

Knowing God

“Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?” John 14:9
Read also Hosea 4:1, 2 Corinthians 10:5

Read John 17:3

When you called upon the name of the LORD, believing on Christ, God saved you, gave you the new birth, forgave you, sealed you with the Holy Spirit, and came to dwell in you and with you from thenceforth. This is where your knowledge of God begins, at the moment of salvation. However your knowledge of God doesn't end when you were saved, it is suppose to grow and grow from here on out through eternity. People think salvation is the end when it is actually just the beginning. When you were born again, that started an intimate and personal relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Now God allows you to choose how far you want to go in this relationship.

You were given eternal life (i.e. God). When the LORD offers eternal life, he is offering himself to all those that want him. It is kind of like a marriage proposal (Hosea 2:19-23).

The LORD gets down on his knees and says whosoever will let him come. He says unto the sons of men, do you want me? You can have me if you want me. And whosoever comes and accepts him gets to marry the Lord!

Initially, after the man accepts the Lord's proposal, he is excited and thrilled and wants to tell everybody about his engagement! When Gabby and I got engaged, we told everybody about it! When Josh and Tabatha got engaged, they told everybody about it! Christian, you should be telling everybody about your engagement to Jesus Christ!

Unfortunately and sadly, over time, many Christians lose that sweet relationship and fellowship (not salvation) with the Lord because they don't maintain it **properly**. It is not the Lord's fault the relationship goes bad; it's our fault. The LORD will go as far as you want to go in your relationship with him. He never forces himself on us, and never infringes upon our free will. He wants you to increase in your knowledge of him (Colossians 1:10).

*Notice how in that same verse we see walking in the Lord unto all pleasing and bearing fruit appear next to increasing in your knowledge of the LORD. More on that later.

Communication is essential for any healthy relationship. I don't care what anyone says, if there is no communication, there is no healthy relationship. The same applies with the LORD.

If you don't proactively maintain anything in this world, it leads to decay, destruction, corruption, and it withers and dies (Hebrews 1:10-12). If you don't maintain your relationship with the LORD after salvation, it will decay, wither and die. Still saved (God is faithful), but no fellowship and relationship.

You can wash your car every week, but if you stop washing your car, it will get dirty and dirtier and dirtier. You can take a shower every day for 90 years, but if you decided to

stop showering, after a few days you will begin to stink! You can cut the grass for 40 years, but if you decided to stop doing it, the grass will still grow, the weeds will still crop up and before you know it, the garden that was once adorned with the fruits of the Spirit have become choked by thorns, nettles, and weeds (Proverbs 24:31-34). The weeds will continue to grow until you go out there and pull them out by the root. What is God teaching us through the creation? Unless you maintain your relationship with the LORD on a daily basis, your relationship will be stagnant and start to stink and could wither and die.

By law I am married to my wife until death does us part. By law I am married to the LORD until death does us part: but since the LORD never dies, and because he lives, I also shall live (John 14:19), and because he is eternal life and he has give me eternal life, we can never be parted (Romans 8:35-39). Praise the LORD!

Well doesn't it say in the Bible that a man can put away his wife for fornication? Yes it does. But it doesn't mean the husband *has* to put away his wife. The scripture is clear, the LORD will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5) and besides all this, all our sins are gone and forgotten – don't forget that! He sees you as his son. You are justified in his sight and righteous in sight because of Jesus.

You say well what if I sin against the Lord so much and become unfaithful – the scripture says YET HE ABIDETH FAITHFUL (2 Timothy 2:11-13). You don't need to worry about the LORD divorcing you.

Whether it is sin, or distractions, or emphasizing the wrong things, Christians often lose that closeness they once had with God. This is not desirable. Sometimes Christians can get preoccupied with working and serving the LORD that they forget about listening to his word (Luke 10:38-42). Sometimes they focus on doctrine and don't focus on Jesus (Hebrews 13:9). Most of the time it is sin that ruins the relationship they once had with God. BUT praise God, there is a remedy for all of these things: **THE BLOOD OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

God desires to have fellowship with you! How do I know that? Read John 17 – that's what Christ prayed for. We are called to have fellowship with Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:9) and we know the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11:29). He wants you to know him and him to know you (John 17:3, Hosea 6:6).

So how does a man get to know the LORD?

Before we look at how a man gets to know the LORD, God has made some promises to us that we can find him and know him (Acts 17:27, Jeremiah 29:11-13).

Faith and Hope

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). It is through faith we understand (Hebrews 11:3) not science (1 Timothy 5:20-21), reason, or philosophy (Colossians 2:8).

Faith is the essence/reality of what we expect from God. Faith is the firm persuasion and expectation that God will perform what he has promised to us in Christ and that this persuasion is so strong it gives substance and a sort of present reality to your hope. I know I am going to be with Lord when I die or at the rapture. How do I know that? I am fully persuaded and believe that God will do what he said he would do. That is the substance of my faith.

There are no visible or physical signs that I am a son of God on my way to see my Father and that my sins are all gone, and that I am perfect and just before God having his righteousness, and that I am going to get a perfect eternal sinless body that never dies. But I know those things are true – and that is the substance of my faith.

If you can see the things with your eyes it is not faith or hope (Romans 8:24-25).

Faith is confidence in God and his word and it expects that God will do what he says. Without faith you cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6). Furthermore, faith causes you to act (Hebrews 11). Faith is absolutely essential in order to know the Lord!

You must have faith and believe God. If you disbelieve God, you are sinning and have an evil heart and depart from God (Hebrews 3:12). You received the Spirit by the hearing of faith (Galatians 3:2) and we know that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17).

Faith is what started the relationship, and faith is required to maintain that relationship.

Being full of faith is associated with being full of the Holy Ghost (Acts 6:5, 11:24). And Faith works by love (Galatians 5:6). We see again that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:17).

We are told that as we received Christ Jesus (which was by faith) so [likewise] walk ye in him (Colossians 2:6-7). We are to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). The world walks by sight. We are to walk by our faith in God. What does it mean to walk by faith?

It means to live life with complete confidence in God that he will do exactly what he said he would do and promised, regardless of what we see going on in our lives, around us, or in the world. Faithful is he that promised (1 Thessalonians 5:14, Hebrews 10:22-23).

Paul said through his faith in the faith of Christ he might know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death (Philippians 3:7-10).

If you have problems with faith, pray LORD I BELIEVE, HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF (Mark 9:24). That was my prayer when I was saved September 27, 2003 at 2:40am a few blocks from here. I said Lord I want to believe that Christ died on the cross for my sins and rose again. AND just like the LORD helped the unbelief of the father of the child, he helped my unbelief too! I left there knowing God saved me! I left there knowing there was a God in heaven and Jesus Christ was there. I knew I was going to heaven

when I died, because I believed that Christ died for my sins and rose again. I knew he was real! I knew what that Bible said was true! HE HELPED MY UNBELIEF!

You say what happened to you that night? The God of everlasting glory in all its marvelous grace and mercy came into my body and said PEACE BE STILL! He filled me up with the Holy Ghost (even though back then I didn't know anything about that stuff – just like a new born baby doesn't know anything about anything!). The LORD will help your unbelief and increase your faith.

You Must Love him and be Thankful and Praise him

We are commanded to love the LORD with all our being (Deuteronomy 10:12-13). We are commanded to give thanks in everything (1 Thessalonians 5:18). If you don't love him, and are not thankful, don't expect to get to know the LORD beyond what you already know.

We need to be rooted and grounded in love (love of God and neighbor) in order to comprehend things and to know the love of Christ which leads to being filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:17-19).

You ought to praise him for all kinds of things and reasons. But the scripture also says that God inhabits praise. So if you praise him, God shows up, and when God shows up you can get to know him better because he is right there with you. (Psalm 22:3, Luke 24:33-36).

You Must Desire to Know the LORD

I am convinced that without a fervent, whole hearted desire to know God, you won't get to know him like you could and like he wants you to know him (Proverbs 2:1-5, Psalm 42:1-2). Remember that study we did a while back, God will give you what you are looking for! A willing heart and a desire are necessary to know the LORD. The key is your heart and your hearts desire.

Also your heart MUST be perfect toward him (2 Chronicles 16:9).

Reading his word and Prayer

You get to know the LORD through the scriptures because he speaks to you through the scriptures (Matthew 22:29-32, Exodus 3:1-6). Through the scriptures we learn about God (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and hear from God. When we read the scriptures we behold the glory of the LORD (2 Corinthians 3:18). The closest we can get to see the invisible God now is by reading the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 13:9-12). The book is vital to our growth in the LORD (1 Peter 2:1-3) but reading the book won't do you any good if you don't desire it and if you don't believe it (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

Like we said in the beginning, for there to be a healthy relationship, there must be communication – and this must go both ways. We know that sin hinders our prayers (Psalm 66:18, John 9:31), so stop sinning, if you mess up, fess up, plead the blood of Christ (1 John 1:9). After you confessed your sin, believe God has forgiven you because

he has! Talk to the LORD, pour out your heart before him and then be still, that is be silent. The LORD still speaks in that still (silent) small voice. Wait for a response.

One thing that I have learned to do is be specific with God in your prayers. I ask the LORD a question and I wait for an answer. Sometimes he answers me immediately, other times it is later on in the day, or when I read the scriptures, or years later. Honestly. I asked the LORD why he split me up from my brethren from First Bible Church about 3 years ago and he just answered me after Bible study two weeks when Josh and I were talking about Jesus.

Be like David in your prayers. He asked the Lord questions about daily life (2 Samuel 2:1).

Walking with the LORD (Obeying the LORD)

I believe if you really want to know the LORD, you must walk with the LORD. That is to obey his word and live according to it. The Book only brings you so far in your knowledge of the LORD. Jesus said you are not blessed if you read and understand the word, he said you are blessed if you read understand and KEEP his word (Revelation 1:3, Luke 11:27-28).

*God allows suffering into your life that you might know him through those sufferings (Philippians 3:8-10)

In order to fully know Christ, we need to walk in his shoes and experience what he experienced.

The Bible says to put on Jesus Christ, like clothing and shoes (Romans 13:14, Galatians 3:27). You ever have anyone say to you, "You just walk one day in my shoes and you'll see what its like" or something like that? We can know about it from the outside but we truly do not know what it is like unless we have walked in that person's shoes, experiencing what that person experienced. So it is with Christ, we are to put him on, and go through what he went through and live like he lived, why? As Paul said in Philippians 3, that we might now him and the fellowship of his sufferings. Suffering for righteousness sake, and living in his ways leads you to a deep and profound understanding and knowledge of your Saviour YOU CANNOT GET ANY OTHER WAY.

The Bible says we are to grow up into Christ (Ephesians 4:15) and we are predestined to be conformed to his image (Romans 8:29). How can we expect to grow up into Christ if we don't experience what he experienced, and live like he lived? Obeying the LORD is where you really get to know the LORD. Here is some more scripture to prove it.

1 John 2:3-6 We know we know him when we keep his commandments!

Obeying the LORD helps you get to know the LORD (Jeremiah 22:16).

1 John 1:3-10 and John 3:16-21

God is light, and if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship with God and he with us, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

The key to having fellowship with God is walking in the light. When you are in fellowship with the LORD, you get to know the LORD. So the question is, what is the light?

What does the light refer to in the scriptures?

It is God (1 John 1:5)

It is Jesus Christ (John 1:7-9)

Is the Holy Ghost (Exodus 27:20)

It is life (John 1:9)

It is the scriptures (Psalm 119:105, 130; Proverbs 6:23, 2 Peter 1:19)

It means revelation and understanding (Genesis 1:15, Daniel 5:14, Ephesians 5:13)

It is sown for the righteous (Psalm 97:11)

It is in contrast to darkness (Genesis 1:4)

It is to give direction (Nehemiah 9:12, Job 29:1-7)

It is for a clothing (Psalm 104:2)

We are light because of Christ in us (Matthew 5:14-16) and we can be full of Jesus if our whole body is full of light having no part dark (Luke 11:36)

What does it mean to walk in the light?

Lets define walking. Walking in the Bible means to live, act, or behave; to pursue a particular course of life.

Abraham was commanded to walk before God and be perfect (Genesis 17:1). God told him to live before me; to act like me; to behave like me; pursue a way of life that is like me.

And you cannot walk with God unless you are in agreement with God (Amos 3:3). That means you must believe and agree with what God said about everything. If you disagree with God, you will part from him. If you want to walk with him, you need to change your ways to match his ways in order to have fellowship.

Walking in the light means to live in obedience to and in accordance with the word of God (the scriptures). It also means to live according to the direction and path the LORD is leading you down.

Furthermore, having a right heart attitude towards sin is necessary to know the Lord (Isaiah 66:2, Psalm 51:17). When you sin and backslide and tempt God, you LIMIT THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL (Psalm 78:41). This will hinder you from increasing in your knowledge of God.

If you want to know the LORD and have fellowship with him you must live according to his word and he will manifest himself to you (John 14:21).

In conclusion, there are several things that need to take place in order for your knowledge of God to increase.

- You must have faith and hope
- You must desire it and seek after with all your being.
- You must love God and be thankful
- You must read his word and pray
- You must walk in the Lord and obey his word

If these things be in you, you will increase in your knowledge of God and your relationship with your Saviour will grow.

Close with Micah 6:8

In fact, the New Covenant enables the Lord to dwell in and with you forever no matter what, and still be just, holy, and righteous!

The New Covenant in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is different from the Old Testament (Jeremiah 31:31-34). This New Covenant God makes with Israel and Judah (of which we are partakers of – Ephesians 3:5-6, Romans 15:27) is entirely spiritual in nature.

Notice what this New Covenant consists of:

1. God would write his law in their hearts (Romans 7:21-23, 8:1-4)
2. God would be their God (it becomes personal) and they would be his people (2 Corinthians 6:16-18)
3. Knowing God personally and individually (John 3:8, 10:1-5, 14, 27-29; 14:17; 17:22-23; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 2 Corinthians 13:6, Colossians 1:27)
4. God forgives and forgets all their sin (1 John 2:12, Revelation 1:5)