

## **Do You Know God?**

After 7 years of fellowship with our group, I think I am finally waiving the white flag and admitting that God really wants me to do this. Some may call me a slow learner, maybe it is just because I am too stubborn to admit it. Who would have thought that throwing a Bible against a wall and yelling at God, shouting. “I want to know You!” I was mad as heck when I did that and I know I was serious as I was fed up with religion and all the church “stuff” and wanted to know Him, the real One True God. That was over 22 years ago. It did not take God long to respond as my world fell apart with trials and storms of epic proportions. Be careful if you ever want to yell at the Almighty as He does listen and will answer according to His will and plan for you.

The Collins On-Line Dictionary had a fitting definition for the word, “know.” In the context we are using it, it is a transitive verb, if you “know someone you are familiar with them because you have met them and talked with them before.” We have established a relationship with them through our contact and keeping company with them.

Another use of “know” as an intransitive verb is that if you say you “know of something, which means you have heard about it but you do not necessarily have a lot

of information about it.” You have not established a relationship. Okay, the English lesson is over for today.

**John 17:3-** “For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send.” From the words of Jesus, He goes far beyond a simple intellectual awareness like knowing your neighbor, to having a close and personal relationship with Him as we would a spouse. This is something Protestant and Catholic churches miss as they want to know God on their terms.

**2 Corinthians 11:2-** “For I am jealous over you with *the fervent* jealousy of God because I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.”

To this end, we know our future is to become the Bride of Christ.

**Revelation 21:9-** “And one of the seven angels that had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, *and* I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

I hardly think our Lord will receive anyone for a bride that He does not know.

Would you? We may be able to make concessions for looks or cooking abilities, or abilities to provide for a family, but these in themselves are insufficient for a successful marriage. There must be a solid relationship built on love and trust and

knowing your future spouse. This is why it is so critically important to establish the relationship with God...NOW.

When we read **Matthew 25:1-11**, the Parable of the Ten Virgins, we see that they failed to prepare. The lack of effort on their part led to the Bridegroom's response in **Matthew 25:12**- "But He answered *and* said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'"

We see numerous examples throughout God's Word of those that failed to heed God's instructions, those who failed to establish a sincere relationship with Him. Perhaps they thought they did or they "assumed" they were in "right standing" as so many in the church today make that assumption.

One of the best examples of those who thought they were a shining example was the Church at Laodicea.

**Revelation 3:16-17**- "So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

I always think of these mega-churches and TV preachers when I think of the Laodiceans. Even the Pope with his fish hat, all of them consider themselves the go to source for holiness. They have all got a time card working for Satan.

Assuming and calling oneself a Christian, is not valid unless you do exactly what God says and exactly what Christ did. It is not a multiple choice and we do not get to select from a menu on what scriptures or commandments we will follow. The following quote is from one such individual professing to be a Christian and from the words, you might suspect he was.

“Today, Christians stand at the head of the country. I pledge that I will never tie myself to parties who want to destroy Christianity. We want to fill our culture again with the Christian spirit, we want to burn out all the recent immoral developments in literature, in the theater, and in the press. In short, we want to burn out the poison of immorality which has entered into our whole life and culture as a result of liberal excess during the past few years.” Sounds like sound ideas from someone who professes to be a Christian.

As you are all sitting down, the quote was from Adolf Hitler in 1942. There is a lot more to be a Christian than calling yourself one. Remember, God does not respect

persons. As those who are baptized, we had better be paying attention as things are heating up.

Anyone who espouses to teach or preach the word of God, had better be doing it exactly as His word says, *exactly*.

**Malachi 2:7-8-** “For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and the people should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But you have departed out of the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,” says the LORD of hosts.”

No one can ever accomplish this outside the will of God and a relationship with Him. No beat-up Bibles as a prop, prancing across a stage wearing a wire microphone, swinging a smoking urn, or handing out Styrofoam wafers, or playing the same four notes in a band calling down the spirit will yield anything but God’s judgement.

**Romans 1:21-** “Because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

**Titus 1:16-** “They personally profess to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto every good work.”

They are more interested in selling their books, videos or anything but sharing God’s truth from His Bible. I guess jet fuel, hair dye and false teeth are not cheap.

**Galatians 1:8-9-** “But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!

As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!”

How do they skip over these two verses!?! Pretty scary if you ask me.

So, just how do we have or establish this personal relationship with God? Well, we do not need to buy anything, send away for spring water or any other marketable item(s).

How did you get to know your spouse? Your best friend? You talk to them! We can talk to God anytime and anywhere through *prayer* and it does not cost \$5.00 for the first three minutes. You do not need a credit card, just an open and grateful heart seeking His presence. We can come boldly before His throne of grace.

**Hebrews 4:16-** “Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Religion and things that are holy have been polluted and diluted so much by the enemy and the laziness of mankind doing it “his way” we have attached far too much emphasis on material things. Sadly, mankind refuses to acknowledge God in their daily dealings.

**Hosea 4:1-** “Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD *has* a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, “There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.”

We must seek God through spiritual things.

**John 4:23-24-** “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who

worship Him in this manner. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

It is through our prayer life we will grow in our faith and knowledge of God and His word and in the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord. The more we know Them the more They will repair “our vessels” and increase our spiritual gifts. God will not waste His Spirit to pour it out on the ground if we are full of “cracks.” We must seek Them diligently setting aside time to talk with God. Are we truly taking advantage of this precious gift? If you are currently experiencing trials and storms, time for a prayer check. Genuine prayer from the heart too, not vain babblings or repetitious recitals or counting beads. In addition, if you are not bearing any fruits of the spirit, a review of your prayer life should be at the top of your to do list as well.

**1 Corinthians 2:11-** “For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God.”

The best way to get to know anyone is to communicate with them. To know them personally. To know their thoughts, their likes, and dislikes. We have that given to



us in God's Word. He has made it easy for us...well kind of. We know the consequences of the journey when we accept Christ's sacrifice at baptism. But God, has called us and set us apart. He has given us the example in His Son, Jesus Christ. He has provided His very essence through His Holy Spirit, empowering us to grow in wisdom and understanding. Prayer is simply talking with God. We know His thoughts, likes, and dislikes. He makes it quite clear what He considers abominations, which is what we witness nightly on the news.

God expects us to pray. He wants us to pray. He is our Father. What parent does not want to hear from their children? Well, okay there are probably exceptions like "are we there yet?" from the back seat. But not in this case. God does not want any of His kids to perish. If He did not want to hear from us, He would not have told us to "pray without ceasing." (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**) Additionally, if we are in constant prayer with God, the devil cannot get a word in edgewise...

**Hebrews 13:15-** "Accordingly, let us offer *the* sacrifice of praise continually to God through Him; that is, *with the* fruit of *our* lips openly professing *our faith* in His name."

**2 Peter 3:9-** “The Lord is not delaying the promise *of His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay; rather, He is longsuffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

How merciful is that!?

We are dependent upon God for every aspect of our lives. What better way to negotiate the storms of life than by having a direct line to the Throne Room? We have an Advocate and High Priest as our Intercessor to God the Father in Jesus Christ. God’s purpose for each of us involves a great deal of conversation as it is about the relationship. It is about knowing God and Jesus Christ. As They already know us, we can display our heart and desire to accomplish our part of our covenant promise. We are headed for a wedding union in the future with our Creator.

**Isaiah 54:5-** “For your Maker *is* your husband; the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer *is* the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called,”

One of the best ways for us to display our love of God first is our prayer life. To become an intimate friend of the Almighty God. We are building on a relationship that will last through eternity.

**Psalm 63:1-5-** “O God, You are my God, earnestly I will seek You! My soul thirsts for You. My flesh longs for You, as in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, To see Your power and Your glory— as I have seen You in the sanctuary. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips” God is seeking those who will serve Him, those that *know* Him.

**Acts 13:22-** “And after removing him, He raised up David to be their king; to whom He also gave testimony, saying, ‘I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will perform all My will.’” God truly found a man who would genuinely love Him in a relationship that would last through the ages of eternity.

Our most valuable responsibility in our preparation for Christ’s return is growing in our relationship with God. Our time we spend in contact with Him in prayer is vital.

**1 John 2:3-6-** “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments. The one who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected. By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked.”

God the Father and Jesus Christ our Savior want us to know Them personally and intimately. The closer we draw to them, the closer They will draw to us. We can pray at any time on any day of the week but the Sabbath has been set aside as that one day when we can fellowship and commune with God the Father and Jesus Christ. I encourage each of you to take time either before or after fellowship (or both) to spend some time in prayer with our God.

**Ephesians 1:17-18-** “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him. *And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling, and what *are* the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,”

Unlike the foolish virgins from Matthew 25 or the Laodiceans from Revelation 3,  
we will be ready, we will know our God. Amen.

BL-06/10/23