

Do You Know Your God? (Part 2 of 2)

(subtitle: How to Know Your God?)

John 14:7 (New American Standard Bible)

<sup>7</sup> **If you had known Me, Jesus said, you would have known My Father also;** from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.”

John 8:19 (New American Standard Bible)

<sup>19</sup> *So they were saying to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “**You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.**”*

## Introduction

Last week, I spoke extensively about the difference between knowing about God and knowing of God. In a nutshell, knowing about God is head knowledge about God while knowing of God is intimate relationship with Him and walking with Him daily. The difference is in the experience of the living God.

This morning, we are going to do the part 2 of “Do You Know Your God?” We will learn about the ways we can know of our Heavenly Father.

**To know:** the word ‘to know’ appears 1321 times in the Scripture (815 in OT/506 in NT). It appears in all 27 books in the New Testament and in 36 books out of 39 in the Old Testament (except Lamentations, Obadiah, Haggai). In other words, 95% of the time the Bible talks about the importance of knowing each other and knowing of God.

Out of those 63 books, two books stand out, as they share the title of most occurrences: one in the Old Testament and the other in the New. The Book of Ezekiel and the Gospel according to John (93 times each). John the Apostle indeed reveals a lot about the importance of knowing God and how to know Him.

He tells us how intimately he experienced Jesus in his letter. Pay attention to the words of to “hear, look, touch, and see.”

In 1 John 1:1-3, he testified: *What was from the beginning, what we have **heard**, what we have **seen** with our eyes, what we have **looked at** and **touched** with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—<sup>2</sup> and the life was revealed, and we have **seen** and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was revealed to us—<sup>3</sup> what **we have seen***

**and heard** we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have **fellowship** with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

By saying this, John emphasizes the importance of personally experiencing God and knowing of God intimately in our relationship (John calls 'fellowship').

In fact, I believe John knew of Jesus more intimately than any other disciples. Here's one instance to support my belief. Did you know that he was the only one who ever actually laid back his head on the bosom of Jesus at the dinner table? Listen to John 13:21 ff. At the Last Supper table, Jesus said, "Truly, truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me." <sup>22</sup> The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking. <sup>23</sup> **Lying back on Jesus' chest** was one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. <sup>24</sup> So Simon Peter \*nodded to this disciple and \*said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking." <sup>25</sup> He then simply **leaned back on Jesus' chest and \*said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"** <sup>26</sup> Jesus then \*answered, "That man is the one for whom I shall dip the piece of bread and give it to him."

## Content

Such a man of God with intimate knowledge of Jesus wrote multiple times in the Gospel and in his letter (1 John) about knowing God and the signs thereof. I am going to talk about the ways we can get to know our Lord Jesus and our heavenly Father.

I researched in the entire Bible on the ways that the people of God experienced God and got to know of Him. In many ways, the Lord revealed Himself to them (such as miracles, signs, wonders, visions, dreams, personal encounter with the Lord, angels, prophets, prayers, adversities, deliverances, and so forth), but they all boil down to the following four ways: Scripture, adversities, prayer, and obedience.

1. We can **surely know of God when we read and study the Word of God**: The Scripture is God's first choice to reveal Himself to His people. Do you want to know Me intimately? God asks. Then, read My Book, He says. Perhaps, I have told you this story before. A man had a near death experience and went to Heaven. He saw Jesus there and the Lord asked him, "Have you read My Book?"

What's the significance of His question? Why does Jesus care about whether we should read His Book? Because without getting into the Bible, no matter how spiritual we are, no matter how hard we try, our knowledge of God will be minimal and incomplete. Take Moses for example. Everyone would agree that he was a very spiritual man of God, very close to God to the point where *the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a*

*man speaks to his friend* (Exodus 33:11). That *spiritual Moses*. Did you know that he spent forty days and forty nights on Mt. Sinai, alone with God, to receive the Ten Commandments? (Exodus 34: 29ff). When he came down to his people, the skin of his face shone so bright that the people of God were afraid to approach him. He had to cover his face with a veil. Whenever he went back in to speak with the Lord, he would take off the veil until he came out to speak with the Israelites. And he would keep the veil over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord again.

Now, no one would doubt that Moses had enough knowledge of the Lord. However, this is what he prayed to the LORD: <sup>13</sup>*Now then, if I have found favor in Your sight in any way, please let me know Your ways so that I may know You, in order that I may find favor in Your sight*" (Exodus 33:13). (Repeat the verse). What does it tell us? It tells us that despite all the direct encounter with the Lord face to face, Moses still needed to know God's ways so that he might know Him. In other words, without God's ways, without God's truth, without God's Word, no one will know the Lord. Where can we find God's ways? Once again, the Scripture. That's why I say unless we get into His Word, we will not know of God.

Consider this. The Lord commands us to be like Him, right? Of course, we cannot be exactly like Him because we are human. But God commands us to be like Him in His character. One of His attributes is mercy. Recently, I memorized a verse in the Bible: Micah 7:18—*He (the LORD) does not retain His anger forever, for He delights in mercy!* Each time I recite this verse, I am reminded that the LORD delights in mercy and pardons our wrong doings because of His mercy! Since I desire to be like God in His character, I started praying, "LORD, make me delight in mercy as You are!" Had I not got into the Word of God, I would've never discovered this truth about God's character. I would have never prayed such a prayer for myself, either. Do you want to grow in the knowledge of the Lord? Get into the Word of God.

2. Next, we get to **know the Lord in the days of trouble**. Let's admit it. We don't like bad times. No one wants to go through crises, either. However, God doesn't exempt us from those times. Listen to Isaiah 43:2: *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you.* It is not 'if' but 'when.'

So, what can we do with our troubles? Either we can grumble and stay depressed, or we can turn the crisis into an opportunity to know God personally. [turn lemon into lemonade, as they say]. That's exactly what I have observed in the lives of biblical characters, too. Through the days of trouble and distress, they all experienced God's deliverance.

Personally, I can testify that all the major growth in my knowledge of God took place in the days of trouble. A couple of examples: I experienced the power of prayer when my brother was in coma for two weeks. The Lord healed him miraculously. I also experienced God's miracles and His faithfulness when I first gave my tithes to the Lord in the days of financial struggles where my family would wonder about the dinner for the day.

3. We come to **know the Lord when we pray**: This is the most common and natural way God reveals Himself to His people. We pray. God answers. Our knowledge of God grows as a result. One instance. Abraham got to understand the loving nature of God when he appealed for Sodom in prayer. When God revealed His plan to destroy Sodom to Abraham, Abraham was worried about his nephew Lot and his family, because they dwelt in the region. So, he pleaded with the Lord saying, *"Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?"*<sup>24</sup> *Suppose there are fifty righteous people within the city; will You indeed sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it?"*<sup>25</sup> *Far be it from You to do such a thing, to kill the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?"*<sup>26</sup> *So the Lord said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the entire place **on their account.**"*<sup>27</sup> *And Abraham replied, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am only dust and ashes."*<sup>28</sup> *Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the entire city because of five?"* *And He said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there."*<sup>29</sup> *And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose forty are found there?"* *And He said, "I will not do it **on account of the forty.**"*<sup>30</sup> *Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak; suppose thirty are found there?"* *And He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."*<sup>31</sup> *And he said, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord; suppose twenty are found there?"* *And He said, "I will not destroy it **on account of the twenty.**"*<sup>32</sup> *Then he said, "Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once: suppose ten are found there?"* *And He said, "I will not destroy it **on account of the ten**"* (Genesis 18:22ff).

What did Abraham learn about God and His nature in his prayer? He learned that although God holds people accountable for their actions, He never likes destroying anyone even the wicked. He also learned that God is compassionate and willing to spare the wicked city on behalf of the handful righteous.

There are many more cases in the Bible where the people of God gained the intimate knowledge of God through prayer life. So will we when we pray. Don't miss out this great opportunity of knowing God. Spend time with God in prayer daily. You will never regret.

4. We also come to **know the Lord by obeying God's voice** and His will and vice versa. Consider Daniel for instance. The King Nebuchadnezzar issued an edict that forbade

anyone, including Daniel, from praying to any other gods but to the king's statue for 30 days. It was a trap for Daniel. The evil men in the kingdom tried to remove Daniel accusing that Daniel still prayed to the LORD his God against the edict. However, Daniel didn't change his mind nor his habit of praying to the Lord, fully aware that he might lose his life and his position in the kingdom. This is what the Scripture says: *Now when Daniel learned that the document was signed, he entered his house (and in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and offering praise before his God, **just as he had been doing previously*** (Daniel 6:10). Daniel obeyed and worshiped the LORD his God than saving his own life by compromise. You know the rest of the story well. As a punishment, Daniel was thrown in the lions' den, yet the Lord protected him. His enemies, however, were devoured by the lions.

Pay attention to what Daniel discovered that day: the Lord protects and rewards those who seek Him with all their heart and strength, even risking their own lives. Once again, there are many more testimonies like that in the Bible. E.g., Isaac's near sacrifice. If you desire to get to know the Lord intimately and undeniably, then, start obeying God and His will. The knowledge of God begins with obedience. God will surprise you with something beyond your imagination.

## **We Need Jesus**

One more thing to remember: if we want to know God the Father, we also need Jesus, because He reveals the Father to us. Getting Jesus is like getting the best coach available in the entire world in knowing the Father. Here's why: Jesus said, *without Me no one can come to the Father* (John 14:6). Without His help no one will know the Father: He also said, *"If you knew Me, you would know My Father also"* (John 8:19). He also said, *"... no one knows the Son except the Father; nor **does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son determines to reveal Him**"* (Matthew 11:27). That's why we need Jesus to know God deeper and more.

## **Conclusion**

Starting today, spend more time in the Bible. Turn your crisis into opportunity to know the Lord intimately. Cry unto Him in the day of trouble, and He will deliver you. Commune with Him in prayer daily. Obey Him and walk in all the way He commands you. Then, you will grow in His knowledge every day. Amen.