

# Knowing Like God Knows

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## **Genesis 3:5**

*...your eyes will be opened and you will be like God,  
knowing good and evil.*

*You will be like God.* Alluring words, but deadly ones, because they flow from a forked-tongue. “Like God” sounds good until you look at the details: “knowing like God knows” means knowing what is good and what is evil just like God knows what is good and what is evil.

How *does* God identify what is good and what is evil? He does it by using His own goodness to evaluate all else. It works perfectly for Him, but only because He is good through and through. It doesn't work for any other being, natural or supernatural. The serpent's alluring words spring from a warped character and lead to death. The same thing happens when we use our own character to evaluate our circumstances, because we also aren't good through and through – our forked-hearts kill our joy. Knowing like God knows can only be done by God.

We each slide into God's place all the time. I repeatedly use my heart (with all its flaws) to evaluate whether something (or someone) I encounter is good for me or bad for me, beneficial or harmful, satisfying or lacking. I am quite sure of myself when it comes to deciding what is okay and what is not. Knowing like God knows is not some abstract user-useless truth. Believing that we can discern what's good for us (and what isn't) lies behind resentment, discouragement, bitterness and a host of other maladies. It impacts our response to suffering. It often leads to a sense of alienation from God.

Pain readily exposes our doubt of God's goodness towards us. We believe easily enough that He is caring for us when God is (according to us) being reasonable. But how about when He crosses over our line and goes too far? What if He trespasses into territory we've claimed for ourselves? (I do, after all, have my limits. So do you.) We each think we can recognize which circumstances are beneficial and which are “too much.” We use our reactions – our preferences, our pleasure, our pain – to define what is good. But if I resent something does that guarantee it's bad for me? When God blocks my goal is He doing me wrong? Do I sometimes assume that God does evil? Is that what I'm thinking? Sure sounds that way.

What's gone wrong? Are our eyes really open? Not really. Did the fall blind us to goodness and give us schizophrenic-like delusions of deprivation and shame? Yes it did.

Let me say it again: Knowing like God knows can only be done by God. The job of defining when things have gone too far belongs not to us but to Him. *He* knows our needs; we aren't that clever. *He* guards us from “too much.” Always. Romans 8:28 tells us that all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose. All things. By His mercy, I love Him and He has called me. This means that pain as well as pleasure works for good. It means I'm never overburdened because God never overburdens me. There's nothing to resent. There is no deprivation in Christ.

Is it ever appropriate to say no, to cut back on activity, to wisely deal with pains and pressures? Of course. But our “no’s” should come from wisdom, not from arrogant attempts to out-think God. Not from resentment because we think He has ignored our limits and brought too much pain into our lives. God never allows “too much” for those who belong to Him – that’s His heart.

**Prayer:**

Thank you, Lord, for exposing my attempts to slide into your place. Teach me to honor *your* definition of what is good and what is evil. Teach me to trust your heart; teach me that you never take me into any event that will not work out far better than the events I plan. Teach me to yield to the truth that “knowing like God knows” can only be done by you.

**A Few Questions**

- How do you explain to yourself the difficult times we encounter?
- If you were to describe God character, what would you say He's like? Do you see Him as uninvolved in the nitty-gritty details of our lives? As loving but passive? As indifferent? Uncaring? Unable to make things work out better? As demanding? As one who shapes us up by punishing us? (Anything other ideas that you hold?)
- Think of a time or event where you would have written a different story for your life (or someone else's) than the one God wrote. How would you have improved His plan?
- How do your ideas about God lead you to doubt that His plan for your life is better than yours? How would your ideas about Him have to change for you to trust He's being good to you?
- How do your ideas about yourself lead you to believe that your plans for your life are better than God's? How would your ideas about yourself have to change for you to entrust yourself to His care?