

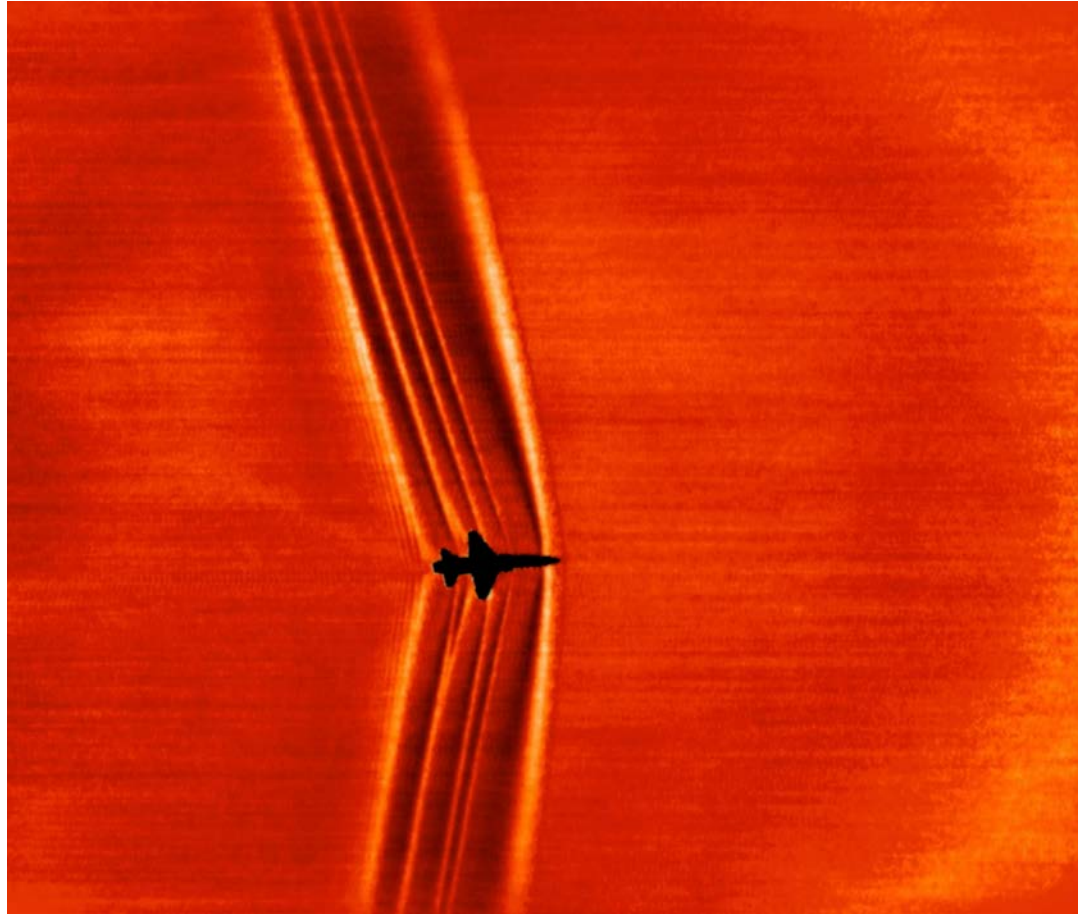
A misty forest scene with a path of fallen leaves and large rocks, serving as a background for the text. The forest is dense with tall, thin trees, and the ground is covered in a thick layer of brown and orange leaves. A bright light source, possibly the sun, is visible in the distance, creating a soft glow and mist. Several large, dark rocks are scattered along the path. The overall atmosphere is serene and contemplative.

What it means to  
**Know God**

# Introduction

In our first two lectures on *What It Means to Know God*, I have argued that the first question we must answer is that of epistemology, the theory or study of knowledge or, as some have suggested, “How do you know that you know?” Through many long centuries – from Thales to the present - various philosophers and theologians have put forth their sophisticated theories of knowledge, hoping that their own understanding would be the final word on the subject and would not be superseded by those in future generations who would stand on their shoulders and correct their fallacies. Our brief journey traced man’s various ways of knowing to mystical intuition, rational intuition, empiricism, or reason. Some suggest that we can know nothing at all.

# Empiricism And The Unseen



A supersonic shockwave image released by NASA on September 23, 2015. This Schlieren image of a T-38C was captured using the patent-pending BOSCO technique and then processed with NASA-developed code to reveal shock wave structures. This is a high-resolution and enhanced version of original NASA imagery.

# Introduction

All of the views we have discussed so far affirm that man is the measure of all things and limit his knowledge to discovery through the senses, emotions, or by engaging in logic and reasoning. Yet, if God is ineffable (cannot be expressed or described in language), invisible, is wholly other, and hidden, how could it be possible to apprehend either his existence or his nature with man as the starting point?

There is another way of knowing which we have not yet considered: Divine revelation. This method asks the question: “Has God spoken or revealed Himself to us?” Is there any cognitive objective truth in the universe which has been disclosed? Whichever of the various ways of knowing we choose, we should be keenly aware that our beliefs have profound implications for our lives here on earth and in eternity.

# Today's Guide

I have chosen the late Carl F.H. Henry to guide us through 15 theses which “summarize what can be said for divine revelation in terms of the living God who shows himself and speaks for himself.” In his 6-volume *magnum opus*, *God, Revelation and Authority*, he sets forth the case for divine self-disclosure.



**Carl F.H. Henry**

1913-2003

# Divine Revelation: Thesis One

1. *Revelation is a divinely initiated activity, God's free communication by which he alone turns his personal privacy into a deliberate disclosure of his reality.*
  - “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? **Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God**” (1 Cor. 2:9-11).

# Thesis One

- “John answered and said, ‘A man can receive nothing, unless it has been given him from heaven’” (Jn. 3:27).
- “But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be **revealed**” (Gal. 3:23).

# Divine Revelation: Thesis Two

## 2. Divine revelation is given for human benefit, offering us privileged communion with our Creator in the kingdom of God.

- “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the **revelation of the mystery** which has been **kept secret** for long ages past, but now is **manifested**, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:25-26).
- “What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him?” (Heb. 2:6).



# Divine Revelation: Thesis Three

3. **Divine revelation does not completely erase God's transcendent mystery, inasmuch as God the Revealer transcends his own revelation.**
  - “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I **know in part**; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known” (I Cor. 13:12).

# Divine Revelation: Thesis Four

- 4. The very fact of disclosure by the one living God assures the comprehensive unity of divine revelation.'**
- "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deut. 6:4).
  - "Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one" (Rom. 3:29-30).



# Divine Revelation: Thesis Five

5. **Not only the occurrence of divine revelation, but also its very nature, content, and variety are exclusively God's determination.**
- “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘But the righteous man shall live by faith.’ For the wrath of God is **revealed** from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:16-17).
  - “God determines not only the *if* and *why* of divine disclosure, but also the *when, where, what, how* and *who*” (Henry).



# Thesis Five

- “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has **shown** it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been **clearly perceived**, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:19-20).