The Existence and Knowability of God

I. The Existence of God - How do we know that God exists?

The answer can be given in two parts:

First, all people have an inner sense of God.

Second, we believe the evidence that is found in Scripture and in nature.

A. Humanity’s Inner Sense of God

All persons everywhere have a deep, inner sense that God exists, that they are his creatures, and that he is their Creator (Romans 1:21, 25, 19; Psalm 14:1; 10:3-4; Romans 1:18, 23).

In the life of a Christian this inner awareness of God becomes stronger and more distinct. We begin to know God as our loving Father in heaven (Rom. 8:15), the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16), and we come to know Jesus Christ living within our hearts (Eph. 3:17; Phil. 3:8, 10; Col. 1:27; John 14:23).

B. Believing the Evidence in Scripture and Nature

Clear evidence of God’s existence is also seen in Scripture and in nature (Genesis 1:1; Romans 1:20; Acts 14:17; Psalm 19:1-2).

For those who are correctly evaluating the evidence, *everything* in Scripture and *everything* in nature proves clearly that God exists and that he is the powerful and wise Creator that Scripture describes him to be. Therefore, when we believe that God exists, we are basing our belief *not* on some blind hope apart from any evidence, but on an overwhelming amount of reliable evidence from God’s words and God’s works.

C. Traditional “Proofs” for the Existence of God

1. The cosmological argument

2. The teleological argument

3. The ontological argument

4. The moral argument

The value of these proofs, then, lies chiefly in overcoming some of the intellectual objections of unbelievers. They cannot bring unbelievers to saving faith, for that comes about through belief in the testimony of Scripture.

D. Only God Can Overcome Our Sin and Enable Us to Be Persuaded of His Existence (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 1:21; 2:5)
II. THE KNOWABILITY OF GOD

A. The Necessity for God to Reveal Himself to Us (Romans 1:19; Matthew 11:27; 1 Corinthians 1:21; 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; John 1:18)

B. We Can Never Fully Understand God (Psalm 145, 147, 139; Isaiah 55:9)
It is not only true that we can never fully understand God; it is also true that we can never fully understand any single thing about God. His greatness (Ps. 145:3), his understanding (Ps. 147:5), his knowledge (Ps. 139:6), his riches, wisdom, judgments, and ways (Rom. 11:33) are all beyond our ability to understand fully.

We might become frustrated that God is a subject of study that we will never master! But if we delight in the fact that God alone is God, that he is always infinitely greater than we are, that we are his creatures who owe him worship and adoration, then this will be a very encouraging idea. Even though we spend time in Bible study and fellowship with God every day of our lives, there will always be more to learn about God and his relationships to us and the world, and thus there will always be more that we can be thankful for and for which we can give him praise.

C. Yet We Can Know God Truly
Even though we cannot know God exhaustively, we can know true things about God. In fact, all that Scripture tells us about God is true.

Even more significantly, it is God himself whom we know, not simply facts about him or actions he does.

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the LORD. (Jer. 9:23–24)

We have a far greater privilege than mere knowledge of facts about God. We speak to God in prayer, and he speaks to us through his Word. We commune with him in his presence, we sing his praise, and we are aware that he personally dwells among us and within us to bless us (John 14:23). Indeed, this personal relationship with God the Father, with God the Son, and with God the Holy Spirit may be said to be the greatest of all the blessings of the Christian life.