



God is transcendent. He is so far above us that he is in a category by himself. We cannot begin to fathom the limits of his perfection or the depth of his beauty.

But God is also immanent. While we will never know God fully, we can know him truly because he has graciously revealed himself to us in Christ. In Christ, we enjoy the incredible privilege of knowing and delighting in God for all eternity.

### **GOD IS TRANSCENDENT**

*PSALM 139:1-6 (ESV): O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.*

*PSALM 145:1-3 (ESV): I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.*

*ISAIAH 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

## SOME OBSERVATIONS

1. There is infinitely more to God than we will ever know or understand.
2. Because God is infinite in all of his perfections, there is infinitely more to each of his attributes than we will ever know or understand. He is infinitely more loving, merciful, holy, and good... than our highest possible conceptions of love, mercy, holiness, and goodness...
3. Because God is infinite in holiness, majesty, and beauty, everything we learn about God will only lead us to greater wonder and delight.
4. Because God is infinite in all of his perfections, we can trust him to be loving, merciful, holy, and good, even when it appears that he is not loving, merciful, holy, or good.

## SOME QUESTIONS

1. How do the biblical writers describe God's transcendence?
2. What is unsettling about God's transcendence?
3. What is comforting about God's transcendence?
4. What do we know about what we do not know about God?
5. What is the appropriate response to God's transcendence?

## BUT HE IS ALSO IMMANENT

*ISAIAH 55:15-17: For this is what the high and exalted One says— he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with the One who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.*

*1 JOHN 5:20 (ESV): And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

*MATTHEW 11:27: "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*

*1 JOHN 2:3-6: We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. <sup>5</sup> But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: <sup>6</sup> Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.*

## SOME OBSERVATIONS

1. We are only able to know God because God has graciously made himself known.
2. While knowing God involves the intellect, it is far more personal than cerebral.
3. We know we know God when we are growing in our wonder and delight in Him and are graciously reflecting His heart and character in our relationships.
4. We grow in our knowledge of God when by faith, we turn from our sin to God, are instructed by His Spirit through His Word in community with other believers, and live for His fame and glory in the world.

## SOME QUESTIONS

1. What makes it possible for us to know the unknowable?
2. What is the difference between knowing about God and knowing God?
3. What happens when our knowledge of God is far more cerebral than it is personal?
4. How do we know we know God?
5. How do we grow in our knowledge of God?

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