

**The Attributes of God**  
**A FAITHFUL GOD SENDS A SAVIOR**

Gal 4:4-9;

**What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.**  
(especially at Christmas )

We've all been in situations where we've had to wait to see if someone would fulfill a promise. It could be something as small as "Will you please pick up some milk on the way home?" "I PROMISE"

OR something much more important like wedding vows, or dare I say it, church membership vows.

It might be waiting for the repair guy to come between 10-2 or the garage to have the repair done by the time you really need your car.

We also know the let down of a broken promise. It hurts and when it happens over and over it can ruin a marriage, a family, or any relationship.

**THE BIBLE UNDERSTANDS WAITING ON PROMISES**

**Advent is a season of Waiting and Expectation**

Throughout the Bible, God promised The Advent or coming of his son, Jesus. This is one of the most important events in all of human history – the almighty, eternal, creator of the universe becoming human, living among us, and suffering on our behalf in order to give us life.

The Old Testament looked expectantly for The Advent of God's forever king, the anointed one who would bring peace to his people.

Isaiah 9:6 anticipates and declares, "For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

In Luke 2:8-11 , when the long-awaited Messiah finally came, angels announced his birth by declaring, "I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

For centuries, Christians around the world have used the four weeks leading up to Christmas to prepare themselves for the celebration of Jesus' birth. It's a time when we observe his first coming while we also look forward to his second coming. Each of the four weeks leading up to Advent is focused on the hope, peace, joy, and love which are manifested in Christ.

The people of God hope in a Faithful God who will keep His promise to bring salvation. God did so, not by sending an institution or an idea, but by sending his Son.

**Gal 4:4-7 tells us that Jesus WAS SENT, not just born**

**4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.**

**8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. 9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?**

**1. Jesus was Sent to Earn our salvation by living a perfect life under the Law, and by Redeeming a people by his death (Gal 4:4,5)**

Jesus WAS SENT –

Christmas is a reminder that our salvation is based on works; it is based on obedience. There is no salvation if the Law is not obeyed and upheld.

WHOA NELLY, PREACHER!! What are you saying??

I'm saying that **Salvation is by works, BUT NOT BY OUR WORKS.**

Jesus came to EARN our salvation. He came to fulfill all righteousness. We receive and experience Salvation by grace through faith, but Jesus earned it.

If you don't know that salvation is by works you haven't understood the gospel. There is no salvation if Jesus only dies for sin, he must also obey all righteousness for us. We don't just get to heaven by his death, but by his life and his death. It's what is known as the Active and Passive Obedience of Christ.

Jesus came to live the life we should have lived and die the death we should have died.

**2. JESUS WAS SENT so that we might be made sons and be brought into fellowship with the Father- to know his love.**

Years ago I had a conversation with a man who indicated that it is <<helpful to have others interceding for us to "soften up" the Father.>>

I told him that the Bible tells us that because of the work of Christ we have direct access to the Father; he doesn't need to be softened up anymore. Jesus came in the manger so he could die on the cross and turn Romans 6:23 – "the wages of sin is death" into Romans 8:1 – There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." The Father's heart is soft and compassionate toward us. We need not live in fear as slaves, but in joy as beloved children.

The righteous wrath of the Judge has been turned away by the love and mercy of the same Judge who now makes us his children through faith. THE SON came to make us Sons and Daughters of the king.

"Veiled in Flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity  
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel  
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth"

**Jesus came so that we might know God which also means that we MIGHT BE KNOWN BY God.** It may well be that being Known By God is more important than Knowing God. (Gal 4:9)

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/eq/2005-4\\_343.pdf](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/eq/2005-4_343.pdf)

In the Voyage of the Dawntrader by CS Lewis, Lucy, Edmund, and Eustace have an adventure in which Eustace encounters Aslan, the lion, and he is changed.

In speaking of this life transforming encounter, Eustace asks Edmund what he knows of Aslan. Edmund answers in a surprising way.

"But who is Aslan? Do you know him? Asked Eustace..."

"Well – he knows me," said Edmund. "He is the great Lion, the son of the Emperor beyond the Sea, who saved me and saved Narnia."

Edmund admits that Aslan knows him better than he knows Aslan. His admission puts the accent on being KNOWN BY ASLAN without diminishing the importance of him knowing Aslan. Edmund stands in the Christian tradition of confessing the truth that God knows us better than we know him. We could also say that he knows us better than we know ourselves.

That is the reality of Salvation. God knew our need before we were aware of it. God knew what had to happen for us to be saved when we didn't have a clue. **At the core of salvation is the reality of being Known by God.**

Our knowledge of God and our experience of knowing God fades and shifts, BUT His Knowledge of us Never changes – (cf: OMNISCIENCE)

This resonates with what Bob preached last week from Eph 1 on God's loving choice and the grace of predestination. He is the initiator, the one who brings and accomplishes salvation.

Certainly, God knows ABOUT us, but biblically he KNOWS US. THIS conveys the idea of an unqualified relational blessing. (Rosner)

Walter Eichrodt writing about Hosea says "God knows his people means that **He has introduced them into a permanent relationship of the closest mutual belonging.**"

J.I. Packer writes in Knowing God:

p. 44-45 kindle version

In Gal 4 Paul makes know the priority of the grace in our knowledge of God. God's grace comes first. He knows us first. **We know Him because he first singled us out by grace. The use of "know" in this way reflects his loving, choosing, redeeming, calling and preserving.**

Jeremiah 1:5...Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born I set you apart"...

God's knowledge of those who are his is associated with his whole purpose of saving mercy. It is a knowledge that implies personal affection, redeeming action, and covenant faithfulness. ...

*What matters supremely, therefore, is not, in the last analysis, the fact that I know God, but the larger fact which underlies it—the fact that He knows me. I am graven on the palms of His hands. I am never out of His mind. All my knowledge of Him depends on His sustained initiative in knowing me. I know Him because He first knew me and continues to know me. He knows me as a friend, as one who loves me; and there is no moment when His eye is off me, or His attention distracted from me, and no moment, therefore, when his care falters....*

*There is great comfort in knowing that God is constantly taking knowledge of me in love and watching over me for my good.*

*There is relief in knowing that his love is realistic. He knows the worst about me, so no discovery can disillusion him about me and quench his determination to bless me. ...*

*This knowledge is a cause for humility- he sees all my twisted thoughts and acts and he sees more corruption in me than I see in myself.*

*This is also a great incentive to worship and love God, who for some reason, wants me as his child and has given his son to die for me to make me his own."*

Is there a greater love story than this? **Brian Rosner calls being known by God the "Cinderella of Theology."** We bring nothing to the table with God. We have no pedigree that would attract Him to us. We have no earthly reason He should look at us, but He does.

I like the phrase "Cinderella of Theology" but in a sense I would have to disagree. A better story line that mirrors the Gospel would be the handsome prince going and taking one of the ugly step sisters. Cinderella has traits and attributes that would commend her to the prince – she was kind, loyal, hard-working, and attractive. But the step sisters were mean, greedy, selfish, and unattractive.

We like to think of ourselves in the place of Cinderella – the good gentle people just waiting to be found by the prince. But we are the mean step sisters with nothing to commend us, but THE PRINCE loves us anyway. HE KNOWS US. He is FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES.

I will even correct my own correction because as Bob pointed out last week, we're not even the mean step-sisters. They were alive, but We ARE DEAD. Before the prince can find the foot to fit the slipper, he must raise us from the dead.

THE WORLD was stained and scarred by sin and rebellion. All creation is broken and groaning under the power and penalty of sin. We were ensnared by the deception of sin. We know that sin is like a fishing lure – it is shiny and appealing, but it has a hook. It wants to catch us.

Every sin has a “gotcha” but Jesus was sent to “getcha” – A. Stanley

**That's what Christmas is about – The FAITHFUL God sends His Son to get a people for His own possession.**

To be known by God means he OWNS us. You can't spell k-n-o-w-n without O-W-N

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/book-review/known-god-review/>

**Brian Rosner: Known by God**

**The eight things we should do if we want to know ourselves as we are known by God:** These are practices of those who are owned by God. Honestly, that idea rubs us the wrong way, but it is biblical. Gal 3:19; 1 Pet 1:19, Acts17:11; 1 Cor 6:20 all refer to our being bought with a price – the blood of Christ. Therefore we should glorify God with our bodies – all we do and say.

EX: like a marriage – “you are not your own; you belong to one another”. There are relational practices that you take on when you get married. You even make public vows. SO TOO THERE ARE RELATIONSHIP practices when we belong to Christ..

1. Get baptized;
2. Attend family gatherings;
3. Read and hear the Bible;
4. Pray to our heavenly Father;
5. Sing the faith;
6. Say the Creed;
7. Take communion;
8. Live the gospel

Those practices put us in line with God's agenda for those who are known by Him.

**3 Jesus was Sent so we might be made heirs**

**Not “Who wants to be a Millionaire”, but “Who wants to be a Righteous Heir”**

The heirs of God in Christ get far more than a million \$\$\$. They get eternal life. If you love this world and what it brings – praise of men, pride of life then you'll get it. But that's all. Your reward will be in full here in this life. But if you embrace Christ and who he is for you, you'll have Him in this life and in eternity. Don't work and toil for what can only bring death and separation from God. Repent of loving and trusting in the world for life and meaning. Repent of trusting in your goodness, or lack of badness, as your basis for being acceptable to God.

Rather BELIEVE in the one who was sent, so that you might receive the righteousness that He earned. You can become an heir through faith, not having a righteousness that comes through effort and deed doing, but through Christ alone.

What do you want to inherit from God? Wrath and condemnation or life and peace?

**THE SLAVE BECOMES AN HEIR BECAUSE THE SON BECAME SIN.**

#### CONCLUSION BABY AND THE BUM STORY

Young couple in a truck stop with two kids on holiday travel. The baby kept eyeing and smiling at a bum sitting down the counter. The bum would smile and the baby and play peek-a-boo. The mom was getting uncomfortable as the baby would respond to the bum.

The couple ate quickly and left awkwardly. As they passed the bum he said to the mother...

<< thank you for letting your baby love me>>

As they got in the car, she was troubled by the encounter and her reactions and feelings and then realized, "I'm the bum and God sent his son to love us."

The TABLE represents how God sent his son to love us.

Come to the Table

"What Child is This?"

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