

God wills ...

1. to be known (true knowledge of God)  
John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.  
1 Timothy 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
2. to be worshiped (faith, prayer, proclamation)  
Psalm 147:11 The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy.  
Psalm 51:15 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.  
Psalm 118:17 I shall not die, but live, And declare the works of the Lord.

#### NATURAL KNOWLEDGE (Creation and Conscience)

“There is therefore some natural knowledge of God which is by nature grafted into the minds of all men and is gathered from the works of God in the creation and in the evidences of His deity which are seen in the whole nature of things” (*Loci Theologici* by Martin Chemnitz, p.52).

1. He exists  
(The very order of nature itself, The nature of the human mind, The truthfulness of natural knowledge, The structure of human society, The ultimate purpose of things, etc.)  
Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.  
Hebrews 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.  
Romans 1:19-20 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,
2. The difference between the honorable and shameful  
(The terrors of conscience, The orderly process of cause and effect, etc.)  
Rom 2:15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*)  
Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress **the truth** in unrighteousness,

Due to sinful human nature –

- Always seeking whether there is a God
- Unsettled in our minds with horrible unending doubts about whether we are acceptable
- Ruled by immorality
- We don't know how to worship and serve God

With natural knowledge alone, man knows neither the essence nor the will of God.

“...although the heathen can see the works of God, the creation and the sustaining of the universe, yet they fail to recognize the true God, because they neglect the word which has been revealed by God and confirmed by witnesses” (*Loci Theologici* by Martin Chemnitz, p.55).

1. Not knowing the Son, they know not the Father

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Matthew 11:27 27 “All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

1 Corinthians 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

2. Ignorant of the Son and His promises of salvation, man is in unending doubt. The human mind understands that God punishes the guilty but knows nothing of reconciliation.

1 Cor 1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

Galatians 4:8 But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods.

God has given natural knowledge

1. For the sake of external discipline - Romans 2:14-15

2. “to seek the Lord”

Acts 14:15-17 and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, 16 “who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 “Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”

Acts 17:23-28 “for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: 24 “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 “Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 “so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 “for in Him we live and move and

have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

3. Men might be without excuse - Romans 1:19-20

Three kinds of men (which don't glorify God)

1. Wallow in manifest crimes
2. Depraved passions but some control over body and mouth
3. Most honorable heathen, but sin against 1<sup>st</sup> commandment (lack of fear, love, and trust/faith)

## REVEALED KNOWLEDGE

We need a clear testimony of God where He reveals Himself and His will

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

“Now that the Messiah has presented Himself in this way, let us keep our eyes in our worship on this only-begotten Son of God and Son of Mary who “was crucified, dead, and buried and rose again and sits at the right hand of the Father,” who gathers together His church out of the whole human race and cares for it, protects and defends it, and will save and glorify it in the eternal life to come” (*Loci Theologici* by Martin Chemnitz, p.55).

With Revealed Knowledge ...

1. We know the Son as Mediator, and thus we know who God and His will

*Triune God, no accidental (changeable) qualities, etc.*

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Matthew 11:25-27 At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. 26 “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. 27 “All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.”

Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

1 Timothy 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2. How to worship and praise the Father for the sake of Christ

Psalms 51:15-17 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.

Hosea 6:6-7 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. 7 “But like men they transgressed the covenant; There they dealt treacherously with Me.

Matthew 9:12-13 When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 “But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

3. The Word of God, where He is creating faith and clearly revealing Himself.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Ephesians 2:20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

Romans 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

4. Consider Nature Rightly: Natural knowledge subordinated to Revealed knowledge

Matthew 6:26-28 “Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 “Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

Psalm 104:1-2, and all of it, “Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, 2 Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.”

Isaiah 5:12, “The harp and the strings, The tambourine and flute, And wine are in their feasts; But they do not regard the work of the Lord, Nor consider the operation of His hands.

5. God has commanded His Church (and the Pastoral Office) to separate true from false worship

2 Corinthians 6:14-15 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

1 Corinthians 5:11ff “But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person....

1 Corinthians 10:20-21 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons.