

Before the Beginning

(Sermon Notes)

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There can be nothing more important, than that we know about God – and that we understand how intimately involved He is in our lives. The question becomes; how well do we know God?

In our minds and hearts, is God **near**, is He with us continually, or is He **far** away? I submit that for too many people – especially those in God's Church – God is too **remote** in their lives and thinking. How can we know more about God – for Him to be more **real** to us?

How can we know more about God in order to **draw nearer** to Him? Certainly, we are known of God – God knows us – and there is no place on earth where we could hide from Him, even if we wanted to do so. Psalm 139 is all about how well **God knows us**: David wrote:

Psalm 139:1 O LORD, thou hast searched me, and **known me**.

Psalm 139:2 Thou know my sitting down and mine uprising, thou understand my **thoughts** afar off.

Psalm 139:3 Thou compass my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with **all my ways**. [God knows what makes us tick]

Psalm 139:4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

Psalm 139:7 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

Psalm 139:8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

Psalm 139:9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Psalm 139:10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

Psalm 139:11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

Psalm 139:12 Yea, the darkness hides not from thee; but the night shines as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

Psalm 139:13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

Psalm 139:14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that, my soul knows right well.

Psalm 139:15 My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Psalm 139:16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Psalm 139:17 How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of **your thoughts of me!**

Psalm 139:18 If I should count them, they are **more in number** than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

The whole purpose of God knowing us so well is so that He can bring us to perfection – so that we came be perfectly in His image.

Psalm 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

Psalm 139:24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

2Timothy 2:19 ...The Lord knows them that are His.

Luke 12:7 Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Psalms 139:16 is an understatement in that – not only as David put it – “all my members were written,”... God not only knows our DNA – but He knows the atomic and molecular components that make up our individualistic brain cells and neurons. God has given us a human brain and fired it to life and reason. The brain is the most complicated mechanism in the universe – by far! But, add to that brain the workings of God’s Holy Spirit and what do you have? **You have a Child of God.**

God knows our heart and mind and thoughts. Now, what about the other way around? **How well do we know God?**

God reveals a great deal **about Himself** in the Scriptures. And knowing what God has revealed about Himself will aid our relationship with Him greatly. Sadly, in the mind of many, apostasy and heresy have turned God into a nebulous unknown and distant thing, too distant to ever have a personal relationship with. God is not a closed and unapproachable trinity as most teach, but an open, accessible, lovable and expanding God family.

Even today, many people will attest that they believe in God, but, He is a remote God; only there for times of crisis, but really very far from their daily lives. The reality of God is more than most people care to think about. The concept of fully and entirely submitting our own will to God’s sovereign rule in our lives is more than most people can conceive of.

How many people in God’s Church know of the Sabbath, the Holy Days, and the words of Jesus Christ – and think that because they know those things, they **have it made**?

Understand this, it is not a matter of “knowing about the holy things,” but a matter of “living them” by making them the primary part of our lives. The Scripture says:

James 1:22 Be ye **doers** of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

There was a time when I would have paraphrased this verse with, “Talk is cheap, you are only fooling yourself if you are not **living** it.” I found this statement – and I love how well it is written.

“Salvation lies **not** in **belief** of a concept, but in literally following the narrow path to enlightenment.”

When I found that, I said to myself, wow! I’ve never seen it put more succinctly! “Salvation lies not in belief of a concept, but in **literally following** the narrow path to enlightenment.”

The most important role of a minister is to help brethren **look to God** – and draw near to God. Anything else is to come short of a minister’s responsibility.

The most important role of a minister is **not** marriage counseling and weddings; It is not comforting those who have lost loved ones as we place their remains in the earth; It is not teaching doctrine to those who are newly called... The most important role of a minister is to help brethren look to God and draw near to Him; It is to point the brethren **directly** to God in His capacity to give them eternal life in His Son Jesus Christ.

A true minister of Jesus Christ should never **promote** himself, his name, or his organization, but ought to be directing people’s thoughts and prayers directly to God.

We need to **know God** and understand more about the workings of God so that we are better able to emulate Him in all that we do. God is real – He does real things. Let’s look at how long ago God began planning on our being His children who would be near and dear to Him.

What was God thinking **before** He began the creation— **before the beginning**? Let me add some perspective to this:

When I was a kid, I loved the funny papers. I would read them every Sunday morning. I liked the comic strip “Peanuts,” by Charles Schulz.

Imagine for a moment that Charlie Schulz is god of his little world - a miniature society of young children. Charlie Schulz is the cartoonist who wrote comic strip "Peanuts" featuring the characters Charlie Brown, Peppermint Patty, Lucy and Linus, a beagle named, Snoopy, among others).

Charlie Schulz was the creator. As he sat in his art studio at his drawing table He was able to determine the **beginning** of the story and the **end** of the story in each strip. He drew the characters in, and gave them their individual characteristics.

In the same way, **God looks down** at His creation just as Charlie Schulz looked down on his comic strip. From a single perspective God sees the beginning and the end – He even determines what the beginning and the end are.

God is gracious enough to tell us a lot **about the end** – that is what the Biblical glimpses on **prophecy** are all about. God says:

Isaiah 46:10 Declaring the end **from the beginning**, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Isaiah 46:11 ... I have spoken it, I will also **bring it to pass**; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

Isaiah 14:24 Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed so it shall stand.

Physical and Spiritual are as different as a flat two-dimensional comic strip on paper is – from living and breathing three dimensional real life beings. God reveals this about His Creative reality:

Psalms 102:25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.

Psalms 102:26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

Psalms 102:27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

The very name of God, "I Am," denotes **His constancy**; God is what He has always been, and what He is, is what He will always be.

Malachi 3:6 For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

James 1:17 "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is **no variation** or shifting shadow.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

The primary context of God's immutability is that He keeps His promises. It is important to God that we know and can trust that He will do what He says He will do, whether bringing good or evil, or mercy or wrath. God will do what He has said He will do, and all that He has planned to do — He will bring it to pass. (Isaiah 46:11)

God is constant. He does not change: He does not grow; He does not evolve; and He does not develop—He is immutable and unchangeable.

Acts 17:31 He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man [Jesus Christ] whom He has ordained.

The Day of Judgment is certain for the Judge, and His purpose is constant. It may seem **to us** that God changes – but that is just His **mercy** being extended that we might endure the trial, His **compassion** being enacted,

His **patience** prevailing, and His **forgiveness** overriding our transgressions.

The first workings of God took place in the period **before** the beginning of time and space – up until the creation of spirit beings and earth's destruction prior to the creation of the first man—Adam. That was the pre-creation, pre-Adamic period. In the beginning, there was only God the Father and the Word, who became Jesus Christ (John 1:1-2).

John adds greatly to our narrative by explaining that prior to the physical creation of the universe there was a previous “beginning.”

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word [Jesus Christ] was God. The same was in the beginning with God [the Father].

God's ultimate creation comes about in dual stages—first physical (from our point of view) and then ultimately, spiritual. (Though the spiritual actually pre-dated anything physical). The physical is temporal, but the spiritual is eternal. God is interested in the **end product** of His creation – and that is – spiritually created beings in the exact image of God's Spiritual Character.

The beloved apostle John expounded on how the Plan of God's material manifestation began – as he quickly transitioned into some of its spiritual components: This takes place much earlier than the Genesis narrative of creation:

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word [Jesus Christ], and the Word was with God [the Father], and the Word was God.

Jesus Christ is God and has always been God – and always will be God. Even when He was on earth in a temporary fleshly body – He was the one who was the Creator God – Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, **God with us** (Matthew 1:23).

The Bible reveals that God indeed has a Plan for mankind. God created man so that man could become God. As part of God Plan, Jesus came among men. God came into the fleshly realm of man in order for man to be able to attain unto the spiritual sphere that is God's. This is the great mystery of the ages. The most amazing thing is that it is so plainly hidden in open sight right here in the pages of the Bible. Speaking of Jesus:

John 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Here, John begins to interface with the Genesis account.

John 1:5 And the light [God's Truth, God's Word, God's Way] shone in darkness; and the darkness [Satan's way] comprehended it not.

This dark world still is unable to see what God has in store for all. The Scriptures reveal that even **infinity** is not a limiting factor for the incredible Plan of God – because, after all, infinity is only limitless time – and God **supersedes** time and space.

God the Father and Jesus were the only two beings that existed. God the Father is the eternal, glorious, supreme Creator of the heavens and the earth, the source of all life. The Father created all things **by and through** Jesus Christ.

We are told in Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

As temporal, physical beings we like to say things like, “God has existed forever and ever.” “God has existed for all past eternity.” And we think of it as being a long, long time. Actually, time, matter and space did not exist in the very beginning—only God existed. There were only God the Father and Jesus Christ the Word. Time, as we know and experience it, had not yet begun. Time, matter and space are a part of God's physical creation for the purpose of bringing about His Plan.

Genesis speaks of a later beginning—the beginning of physical matter, energy, light and time. God's Plan began way before that. The Book of Genesis begins with the **physical** creation of the universe. God does not reveal how He brought about such a vast and magnificent handiwork—He simply states that He did so. Man, with all his brilliance, is unable to understand even the basic building blocks of that wonderful work.

Hebrews 1:2 [God] hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also **he made** the worlds.

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and **upholding all things** by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

The Bible reveals that God the Father created all things, including the vast universe, **by** and **through** His Son, Jesus Christ. What preceded the actual creation of the heavens and earth? Obviously, there was a great deal of forethought and interaction that went on between Jesus and His Father prior to His first creative actions.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning **God created** the heaven and the earth.

Jesus, through His eternal creative power sustains the entire universe.

We are told in Hebrews 1:2 that it was through the Son that the Father "made the worlds."

A better translation of "worlds" is "ages." The Father created the ages through Jesus. The Bible speaks of "Ages," and refers to the divisions of time, history, and culture from eternity past to eternity future.

Without a physical universe, there would be no such thing as "time." Modern scientists have formulated how energy, mass, radiant light and time are functions of physical laws. Energy as a component of matter is equal to the speed of light **times** the mass of materials, **times** the speed of light again! That means that there is an incredibly enormous amount of energy stored up in every bit of matter that Jesus created. It is Jesus Christ who restrains these phenomenal forces by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3).

Physical laws are subject to God – He supersedes all. Physical laws, whether Copernican or Quantum-Mechanics, operate well below the threshold of God's **spiritual realm**. Nicolaus Copernicus, a Renaissance mathematician and astronomer, is incorrectly credited for formulating a model (1543) of the universe that placed the Sun rather than the Earth at the center of the universe, and had the earth rotating on its axis. Actually long before the 1500's the ancient Israelites, Arabs, and the Phoenicians are known to have sailed from the area that is now Lebanon and Israel, to points all around the globe because of their correct understanding of the solar system.

1Kings 10:11 The navy also of [King] Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones.

1Kings 10:22 King [Solomon] had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. [Solomon's navy brought copper from Upper Peninsula Michigan, USA for use in the construction of the Temple.]

Hebrews 2:10 For it became [God], for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto **glory**...

That is us – **glorified** spirit beings, just as God the Father and Jesus Christ are **glorified** spirit beings. And we will be a part of the Family of God forever more. God's Plan is to create us as full-fledged sons and daughters in His image as God-beings. As such, we will be born into spirit-life beings possessing the same qualities of holy righteous character as our glorious brother, Jesus Christ. Noticed how we are lumped-into **one** with Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 2:11-12 For both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause [Jesus] is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, I will declare thy name [Father] unto my brothers and sisters.

Let's review some Scriptures that tell us absolutely that Jesus is the Creator God.

1 Corinthians 8:6 To us there is but one God, the Father, **of whom are all things**, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, **by whom are all things**, and we by Him.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

Many Scriptures testify to the fact that God the Father created all things by and through Jesus Christ:

Colossians 1:16-17 For by Him [Jesus Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

Ephesians 3:9 God **created** all things by Jesus Christ:

Psalms 33:6 By the **word of the Lord** were the heavens **made**; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

It is Jesus, then, who created Adam and Eve, the pre-flood age, this present age, and He will also create the ages to come.

When Paul says in Hebrews 1:3 that God upholds all things [the universe] by the word of His power, it means that Jesus Christ is guiding, powering and sustaining everything through the might and power of His Spirit. Without Christ's ever vigilant support everything would vanish in a split-second just like when matter and anti-matter come together and annihilate one another.

Jesus is the ruler and **sustainer** of all that exists. Not only did Jesus create absolutely everything – He upholds it and keeps it running.

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of his person, and **upholding all things by the word of His power**...

The relationship and bond between God the Father and Jesus Christ represents ideal Godly love and complete harmony.

Before the Beginning

The first act of God, of which we are aware, is this: in their brilliant Godly wisdom and love, they came up with a magnificent Plan – a perfect Plan. God the Father and Jesus Christ decided that they would invest themselves in the greatest **venture** imaginable. Before launching into their Plan, they made absolutely certain that it was perfect and infallible. They covered every contingency – so that nothing would ever destroy their perfect Plan to bring us into their Family. Their Plan was to open their close-knit God-Family **to others!**

Because, they loved one another **before** the foundation of the world, they did not see it as an intrusion **to invite us**, but as an expansion of their perfect love (John 17:24). For them, opening the God-Family to others was an act of sharing and giving of their Spiritual substance and very essence. They wished to share their Eternal God Life with an extended Family.

That mind-boggling concept—that we have been created to be just like God as His sons and daughters, was not an afterthought or a fallback notion—it was the **very objective** of God for all creation—that we might be filled with all the fullness of God!

Ephesians 3:19 To know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge so that ye might be filled with **all the fullness** of God.

That is an **enormous** statement! “Filled with **all the fullness** of God.” Our little minds are incapable of being *filled with **all the fullness** of God.*

We have to be **changed** a lot before that can happen!

God the Father and Jesus Christ determined that their Godly relationship with others must always be perfect and unspoiled in every way; always directed by flawless, righteous character.

Why did God create so vast a universe with so much power and so much potential? It was certainly created with a Plan, and for a purpose.

Isaiah 45:18 Thus says the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He has established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it **to be inhabited**.

The meaning of this verse shows that the purpose for which God created this earth was so that there would be a place for mankind to **live and flourish**.

Let's look at some of the “behind the scenes” workings of God the Father and Jesus Christ before they launched into the masterpiece of creation that shows their hand. From the very beginning God's intention was to bring many sons and daughters to share in His Glory (Hebrews 2:10).

The ultimate goal of God's Plan is seen in the beauty and perfection that will be revealed in the eternal Kingdom of God.

Pre-history – Pre-time

Acts 15:18 Known unto God are **all his works from the beginning** of the world.

That is another really big statement! Let's review it:

Before there were any stars – or sky – or sun – or earth, God established His quintessential Temple in heaven. Brethren, do you understand that there is a perfect spiritual **Eden** in heaven, and there is the perfect spiritual **Temple of God** in heaven, and that the replicas on earth were only **physical** facsimiles of the real thing?

In heaven is the spiritual temple, the prototype or pattern from which the earthly Jerusalem Temple was built. God has other patterns which also reflect the reality of His Plan. The heavenly realities of the Temple and Eden **pre-existed** – even the creation of the physical earth and universe. Notice what Paul is telling us:

Hebrews 9:23 It was therefore necessary that the **patterns** [blueprints] of things in the **heavens** should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

We understand how and why God's spiritual Temple in heaven was off-limits to sinful mankind.

The blood of calves and goats purified the **physical** tabernacle at Jerusalem, and all the vessels of the ministry, **but** it was only the blood of Jesus Christ that could remit the sins of the world – purifying the heavenly things – as Paul put it in Hebrews 9:23.

The patterns which are in heaven are indestructible, while the things on earth are only physical examples of what exists in heaven. God gave His prophets the plans or pattern from which to construct the Tabernacle and the Temple. The patterns in heaven were in place prior to the creation of the physical world.

Acts 7:44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the pattern [**blueprints**] that he had seen [in the Mount].

God showed the **blueprints** to Moses for the construction of the Tabernacle...

Numbers 8:4 And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the **pattern** [blueprints] which the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the candlestick.

And then later to David:

1Chronicles 28:19 All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern [blueprints].

God gave David the **blueprints** of the heavenly Temple and all its accoutrements - so that David could build a stone, timber, and metal temple at Jerusalem. Look at how detailed the **blueprints** were for the Tabernacle:

Exodus 25:8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

Exodus 25:9 According to all that I show thee, after the **pattern** [blueprints] of the tabernacle, and the **pattern** of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

Exodus 25:35 And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick.

Exodus 25:36 Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all it shall be one beaten work of pure gold.

Exodus 25:37 And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it.

Exodus 25:38 And the tongs thereof, and the snuff dishes thereof, shall be of pure gold.

Exodus 25:39 Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.

Exodus 25:40 And look that thou make them after their **pattern** [blueprints], which was shown thee in the mount.

Please understand that all the Holy things we see on earth are only **well thought out** replicas of what previously was established in God's heaven.

Psalms 12:6 The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

Over and over silver goes entirely through the purification process to get pure **sterling** silver. That is what God did with His Plan of creation before He ever began to enact it.

Proverbs 8:22 The Lord possessed me [Wisdom personified, The words of the Lord] in the beginning of his way, **before** his works of old.

This is another place where the title of today's sermon is taken from:

Proverbs 8:23 I was set up from everlasting, **from the beginning, or ever the earth was.**

Proverbs 8:24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

Proverbs 8:25 **Before** the mountains were settled, **before** the hills was I brought forth: [God did not go-off **half-cocked** but tested, purified, every last detail – before He ever started]

Proverbs 8:26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

Proverbs 8:27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

Proverbs 8:28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

Proverbs 8:29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth.

Then, God prepared the face of the earth for man to develop in the character image and likeness of God. This step is necessary because Godly spiritual character cannot be created by fiat. It must be built of free choice, developed over time, and shaped by pressure, until we come to see the true ways of God, and to know that there is a penalty for sin. God created man for the supreme purpose of reproducing Himself.

Carnal sinful man is not yet made in God's image because God has perfect divine character. Development of righteous spiritual character in man is a must for man to be in the likeness of God. It is God's Plan, that **only with our willingness** and **submission** to His sovereignty, will He infuse His holy righteous perfect spiritual character in us.

While salvation is within our grasp, it is not determined until we have finished the race – endured unto the end. How we run and finish that spiritual race has everything to do with how we exercise the true belief – and the **doing**, the living of that belief that has been given to us.

Be ye **doers** of the word, and not hearers only – living it with every fiber of our existence! (James 1:22)

We who have been called have been given the ability to believe in God's sovereignty, providence, protection, and goodness. Our job is to walk through life with the Father and the Son, because through our relationship with them, their fundamental attributes and qualities will always be before us, which is how we will take on the character image of God.

As individuals, we have our part in developing Godly character. Righteous character is the capacity to discern what is right from what is sin, and to choose correctly by resisting the wrong and taking a stand for what is true. We cannot have this Godly character without the motivation and power of God's Holy Spirit.

And after this, to realize that spiritual character is a gift of God. Each and everyone must overcome sin and cultivate Godly spiritual character during this lifetime in order to be born into the Kingdom of God!

God does nothing without purpose; no more than anyone would go out and build a barn for which he has no use. So, for what purpose was the universe created?

Of the increase of God's domain there will be no end. The vastness of the heavens not only points to His unlimited power to create, but it is also an indication of God's extensive Plan to extend His Family.

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of His empire and peace there shall be no end.

End: Before the Beginning