



Relational Knowledge

**in a Modern and
Postmodern World:**

*A Perspective from
Scripture*

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As Western society shifts from a predominately modern orientation to a postmodern perspective¹, many issues arise for the Christian thinker. Among these is the question of knowledge.

The purpose of the paper is to briefly posit a framework for understanding a Biblical view of knowledge—a view that is deeply rooted in the relationship of the Triune God directed to humanity. This will not be an exhaustive work, but rather a sketch work that may help us negotiate an understanding of knowledge within the new cultural currents of postmodernity and the rescinding, or at least moderating, currents of modernity. Moreover, the paper is written for those who have faith in the Triune God; it is not intended to address the starting places that an unbelieving audience might have.



Over the past few centuries, many within the believing community have adapted modern ways of thinking. If we now embrace the idea that absolute certainty of knowledge is a failed experiment, are we then left to embrace postmodernity's relativism? *This paper makes a case that a Biblical understanding of knowledge will lead not to clinging to objective, detached truth systems of modernity or shifting to a relativism of postmodernity but rather to an embrace of relational truth firmly grounded in the omnipresence of the Triune God Who is ultimate reality.*

First, it should be noted that a pursuit of knowledge with absolute certainty is substantially rejected within a postmodern framework. Knowledge statements with absolute certainty are viewed within postmodernity as an impossible project—except to state, paradoxically, the absolute that uncertainty is inevitable. Nevertheless the relevancy of establishing convictions based in knowledge (with various degrees of certainty) is established through the pragmatics of making daily decisions within a global context.²

This paper attempts to articulate a Biblical view of knowledge. That view cannot be characterized as either modern or postmodern. Rather, it is fundamentally based in a relationship with the Triune God Who is ultimate reality. In asserting this stating point, one might assume a slippage of reason. In modernity and postmodernity there is an underlying construct that the human mind is the ultimate judge of knowledge. In modernity the assumption is that the mind can find true knowledge. In postmodernity, this certainty is eroded and at best we have culturally constructed truths within certain contexts. This assumption of human judgment is at once reasonable and problematic. The reasonableness is derived from the sense that knowledge is viewed as “our” knowledge—thus only human reason is capable of making this judgment. Even as modernity has sought objective truths, the goal has always pointed to human acquisition of truths that are verifiable through

¹ The use of the word modernity in this paper refers to a way of reasoning that seeks to yield verifiable objective truth, and postmodernity refers to a philosophical stance that erodes the possibility absolute truth.

² Humanity is faced with making decisions and we base those decisions on some construct of prior knowledge related to the current decision options that will impact future consequences.

human reasoning. Postmodernity has challenged the foundations of such knowing and thus any knowledge derived by a modern process. However in both perspectives, the human mind still exists at the ultimate judge of knowledge. Though reasonable, human judgment, as the ultimate arbitrator of knowledge, is nevertheless problematic. Humanity, with its many shifting positions on a vast array of topics, has displayed the difficulty of coming to a lasting knowledge that is accepted across cultures and generations. This assumption of the priority of the human mind (with few or many limits) places a benchmark within the project of knowledge that is both reasonable and very much an assumption.

Within a Biblical understanding of knowledge, assumptions also arise. This view dismisses the human mind as the ultimate judge of knowledge because ultimate reality is viewed as the transcendent Triune God. Our relationship to Him is thus fundamental to our acquisition of knowledge within certainty limits. This assumption requires humility of heart and mind as a starting point. This assertion of the Triune God as ultimate reality is fundamental to a Biblical view of knowledge, a view that will be called “**relational knowledge**”.

Relational knowledge, based in God as ultimate reality and His relationship to the creation, may seem like a leap of faith for some. And to some extent it is. But it is based upon the evidence of the dependency of humanity. Since, as humans, we have distinct limitations bounded by birth and death, any attempt to establish humanity as an ultimate arbitrator of truth is presumptuous. Thus we surrender to our obvious frailty and decide that God has spoken to us from Scripture.³

To assert that God is ultimate reality is to believe that He alone is independent and transcendent. And yet we must not leave this assertion of knowledge dangling. The remaining topics are written to support our knowing of God Who is ultimate reality. However, this support is never conclusive to the mind for the Triune God is relational. And thus in relationship with Him, we experience Him as ultimate reality. Without some acceptance of His Being as ultimate reality, there is no objective, verifiable system of reasoned logic that can arrive at this position. But given this assumption of God as ultimate reality, the reasonableness of this assertion is affirmed through the experience of His being.

A discussion of a Biblical understanding of relational knowledge requires a look at 1) the guidance of the *Holy Spirit* 2) the embodiment of knowledge as *Jesus Who is the Word*, 3) the special revelation of living words of the Triune Omni-present God through the *Scripture*, 4) the universe as a silent language of God—His *general revelation*, 5) *human language* as a primary conveyor of knowledge, 6) knowledge as *limited* since we see a poor reflection of ultimate reality, shadows of heavenly things and faith, 7) knowledge decisions requiring various degrees of *trust*, 8) human *conscience* seeking to avoid that which is false, 9) *degrees of certainty* and probabilistic cause and effect over varying timeframes, 10) knowledge as *neither objective or relative* but rather relational, 11) our view of knowledge impacting our *transmission* of knowledge, including interpretation, education, socialization and spiritual transformation and 12) the *purpose of knowledge* to reveal and explore the glory and Person of the Triune God Who is ultimate reality. Figure 1 depicts these factors that we will consider in moving toward a Biblical understanding of relational knowledge.

³ This paper will not deal with the rationality of believing that there is a God and that He has spoken through the Scriptures. Rather this paper explores a Biblical understanding of knowledge.

The Triune God is Ultimate Reality



God speaks to us through His ...

1. Holy Spirit
2. Jesus
3. Scripture
4. General Revelation.



This relational knowledge ...

5. Is negotiated through human language
6. Has limits
7. Involves grammar, logic and rhetoric
8. Requires trust
9. Involves our consciences
10. Offers degrees of certainty
11. Is neither an objective or relative view of knowledge
12. Can be transmitted within humanity
13. Always has the purpose of revealing and glorifying God.

Figure 1: Toward a Biblical View of Relational Knowledge

THE TRIUNE GOD, WHO IS ULTIMATE REALITY, SPEAKS TO US

HOLY SPIRIT. The Spirit of God is active in our knowledge. He comes to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11) and to guide us into truth (John 16: 13). Furthermore, the gifts of the Spirit include knowledge and wisdom as well as faith (1 Corinthians 12: 8, 9). To imagine that humanity can understand knowledge of ultimate reality apart from the Spirit of God would be idolatrous of the human mind.

As humans we are called to be open to the Spirit of God. We are called to the place of humility that assumes we are not the final arbitrators of truth about reality. This humble place requires a deep sense of human depravity framed within our dependency. Thus embracing heart attitudes of surrender to God and submission to His Spirit are necessary as we relate to God and experience the joy of knowing Him as ultimate reality.

JESUS, THE WORD. Jesus is the mysterious embodiment of knowledge. Jesus is the Word (John 1:1). He is the truth. He is the way. He is the life (John 14:6).

Thus, knowledge is fundamentally relational in nature. That central relationship is with Jesus. These relational ties may be weak or strong, at peace or hostile, recent or distant. Yet knowledge is experienced through our relationship with ultimate reality—with the Triune God and through the Mediator Jesus. This applies even for those who do not acknowledge God as ultimate reality (see Romans 1:18-23 and Ephesians 4:17-19); their relationship with God is broken but in reality the relationship still exist, if only in a hostile state.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:15-17)

God calls us to know, to relationally experience the Word, Jesus—Who is God. Consider Psalm 34:8: “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” And Romans 2:4 proclaims God reveals His truth through His kindness. The key to understanding Scripture is within the Person of Jesus. And in Him we find that which is good and kind and wise for living life.

SCRIPTURE. The belief in the special revelation of living words of God is foundational to the Christian faith. The Bible is explicit—it is the Word of God. Moreover, these are living words (Hebrews 5:12). The Author (I AM) is Present, not distant or absent, as one reads and meditates on Scripture. This belief transcends a human author’s ability to speak to an audience. As humans, our presence is limited and diminishes over time. However, we trust a trustworthy and present Author. He is the Spirit of God Who speaks to our hearts through the Living Word of Scripture.

Scripture also affirms the relational aspect of knowledge. Psalm 119 proclaims this connectivity between knowledge and relationship with ultimate reality. The passage “The earth is filled with Your love O Lord; teach me Your decrees” (Psalm 119:64) implies this connectivity.



GENERAL REVELATION. The universe can be seen as a silent language communicating to the hearts and minds of people from all languages (Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:20). This knowing is described by the Psalmist as a “voice” and a “speech” that “displays knowledge”. What is clear is that God is displaying His glory before all humanity. Thus, He draws us to Himself as

we acknowledge Him as Creator. However, as humanity often does, we turn a deaf ear to this “speech” and often worship the creation rather than the Creator.

God’s presence is particularly expressed (and unfortunately can be especially distorted) through human beings that God created in His image. Knowledge of God “shows up” in much of our language and cultural artifacts. Our lot as humans is to shift through written, spoken, touch, taste, olfactory and visual data to form our convictions regarding ultimate reality and paths to living life well.

A note of caution is needed at this point. Though God is pouring forth speech through the heavens, it would be wrong to assume this means we are to look to the heavenly bodies as in astrology (which is expressly forbidden by Scripture) to find the specific will of God for our lives—to hear a word from God. Rather we should not neglect to see that the heavens tell us some things, but not everything, about the nature of God. And by extension, all of the natural world points to God Who is ultimate reality and Who is omnipresent.

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF RELATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

HUMAN LANGUAGE. Knowledge can be culturally and creatively constructed within human language. This may sound like a postmodern statement. However, God gave Adam and Eve a profound ability—the ability to describe and manage their world with language. God could have just as easily dictated words for Adam and Eve to memorize, instead He made language dynamic. Thus, a Biblical view of knowledge must include the ability of humanity to create and interpret language—to create knowledge about reality and even to imagine that which is not real.

It is within the cultural community of believers that we understand, interpret and communicate the Living Word of God. Our understanding of Scripture is shaped within this creative cultural process. We cannot eliminate all our cultural frameworks as we seek to understand the meaning of Scripture. This does not imply that Scripture can be freely manipulated to say that which we desire. It does mean that we should seek to understand the original cultural contexts within the Scripture as we read, study and meditate on Scripture. And that we apply the Scriptures within our creative cultural contexts; we are called to take our understandings of God and act upon them with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

And yet as with many good things God has given us (worship, sexuality, food, etc.), He has given boundaries to human creativity. We must continually honor God and not violate His revealed Word. And we must continue to be creative in our living and knowing as we seek to accomplish the first directives of God to humanity: “be fruitful ... multiply ... rule”.

Moreover, God has given believers spiritual gifts. Included are knowledge, wisdom and prophecy. These all deal in the currency of human language. And these gifts are for service within the boundaries of the Scriptures—the revealed knowledge from God.

Furthermore, we often have a sense of knowing even when words fail to describe the experience. For instance, the knowledge of a physical touch in human interaction defies

adequate words. Words are only a shadow of this reality. Try as we may we fail to capture the extent of our knowledge of such acts which may be intended as tender loving or brutal hate. And yet to the receiver of these physical touches, there remains a lingering knowledge. Wordless knowledge often arises as our sense of sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing (devoid of words such as music and wind) are engaged in the reality about and within us.

LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE. Our knowledge (individually and corporately) is always a poor reflection of ultimate reality or a shadow of heavenly things that requires faith within an earthly existence. As much as we humans desire absolute certainty, that certainty is not to be found in this earthly life. We are required to step forth in faith as we see God dimly; as we meditate on shadows of heavenly things. The limits of our humanity, specifically our location in time and space, preclude a clear view of ultimate reality, of the transcendent God.



We see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. 1 Corinthians 13:12

They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. Hebrews 8:5

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. Hebrews 11:1

Though we have Jesus (in heaven and in us), the Living Word of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, God has revealed to us that we still “see but a poor reflection”. Even in these scenarios, we have had to bow to uncertainty in even the simplest of matters. And these uncertainties force the play of trust and doubt. It may well be imagined that the dimensions of heaven do not translate well into the limits of the dimensions of knowing set by God within the human mind and heart while on this earth. And yet we know enough to make decisions based in some measure of trust.⁴

GRAMMAR, LOGIC & RHETORIC. All languages have grammar, logic and rhetoric. Rules of grammar show proper use of words in sentences. Rules of logic indicate paths for making an argument that results in statements of truth based on assumptions (consistency), e.g. “if .. then” statements. And rhetoric accounts for the usages of words to communicate effectively. Words in use can be posited as a logic of intellect, logic of emotion and imaged outcomes.

⁴ We humans do make decisions. And these decisions include our convictions about who we are and that which is beyond us—often including our perception of God or gods.

Without detailing grammar, logic and rhetoric, the Scriptures use these aspect of language to communicate knowledge.

TRUST DECISIONS. Knowledge decisions require trust. Christian faith can ultimately be seen as trust in One Who is trustworthy—One Who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. That trust is established through the rhetoric of the mind—a process of making decisions about the persuasive use of words regarding trustworthiness.

Trust is on a continuum with doubt, the fear of untrustworthy. Fundamentally, we live in a world that requires trust in a climate of doubt. We make decisions, thousands of them daily, and each requires some semblance of trust, often with twinges of doubt. So it is with knowledge decisions, we trust and doubt them based in the trustworthiness of the speaker (God, others, ourselves). In a fragmented world, with little sense of ultimate connected reality, trust in self is eroded as well as trust in God or others. However, the engagement of relational trust and doubt are always aspects of knowledge.

How extensive is doubt? Let's consider the statement "I have four children". Surely I "know" this without any doubt. In common language that is reasonable. However, consider whether you "know" at this moment if all the children are alive; or if they are all really mine; or if I live in an illusion or a dream that is not reality. Thus trust can become an issue with every statement—even seemingly obvious statements because a knowledge of ultimate reality requires trust.

As we examine our knowledge, the question of trustworthy authorship comes into focus. Who will we trust? Will we trust ourselves, others and/or God to be authoritative? No knowledge decision is made without a parallel trust decision. Furthermore, framing knowledge within trust and trustworthiness further posits knowledge in relational terms and transforms the quest for knowledge from a search for objective, detached truth to a relational journey of connectivity to ultimate reality—to the Triune God.

CONSCIENCE. Our consciences play an important role in knowledge. We have an innate understanding of good and evil that can be nourished, deceived or even seared. Genesis 3 indicates that as a result of the fall we acquired a knowledge of good and evil—implicitly a fallen knowledge of morality.

Our consciences can be violated when we break "reasonable rules" of using words. We prefer that words are spoken with consistency rather than with contradictions. Such contradictions are termed false statements, inaccuracies or even deceptive lies.

However, we also acknowledge that certain inconsistencies in words are more accurately termed paradoxes—apparent contradictions that are nevertheless held to be true. Thus, the ideas of God being Three Persons in One and the sovereignty of God and free will of man are viewed as a paradox rather than contradictions. Otherwise, such a statement would have violated our reasoning and thus lead to the conclusion that this knowledge is a falsehood—a logical and in this case a moral error. More explicitly, God has given certain moral guidelines in Scripture (through historical stories, parables, poetry, moral teachings, etc.) that help guide the development of our consciences.

To view the Triune God as paradoxical to the human mind is to state that ultimate reality is paradoxical to humanity. This assertion is somewhat similar and yet significantly dissimilar to postmodernity. To relationally surrender one's heart and mind to the Triune God, Who is at once ultimate reality and paradoxical to the human mind, is a far cry from assuming that human mind is the ultimate judge of knowledge and then to conclude that knowledge is paradoxical (i.e. there are no absolutes).

DEGREES OF CERTAINTY. Degrees of certainty of knowing are impacted through probabilistic cause and effect (including pain-pleasure) over varying timeframes. Thus, individually and collectively, we have the opportunity to re-think our knowledge about reality and to affirm, modify or reject any aspect of that knowledge. This does not imply that ultimate reality is relative, but that our perspectives can and should change as we grow through experience.

A Biblical view of knowledge, however, also attests to humanity's ability to be deceived and to lie. God has provided a means for correcting these non-truths thus monitoring reliability of knowledge through probabilistic cause and effect. Effect is in play as we live life, and we can forecast various effects with varying degrees of certainty, thus probable cause and effect over the near term and longer periods of time. And the effects may seem quite different over various timeframes.

In short, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6:7). The certainty of our knowing is reinforced or weakened through the results of our enacted knowledge. "Does God keep His promises?" or "Does this truth work in real-time life" are simple ways of stating the contingency of probabilistic cause and effect on the certainty of our knowledge.



Moreover, as we speak or write words the context helps define the meaning and the limitations of those meanings. For instance, a bumper sticker on the back of a Jeep that says "No Roads; No Rules" is not referring to the elimination of the rules of gravity in places that roads don't exist. Rather the meaning in context implies no rules for where one can drive. The certainty of this statement is again impacted by probabilistic cause and effect since certain off road experiences are impossibility (e.g. drive across a lake). Thus our language experience is laden with degrees of certainty.

RELATIVE vs. OBJECTIVE vs. RELATIONAL TRUTH. Postmodernity has championed the idea of relative truth—the notion that all truth is relative to the individual or culture context of the moment. Thus all world views and all ethics become relative.

Much of modernity has been founded in the pursuit of verifiable systems of objective truth. That objective truth is viewed to be most reliable when detached from human subjectivity or any prospect of Divine involvement beyond perhaps initial creation.

The reliability of these truth systems is established through various methodologies of verification. Scientific objective truth seeks to discover and systematize a body of words and symbols that describe the physical, psychological and social realities in this world. When applied to the spiritual world, the pursuit of objective truth seeks to describe God and His workings without acknowledging a foundational relational prerequisite to knowledge. However, Jesus said of His disciples “I have revealed you (the Father) to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word (John 17:6).”

Though one could concede that some “objective truths” are possible about God, one could also assert that a Biblical understanding of knowledge would firmly place all knowledge within a relational paradigm since the Triune God is ultimate reality. This paper takes the position that the pursuit of detached, objective knowledge, while somewhat theoretically possible, is a malnourished perspective of knowledge and ultimately can lead to a denial of God Who is all in all.

That said, the study of physics, chemistry, mathematics, etc. may seem best undertaken without a consideration of relational truth. Relational truth implies a knowledge that is connected to the Triune God Who is ultimate reality. Without this relational context, knowledge becomes fragmented and detached. And in fact much has been learned without factoring God into the physical sciences or mathematics. However, these successes should be viewed in context. As the knowledge of science is applied within human societies and within the ecosystem, a neglect of truth in relationship with ultimate reality, with the Triune God, can produce disastrous results where ethics are relevant. The ethics of science thus requires an understanding of relational truth.

This does not negate the benefits of objective truth reasoning. Mathematics [and thus much of the natural sciences] can appear detached and objective. The logical systems of mathematics work well to help produce computer science, economic theories, etc. However, the limitation of mathematics as totally detached is grasped within the relationship to spatial inference of numbers and relations and shapes. The relational view of mathematics can, but not necessarily, lead back to the One Who is ultimate reality. This detachment may even serve our extensions of mathematical relationships. However, the relational link between mathematical concepts and spatial realities doesn’t allow for a total detachment.

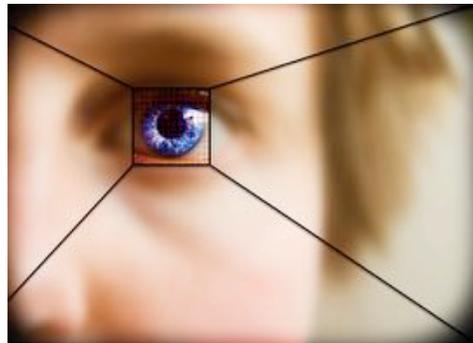
The advantage of postmodern perspectives on knowing is that we must consider the presence of the author in determining the meaning of a statement. However, the limitation of postmodernity is its inability to account for the possibility of ultimate reality—the omnipresent God Who brings meaning to all language.

The notion of relational truth is evident in Scripture from Moses to Jesus to John. Truth is ultimately connected, even though it can be expressed at various levels of abstraction. For example, Adam had sexual relations with his wife. This was described as Adam “knew” his wife. Such knowledge was truly relational. In more abstract terms, sexually relations might be termed in quantifiable coupling units, but even this abstract venture cannot be completely detach from relational truth. Thus, all knowledge is experienced at various levels of abstraction and intimacy of relationships. This connectivity finds its ultimate meaning in the connectivity of the omnipresent God with His creation.

TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE. We transmit knowledge from one person or culture to another. The use of written, oral and non-verbal language, of images and sensory experiences—these all become elements within knowledge transmissions. All the above factors are involved as we develop efficient means of transmission for the purpose of building culture across biological generations. And from a Biblical perspective, the purpose of knowledge includes our drawing closer to the Triune God and being transformed into His image—which greatly impacts culture building and trumps its supremacy of priority.

The issue of interpretation is key within transmission of knowledge. The enterprise of interpreting the meanings of words from one person to another becomes a matter of presence. The closer in presence the author and hearer/reader are the more likelihood the hearer will gain a clear understanding of the meanings of the author. As distance grows the reader is left to interpret words with less certainty of acquiring the original meaning of the author.

The rules of interpretation are problematic. In the modern use of words, the goal of interpretation is to ascertain the original meanings of the author. In a postmodern world, this goal is less doable and thus less effort is given, esp. as presence diminishes. Thus, the deconstruction of words begins. That is, the work begins to find meanings within the words that resonate within the reader regardless of the certainty of original intent.



From a practical and Biblical understanding, we can affirm both sides and go beyond this debate. The goal of original intent is worthy and the loss of presence does impact the attainment of that goal. However, as believers we also acknowledge the omnipresence of the Author of Scripture. Thus, we are left with humility and trusting God Who is trustworthy to speak through the written words of Scripture to our hearts through the Holy Spirit and then to back up His words. We must humble ourselves before God and each other as we seek to grow in knowledge of the Holy, and by extension all else, and as we interpret knowledge.

The enterprises of socialization and education are founded in this transmission of knowledge. The same is true for spiritual transformation as we view knowledge from the above relational perspectives.

Our view of knowledge impacts our methodologies for transmission of knowledge. Relationally grounded knowledge implies relational means for transmissions are more effective than simply “truth telling”. This is obviously true regarding the Gospel of Jesus. Simply dumping gospel words are far less effective than telling truth within the relational context of gospel living.

PURPOSE OF KNOWLEDGE. The purpose of knowledge from a Biblical perspective is to know the revealed and explorable Person and glory of the Triune God Who is ultimate reality and to experientially worship and love Him as God and be transformed into His image (Romans 12: 1, 2). This purpose allows humanity to pursue understanding the

physical, psychological and spiritual world while understanding that God created all by and for Himself and is omnipresent in His creation and transcendent to it.

It is important to recognize the diversity of experiences with God through various spiritualities. In this paper we will not address a means for this diversity except to posit human understanding of the spatial construct of “beyondness” often leads to various spiritual experiences and knowledge.⁵ Furthermore, the assumption of God as ultimate reality does not imply that God is the creator and sustainer of evil. Rather God has created spiritual beings, some of whom, notably Satan and the demons, rejected God. He also created human beings with free will—and Adam and Eve, as well as their descendants, also choose the evil of rebellion toward God.⁶

Ending Remarks. A Biblical relational understanding of knowledge stands in stark contrast to both modern and postmodern perspectives. While the modern stance highlights rules for the objective pursuit of systems of knowledge, it often detaches truth from ultimate reality, from the Triune God. This modern way of knowing established the scientific method that at once serves human understanding and potentially blinds it by displacing truth from its relationship with the ultimate reality, with the Triune God, thus prioritizing objective truth as the pursuit of the human mind that becomes the ultimate judge. While the postmodern stance emphasizes the uncertainty of knowing reality and thus makes room for mystery, it neglects to acknowledge ultimate reality exists and that the Triune God is ultimate reality. Rather postmodern knowledge places human cultures as arbitrators of perspectives within each cultural context.

As we go forward in Christian thought and ministry, we must seek to articulate an accurate portrayal of knowledge from a Biblical perspective and assumption that truth is fundamentally in relation to the Triune God Who is ultimate reality. This paper has been a sketch attempt at articulating such a stance.

⁵ See *Beyondness: A Key to Various Spiritualities*, Ralph Ennis

⁶ This choice is based in an ability to subtract from that which was perfect in order to arrive at imperfection, rather than evil as a substance totally non-derived from good. Thus fundamentally, godly jealousy, an aspect of being created in the image of God, was sliced into ungodly envy, a desire to become like God, with the deletion of proper jealous’ possessiveness for God.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How have you previously grappled with the idea of knowledge?

What might be some implications of embracing a modern view of knowledge? A postmodern view of knowledge?

How might relational knowledge impact the way you view life and God?

Note: As the reader considers his or her understanding of Scripture and knowledge, please help make this paper better by sending comments to ralphennis@gmail.com. Thanks.