks, can we ever really comprehend, can we ever really understand the infinite? His ways are higher than our ways. His thoughts are much greater, much higher than our thoughts.

I would imagine that many of you tonight have often been confused by God. You just don't understand Him. Why does God do that? Why does He allow this? Some of you are possibly just thinking, why on earth has God allowed me to get here tonight? Often we are confused by God.

It's the sense in which that encourages me. If I could understand God, if I could plumb His depths, then I would become as God myself. Such a God wouldn't be worth believing in.

I'm glad there are things about God that I just don't understand. He's so much bigger than me. One of the things I want to try and convey this evening is the bigness, the greatness of God.

The Lord Jesus seems to suggest it's going to take us eternity to really know God. John 17 and verse 3. This is life eternal, to know you, the only true God. And yet the Bible tells us that though God is great, in one sense He is unknowable.

Yet He has revealed something of Himself to us. And the wonderful thing is that God longs to be known by us. He longs to enter into relationships with human beings.

John chapter 4 tells us that He's actually seeking for people who will worship Him. The great infinite God is seeking for human beings who will enter into a relationship with Him. People who will love Him.

And people who will enjoy His love. And that is what the OMU program is all about. That's what the OMU program is all about.

Yeah. Amen. I'm excited about this.

It's all about the bigness of God. The bigness, the greatness of God. And it's all about this privilege of a relationship with Him.

Yeah. And if you don't move on in your relationship with God through this OM experience, as far as I'm concerned, OM will have been something of a failure for you. Please put that as the foundation of your understanding of OM.

Together we want to discover the greatness of our God. And we want to deepen that relationship with Him. It's also our message, isn't it? God can be known is our message.

He's not just a power in the sky. Not just the impersonal ordainer of human fate. Establisher of humanity.

Our message is that God can be our Father and our friend through the Lord Jesus. And the heart of our message is that Jesus died to make that possible. Jesus died to bring me to God.

Isaiah tells us that our sins brought a separation between us and God. And the only way to deal with that separation was for Jesus, the Son of God, to pour out His life for me. Now here's an example of wastage.

Human beings were made for a relationship with God. By sin they destroyed that relationship. This great God moves in on their behalf.

Pays the ultimate price. Gives His own Son to restore that relationship. Yet still the vast majority of human beings know nothing of a relationship with God.

This book will reveal that. What wastage that God should do all that for us. And yet the vast majority of people live without a relationship with God.

So how does God, the great infinite God, reveal Himself to us? How are you going to come to know God in your life? How am I going to come to know God more during this next OM year? The Bible tells us that God reveals Himself to us through creation. In Romans chapter 1, Paul says, Since the creation of the world, the invisible attributes of God have been known. Romans 1.20 You're testing me, aren't you? And particularly, I think, it says His invisible nature and His divine power.

Yes. So we can look at creation and we know from that witness there is a great God. In fact, Paul tells us that there's enough evidence in creation alone for mankind to know that there's a great God.

What should we say? In Psalm 19, I hope. The Psalmist says the heavens are declaring the glory of God. And the second verse tells us that day to day, creation is pouring forth speech.

In other words, God is speaking to us through creation. Charles Spurgeon used to say, there are two books I love more than any other. Where? No, this one isn't in the Bible.

This is Charles Spurgeon. I love the book of creation, he said. And I love this book, the Bible.

Now, I live just a few miles north of the English Lake District. English? Lake District. Mountains and lakes, beautiful area.

You must visit me, Joseph. And there is the main road south to London, just to the left or the east of the Lake District. And almost every week, sometimes twice a week, I go flying down that road at speed.

And I get convicted every time I do it. Sadly, it doesn't stop me doing it, but I get convicted every time I do it. Doesn't matter about that one.

It's a tragedy, you know, it's a tragedy to pass the Lake District. Because God has spoken in a very special way there. But very often, I don't have time to listen.

I don't have time to enjoy the beauties of His creation. That's a great danger in our fast-paced life, isn't it? It's a great danger in an activist organization like Operation Mobilization. I hope that even during this time of conference here in Debron, even during this time of conference in Debron, I hope you'll take time just to get out there.

And to walk around and look at the beauty. And just to have time to meditate and to speak with God and to listen to God as day by day He speaks to you, He pours forth speech through creation. So that's one way in which God reveals Himself.

But Paul gives us another way in Romans 1 as well. Another way in Romans chapter 1. God reveals Himself to us in our hearts or in our conscience. In verse 19, we're told what can be known about God is evident in a person.

The book of Ecclesiastes tells us that God has put eternity into the heart of a man. There is something within us which cries out, there is a God, there is someone greater than you or I. Our conscience screams at us, this is a moral universe and there is a creator and a just God ruling us. Universe.

Did I say all of that? Our conscience screams. Paul tells us that we can suppress that witness from within us. We can keep denying that voice.

And that's where atheists come from. People who do not believe there is a God, that's where they come from. If people constantly reject the voice of creation, the voice of conscience, they'll ultimately come to that state of atheism.

And of course supremely God has revealed Himself to us in Jesus Christ. John tells us in his first chapter that Jesus is the Word. God the Son is the expression of the heart of God for us.

Philip said to Jesus in John 14, show us the Father, that will be enough for us. Jesus said, the person who has seen me has seen the Father. You may often wonder if you're anything like me, what is God like? And the answer to that question is, God is Jesus like.

What is more, God has always been Jesus like. Some people try and draw a distinction, don't they, between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament. And some people that I know, they say, I don't like the God of the Old Testament.

If you think like that, I'm afraid you're into terribly false thinking. God has always been and will always be Jesus like. And this is an important theme repeated many times in the Bible.

Paul tells us in Colossians 1 that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews tells us He's the exact representation of the Father. And the picture there is of the stamp, the stamp mark that you make with a stamp.

Jesus is the exact stamp, the exact image of the Father. Jesus Himself said, no man has ever seen the Father. But the only begotten Son who comes from the bosom of the Father, He has made the Father known.

Another way in which God reveals Himself is through Scripture. That's why this book is precious to me. Here, that's why this book is precious to me.

All that God wants me to know about Him and myself and life is contained here. Everything I need, the apostle Peter tells me, for life and for godliness is contained here. I want to come back to that in a few moments.

But I want to tell you a further way in which God reveals Himself. And that's through our experiences. And this, I want to testify, has been one of the greatest blessings of OM for me.

I first touched OM when I was 17 years of age. 17 I was when I first joined OM. That was two and a half years ago.

No, no, don't tell her. That's not true. That was many, many years ago.

I've been brought up in a very efficient kind of Christian home. I became a Christian when I was about three, I think. Three years old.

Yeah, three. My earliest memory in life, if I think back to the very beginning of my life, as far back as I can think, my earliest memory is sitting on my mother's knee at night and being taught Jesus. And I fell in love with Jesus as early as I can remember.

I've never made a decision. Do you think I'm converted? I can't remember a day when I didn't love Jesus. I can remember many days when I haven't loved Him as I should, as much as I should.

But never a day when I didn't love Him. I can remember many days when I didn't love Jesus as much as I should have loved Him. But never a day when I didn't love Him.

A little. A bit. At least.

So I went to Spain when I was 17. From this kind of home, this Christian home, I went to Spain when I was 17. And I'd been taught the Scriptures from childhood.

I'd been taught the Bible from childhood. I'd learned verses such as, My God shall supply all of your needs. And I really believed those verses.

I really believed those verses. Oh, sorry. I really did believe those verses.

I had no doubts about it. And then when I joined OM at the age of 17, we went off to Spain. And the second day on our team, a little Mexican fellow who was leading the team came to talk to me.

His name was Pepe, and he came up to about there on me. Yeah, about there. And he said to me, Peter, we don't have any money.

And I said, well, that's not very good organization, really, is it? And then he said, Peter, we don't have any food. I said, pardon? Excuse me? He said, we don't have any food. I thought that was brilliant.

You know, second day on the team. No money, no food. So I said, what are we going to do? What are we going to do, Pepe? He said, we're going to get on our knees here and remind God of His promises.

And we were in the middle of Valencia at the time, on one of the main streets. One of the main sidewalk streets, yeah. And before I could stop him, he was on his knees.

So I, very embarrassed, never done anything like this in my life, I got down on my knees beside him. And in broken English, he reminded God of His promise. My God shall supply all your needs.

And there was a tremendous crisis in my life at that point, I'll never forget it. For the first time in my life, I really was questioning, was this book the word of God? Would He provide food? Could He and His word really be trusted? He provided in a miraculous way for the next three and a half months. And I learned an enormous amount about God on my knees in Valencia.

Three years ago, my son, who is 20, was desperately ill in hospital. He was recovering from a major abdominal operation, stomach operation. And he reacted very, very badly to a drug.

And no one could discover what the drug was. Which drug he was badly reacting to. It affected his breathing.

It affected the way he breathed. He could hardly breathe at all. And he was choking.

Choking. Coughing. And for a day and a half, I lay beside him on the bed.

Helping him breathe, saying, breathe now, Kim, breathe now. And one doctor after another came in, trying to discover what was wrong. And I cried out to God for a day and a half.

Lord, give me grace to be a father at this point. Give me grace to help my son. Give him grace to get through this experience.

And I proved God for a day and a half. It's crucial in our desire to know God. To have that balance between the knowledge of him through his word and through creation.

And the knowledge of him through experience. Experience which isn't tested by the word can be deadly. There are many people and many powers out there who will give you experiences.

Some of them may appear to be divine experiences. Scripture tells us that Satan can make himself look like an angel of righteousness. And he is gifted at giving to men and women apparently divine experiences.

That's why all our experiences must be brought back to the touchstone, the balance of God's word. But can you imagine how utterly and equally deadly it is just to have a head knowledge of this book? Just to know the words. The letter kills.

The spirit gives life to the word. As it's proved and becomes real in our experience. Now I'm really praying that that's going to be one of the great blessings of OM for you this year.

That you'll get many hours in the word of God. You'll get many hours in the word of God. And then you'll get many opportunities out there serving him to prove the reality of the word.

Let me mention one final way in which God reveals himself. And that's in relationship. As we spend specific time with God, we can build a living relationship with him.

Now many of the things I've mentioned already will be a part of that relationship. As you meditate on God in creation. As you spend time in his word, as you have those various experiences.

That will all be part of this growing relationship. But every relationship which is to grow needs time. And I wonder how much time you are willing to give in a busy world, a busy mission, just to deepen, just to build that relationship.

Now my experience is that different Christians spend this time with God in different ways. Some Christians have this ability to spend huge chunks of time with God at one time. Some Christians want to work with an evangelist who works so early, I never ever caught him getting up.

If I work at four, he was up. If I work at five, he was still up. I have no idea what time this chap used to get up in the morning.

He got up very early. An evangelist who got up very, very early every morning. And he just spent hours with God every day.

And then I read this book by a man called Bounds, called Power Through Prayer. What a book that was. I heard that Martin Luther got up at four o'clock in the morning, and John Wesley got up at four o'clock in the morning.

And every Christian who seemed to make any impression in the world got up at four o'clock in the morning. So I got up at four o'clock the next morning. And my mother, sorry I wasn't married at the time, my mother woke me up at six on my knees.

I was fast asleep. I'm not the kind of person who can spend huge chunks of time with God. I'm not the kind of person who can spend hours.

And I used to get quite guilty about that sometimes. But I have this experience of talking with God almost constantly. Just sharing my life with Him.

So if you see me walking around Debron, and there's nobody beside me, and I'm chattering away, don't be too upset. Different Christians build this relationship, they relate to God in different ways. I don't think the method is vital.

I think it's the reality that counts. So why is it so important to know God? It's vital because it impacts every area of your life. The person who is holy must know something of the holiness of God.

The person who lives a life of love must know something of the holiness of God. The person who knows something of power must know something of the power of God. Your Christian experience will be as great as your view and your experience of God.

Nothing is more vital than this. This is where we want the OM year to start. We want the cry of our hearts to be, Lord, this year, help me to know more of you.

Help me to spend that time. Grant me that discipline and that desire. Lord Jesus, you died to make that possible.

What utter wastage if I don't do anything about it. You live to make that possible. So help me this year.

To grow in my knowledge of you. Now we didn't get to Psalm 103. Time's gone.

We didn't get to Psalm 103. We're not going to go on to Psalm 103. But if you look at the first five verses of that chapter sometime, you'll see, you'll understand the psalmist's knowledge of God.

You'll see how the psalmist went about getting to know God. He talks about all his inmost being, all his body, all his faculties being committed to know more about God. Brothers and sisters, let's make this the great commitment of our life.

To know thee, the only true God. And then to go out from that knowledge of him, from that personal experience, to make the true God known in this world. That is what Operation Mobilization is all about.

Let's pray together. Just a moment or two of quietness to think back on God's word to us. Father, we thank you for being a God who longs to be known.

Thank you that you enjoy a relationship with me. Thank you that you have this longing for a relationship with people. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for what you did to make that possible and for what you're still doing to make that possible today.

Help us, Lord, to know you. We pray that at the end of this year, our knowledge of you, our experience of you will be greater at the end than it is at the beginning. And Lord, from that position of a strong relationship with you, help us to make you known to many others this year.

It's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen.

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