

4. God and Man Together

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4.1 Understanding Heaven-Earth

I must now explain something to you about yourself and the world in which you live.

God had mercy upon mankind's first parents by covering them over with the skin of an animal, and thus blinding the eyes of their spirits so that they could no longer see the heavens all around us. God did not remove heaven from earth, or else life on earth would have ceased. Rather, God covered over the original human ability to see the full intertwining of heaven with earth. Thus you, as well as all other humans, have been blind to the obvious, that we live in heaven just as much as we live upon the earth. Heaven and earth are one place.

Inside of God. First, we must understand that everything exists only inside of God, inside His thoughts and substance, as Paul said to the unbelievers in Athens. **[God] is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being** (Acts 17:27-28).

If you go into the deepest parts of the earth or to the furthest reaches of the stars, God is as much all here now as He is. David stated that the Spirit of God contains in Himself all who dwell even in Sheol, the place of the dead (Psalm 139:8).

Nothing can ever be separate from God nor can anything exist apart from being continuously sustained by the good-speaking of Jesus, as Paul said: **For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things** (Romans 11:36).

Heaven Is Created. Heaven is created. The heavens intertwined with the earth are as created as earth is and so are all the living beings dwelling in the heavens.

God is not heaven; heaven is not God. **Heaven is passing away.** Nonetheless, God fills the heavens as He fills all things, and the heavens exist inside of God as much as you and I do.

More than that, heaven is as much a part of your human construction as earth is. In a sense you have two bodies; you have a physical body made out of physical material through which you communicate with physical things, and you have a heavenly body made out of heavenly substance through which you communicate with heavenly things.

Death. Now, I said, "in a sense," because in actuality your spirit and your body are utterly intertwined. Your earthly body cannot live, and its molecules cannot remain together unless your heavenly spirit is breathing life all through your body. Death is the splitting apart of heaven and earth. Death is when your heavenly spirit is ripped apart from your earthly body. Death is your enemy; death is God's enemy; death is evil.

James put it this way: **The body without the spirit is dead** (James 2:26). Jesus came to eliminate death: **Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel** (1 Timothy 1:10).

Union of Heaven and Earth. Now, believers in Jesus who go through that experience of having their bodies and their spirits ripped apart do continue inside of Christ, just as we are. Yet they are not whole; they are only partly there. Humans are, by nature, the full union of heaven and earth. Death is utterly contrary to how God made us.

Those believers who exist, now, in heaven-only, though in a condition contrary to salvation, are waiting with eager anticipation for that moment when

they get their earth bodies back. And so Paul said, **“The dead in Christ will rise first”** (1 Thessalonians 4:16). That is, they will get their brand-new earth bodies restored to them first before our present dying bodies are swallowed up by life (2 Corinthians 5:4).

Normal Seeing. Let’s bring this understanding into your present experience. Consider someone who is physically blind from birth. That person is fully aware of the physical things of earth, but not in the way you know things because you have physical sight. In exactly the same way, you are fully aware of the spiritual things of the heavens, but not in the way you would be if you had your normal spirit eyes restored to you.

Here is an account of a person receiving normal human eyesight of the heavens. **And Elisha prayed, and said, “Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha** (2 Kings 6:17).

We Live in Heaven. Heaven is all around us all the time; we are as much a part of heaven right now as we are part of earth. Read the whole story of Elisha and his servant. The servant was blind, as all humans are blind. When Elisha asked God to open the servant’s eyes, he became, for a moment, a normal human being, able to see the obvious.

We live in heaven, and heaven is all around us. More than that, everything happening in the earth is moved upon by its counterpart in the heavens every moment. Nothing of earth exists apart from its heavenly counterpart, and nothing in heaven operates except in conjunction with its earthly counterpart.

Exercising Your Spirit. You are quite familiar with heavenly things, though most humans do very little to train their spirits to function as full heavenly beings. Learning to make use of your spirit-heavenly abilities is a large part of Paul’s teaching to the church.

Now that you are immersed into the Holy Spirit, with the Spirit of God able to flow freely through your mind, emotions, and intentions, you are able to learn to make use of your heavenly giftings and abilities. A big part of why God gave you a heavenly language is for you to exercise your spirit so that you can comprehend heavenly power and life. Just as an athlete exercises his or her body, so you as a believer in Jesus should also be exercising your spirit.

Utterly Together. Consider an earthly neighborhood. On this block is a church filled with godly and Spirit-filled believers in Jesus. Over on that block is a tavern with a hidden room that could only be called a “den of iniquity.” Good and evil are in close proximity to one another in the earth; the heavens are exactly the same. All angelic beings and all dead humans, whether Christians or not, exist in the realm of the heavens. That realm is pictured for us by earth’s atmosphere, but at the same time, that realm is also contiguous with earth’s atmosphere.

Heaven and earth are utterly together, for they are one place; more than that, their parts are always corresponding with one another in very similar ways.

The World. Now, we will speak a bit more about the “place of the dead” in Chapter 5. Here we want to understand a bit more about this dynamic heaven/earth realm in which we presently exist.

The New Testament writers used the Greek word, “*cosmos*,” to refer to heaven/earth, meaning, the “orderly” arrangement of everything. *Cosmos* is typically translated into “the world” in English, meaning the present system of inter-relationships among heavenly and earthly entities, the inter-weaving of angels and demons and humans, regenerate and unregenerate, of living and dead. This entire cosmos is filled with awfulness because of the human refusal to be what we are, the image of God in weakness.

Substance versus Appearance. Now, the most important thing I want you to gain from this

discussion of the cosmos in which we presently exist is the Biblical principle of the relationship between substance and appearance. Substance is what IS; appearance is what things “look like.” These two things are typically very different.

This relationship between substance and appearance operates at two different levels. The first level is that everything that appears in our lives on this earth IS being acted upon by persons or substances of the heavens. Learning to see how heavenly substance is acting upon earthly appearance is a spirit quality that Paul calls, “discernment.”

By Faith Not Sight. But there is a far deeper level of substance and appearance. The substance of all things is found in the infinite thoughts of God. Nothing real exists that God does not first know inside Himself. (**God thinks no evil** – 1 Corinthians 13:5) However, external appearance inside this present death-filled cosmos is very different from the real substance of things inside of God. This is why **we walk by faith and not by sight**; that is, we go by what God says, not by what our eyes or our human judgement imagines to be “real.”

Consider Paul’s excessive statement. **If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God** (2 Corinthians 5:7 & 17-18).

What God Says. In order for you to know Jesus **as He IS**, you must understand the full implications of Paul’s words. Reality is what God says; appearance in this present age of darkness is something entirely different. In substance, that is, inside the knowledge of God, old things ARE passed away and all things ARE made new. But in our present outward appearance, what we seem to “see” all around us, everything appears as if the old IS and the new is NOT.

This reality enables us to understand one of the most important Bible statements concerning God.

God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist {in appearance} as though they did {already in substance} (Romans 4:17).

We live by faith in what God says, not by what our eyes “see.”

4.2 Our Human Weakness

You began this journey of knowing Jesus as He is by knowing Jesus as the One who lives in Person inside your heart. We never leave that initial knowing of Jesus; all things “deeper” are found only here.

But let’s look at Paul’s words in a slightly larger context, Ephesians 3:17-19. **That Christ might dwell inside your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded inside of love, might be fully able to seize hold of, to comprehend together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth {of the full extent of God}, and to know even more the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ, that you might be filled unto and with all the fullness of God.**

The Biggest Statement. Being filled with all the fullness of God is simply the largest statement in the Bible and in the universe, and utterly incomprehensible and overwhelming. Yet we cannot know anything about God or man, about Christ or salvation unless we deal with these words head on.

You were custom designed, dear reader, to contain ALL of God in Person inside your human frame. Look down at your lowly human form; what do you see by appearance? – Weakness. What do you see by substance according to the Word God speaks? – The container of all the fullness of God in Person. Your human weakness is your glory.

God Designed You. But we have this treasure {all the fullness of God} in earthen vessels {our human weakness}, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us (2 Corinthians 4:7). This is your

reality forever. Another Person, God All-Carrying, lives inside of you in all that He is.

I want to talk about the beauty, glory, and importance of your very human weakness. **Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves** (Psalm 100:3). You did not design or make yourself; God did. And He made you exactly as you are for the best of intentions. God designed you as you are to be filled with Himself.

Made Perfect. Let's begin with Jesus' personal definition of His ongoing relationship with you. **Jesus said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect inside of weakness"** (2 Corinthians 12:9). That word, "perfect," means "bring to full completion," with the concept of a step-by-step transformation.

Let's paraphrase what Jesus said to Paul and to us. (Put your own name in the blank and hear Jesus speaking to you.) "_____, My grace, My presence in Person in all that I am alive inside Your heart, is all that you need. I am enough for you, for My strength, My ability to fulfill every Word God speaks is made perfect, comes to its full completion, only inside your human weakness."

When I Am Weak. Paul goes on to say, in response to Jesus alive inside of him, **Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong** (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Yet it is much more than Christ in us; the Father is inside of Christ, who is the Connector between us and God.

It is clear, then, that God created us weak AND with the perfect capacity to fit with, to contain, and to know Himself as strength inside of us. Those who would be strong and wise towards God in themselves cannot know Jesus as He is.

Despising Human Weakness. You are well aware, however, of the great hatred against human weakness that permeates most humans and human society. The evil one despises human weakness as the image of God and prefers to parade an image of arrogant superiority as "what God looks like." Stay free from that false image, the despising of human weakness, by knowing God only inside of Jesus living inside of your heart through faith.

I have stated that God has given us specific pictures of Himself through Jesus, the One who shows us the Father. I want to show you the most important of those pictures.

Jesus Stumbled. After the trial of Jesus, John saw and reported that Jesus left that trial carrying His cross (John 19:17). But the other three gospel writers stated that another, Simon of Cyrene, carried the cross for Jesus (Matthew 27:32). In between these two accounts, it is clear that Jesus stumbled under a cross He could not carry, weakened as He was by the whips and thorns.

The gospel writers do not give us an account of Jesus' stumbling, but the implication placed there by God is clear. You see, this same Jesus had told His own disciples – **If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me** (Matthew 16:24).

The Image of God. So, you must ask yourself – What is a Christ who stumbles under a cross He cannot carry? There is only one answer – the very likeness and image of God.

Place these three things together. A Man on His face in the dirt under a cross He cannot carry. – **He that has seen Me has seen the Father. – Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever.**

God is giving us a picture of Himself as the One who carries all. God used Simon of Cyrene to show us Himself carrying Jesus, who Himself was carrying us, all the way through a path we could not go ourselves,

all the way through death and into life. – This is our Father.

Rooted and Grounded in Love. Then consider the entirety of Ephesians 3:17-18 as a whole. Paul begins with Jesus alive in our hearts and ends with our being filled with all the fullness of God. Yet between these two, each more glorious than we can grasp, He places three things. First is that you ARE rooted and grounded inside of love. **God is love.**

In fact, here is a description Paul gives us of the Father as Love. It is entirely appropriate to place “Father,” all the way through. **Love {Father} is patient and kind; Father is not envious; Father is not boastful, is not puffed up, Father does not act improperly, does not seek His own, is not easily provoked, Father keeps no account of wrongs [thinks no evil], Father does not rejoice at injustice, but rejoices together with the truth. Father covers for all, believes for all, hopes for all, carries for all. Father never fails** (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

Embedded in Love. Paul is saying that, because Jesus lives in your heart, and because God created you weak so that He could reveal Himself through you, for that reason (and many more reasons besides), God has utterly embedded you in all your humanity, inside of His tangible, unfailing LOVE, a love that carries all.

Rooted and grounded in love.

Then Paul assumes that God in us is not enough for us, not really, but rather, our knowing of God in us. And so he positions the biggest statement ever uttered in the universe – **filled with all the fullness of God** – as a knowing which we seize hold of as Christians together. – **The breadth and length and height and depth** {of the full extent of God}.

Knowing the Love of Christ. The most important part of this knowing for us, however, the place where it begins in our hearts as well as every point at which our knowing touches this God who is

too BIG and too BOLD and too KIND for us is this – **to know even more the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ.**

When Jesus said that age-unfolding life IS knowing God, He meant knowing Love. And this knowing of love happens for us inside of every step that we take.

Here is our reality. God created us weak, and He did so as the perfect counterpoint for His glory inside of us. Then, God took us in our weakness and embedded us, every step that we take, utterly inside of His LOVE.

Know Being Encased in Love. Here is one of the great keys to knowing Jesus as He is. You must KNOW, first, all through your being, that you CANNOT, and that God created you that way. (And we are not speaking of the Godly human desire to excel at doing well in practical or creative things, but rather, of any attempt to “act like” or to be “in agreement with” a “God” whom we do not know.)

And then you must KNOW, all through your being, that God has so embedded you in your weakness inside of His love that it is impossible for you to take any step apart from that love directing your way. **Rooted and grounded in Love**, that is, in God. – **Know even more the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ.**

4.3 Filled with God

And to know even more the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19).

Filled with all the fullness of God! What do you do with a word like this? The primary response is to scoff with some form of the serpent’s words: **Did God really say that?** Many, reading these words, will respond with, “*You can be, if you make yourself better*

by some form of human performance, such as 'hear and obey,' or 'keep the law,' or 'try your best.'"

But you have learned only one response to every word God speaks – **Let it be to me according to Your Word** – and then believing we have received.

Life Is Knowing. If God is God, then God is All Here Now and Personal in every moment of time and in every point of space. If God is God, then ALL of God in Person has to fill every particle of all creation and every created entity in fullness. That is not the issue. The issue is that no one knows.

Life is not "God" per se; life is knowing God. And knowing comes into us only through faith, only through our receiving into ourselves every word God speaks as Christ our life. The fact that you are filled with all the fullness of God, then, in itself, means nothing and changes nothing – for you (except that you would not exist otherwise). But knowing God filling you full is something entirely different.

Let It Be to Me. How do you KNOW that you are filled with all of God? The answer to that question will increase forever. But we do know exactly where we must start – **Let it be to me according to Your word.**

Speak these words out loud. "Father, You say that I am filled with all the fullness of Your Being and Person. I ask, Father, that You fulfill this Word in me through and as the Lord Jesus alive inside my heart. I ask that You cause me to know all that You mean by these words of filling me with all that You are. And Father, I believe and know that I have received all that I ask. From this moment forward, I will rejoice in knowing that I am filled with all of Your fullness."

God "Far Away." Now, some might think, "*Hey, God is God and I'm just a tiny human, how on earth could I contain inside my being all that is God in Person?*" Others might think, "*I make mistakes all the time. I sometimes do wicked and hurtful things. God is perfect. If God were filling me full, then I would do thus*

and so---. And because I am not doing thus and so ---, then it is clear to me that I am not filled with God."

Do you see how the evil one uses the sight of the eyes and the judgment of the human to tempt people to call God a liar? God says, "You are filled with all of My fullness." The serpent says, "*You can be filled with God, yes, but first you must ---.*" All such thinking ends in one horrific place only – "*God is far away from me.*"

The Door. Remember that every word God speaks, including this biggest statement ever uttered in creation, comes into you only through your faith, to become Jesus, that Word fulfilled, alive inside your heart. It's up to Jesus to make the Word God speaks to be what it is; your part is to believe in Him.

But God always places a door between Himself and all who approach Him. A door serves two very different purposes. First, a door swings wide open to welcome in friends and family, and second, a door stays locked shut to keep false intruders out. God's door is always faith in His Word, the Lord Jesus.

What Is Inside of You? You will know what God means by what He says, and especially, what God means by filling you full with all of His fullness in Person, only as you first believe that He is telling you the truth.

Having asked God to fulfill His Word as Jesus in your heart, having believed that you have already received all that you ask, consider, now, the first obvious question. What is inside of you? You know who – the Father through Jesus. What you don't know is what God is. God is Spirit, yes, but we have no idea what Spirit is. God is love, yes, but we have no idea what love is.

Defining God and Man. What is inside of you? And even more, what are you that God fills you full? John said, in 1 John 3:2, that we do not know what we are. So, if we do not know what Spirit is, if we do not know what Love is, what do we know? We know a

Man. – **He that has seen Me has seen the Father** (John 14:9).

Okay, we know what a Man is, or, at least we think we do. What is God's definition of a Man? – the likeness and image of God (Genesis 1:26). It is God who has placed this circular definition before us. To know what God is, we must look at a Man. To know what a Man is, we must look at God.

Man is the appearance of God in creation; humans are what God "looks like."

Showing Us the Father. God did not give us this circular definition to spin us in circles, however, but that we might know God through Jesus sent into the only place we can know Him – in our own human hearts of flesh filled with Jesus.

Remember what Jesus told His disciples just before Gethsemane? – **These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when... I will tell you plainly about the Father** (John 16:25). Then Jesus stopped talking, that is, Jesus showed us plainly who and what God is by carrying us every step of the way through death and into life. It is from that picture, then, of Jesus walking the path of the Atonement, through which we are able to describe God.

A Description of God. Here is my own description of God; this is the One I know.

– God always reveals Himself through weakness, swallowing up into Himself all that we are including our sin and rebellion, becoming us in our present state and limiting Himself by our weakness. Thus, carrying us inside Himself, stumbling and falling along the way, He arises out of death into life, ascending on high, and we inside of Him. –

The God who fills you full with all of Himself in Person is the God who carries you in weakness, embedded utterly in love. **By this we know Love – because Jesus laid down His life for us** (1 John 3:16).

By this we know God – as we look out through Jesus' eyes, stumbling along the way, carried utterly by Father.

Filled with All Fulness. What fills you full? "Filled" means every particle of who and what you are, spirit, soul, and body. "All" means all. There is not a particle, a dimension, a realm, a place, a character trait, a quality that is God that is not also IN you, filling every particle of you as you. All of God. Love. The Holy of the Throne.

The "Fullness" of God. Fullness is billowing, it is exploding-ness, it is above and beyond. All of infinity is inside of you, yes, but infinity in FULLNESS, omnipresence in fullness, omnipotence in fullness, eternity in fullness, holiness in fullness, love in fullness, light in fullness, exploding, billowing, rushing mighty rivers of God, all of Him inside of you, all of Him flowing out of you.

Because I Want To. For over ten years, now, most every night when I awake, and often during the day, I look at myself, at my heart, and I say, in one form or another – "Father, You fill me full with all that You are. You are close, Father; You are part of me."

I have no desire to "control" God; any such nonsense has been stripped from me over years of His grip upon my life. I want to know Him. I want Father to be in me and I want me to be in Father. I want to walk together with God in every step.

What proof do I have that God fills me with all that He is? My proof is my faith in what God speaks. And why do I INSIST on believing such a thing? Because I want to; because I would not be found anywhere else.

Three More Parts of Knowing Jesus. Let's sum up the next three parts of knowing Jesus.

1. Heaven and earth are part of one another, one place together. Heavenly things and earthly things act upon each other continuously. All created things exist

only inside the Spirit and the Knowing of God. What appears in creation may not look to us like the substance out from which it comes.

2. God created humans weak for His purposes. – **That the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.** For that reason, God embeds our human weakness and every particle of our lives inside of His love, **rooted and grounded in love.**

3. God created humans to be filled with all of Himself. Man is created to contain God; man is custom made to fit God; man is what God looks like when He appears inside heaven/earth.