

KNOWING GOD

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Who do you know the best? Is it your spouse? Or your parents? Or a school friend? Is it a sibling, a brother or a sister? Who do you know the best? How did you come to know that person so well? Well, you probably have learned a lot about that person by simply watching. But more than likely you have spent a lot of time talking with that person, listening to what they think or how they feel about things in life. But can you say you know everything about that person? Knowing God is similar to knowing your best friend, but can you say that you “know” God?

Hello I’m Larry Murdock. I preach for the Gandy church of Christ. Welcome to this program.

Knowing God is important, very important. The Bible says that we can come to know God. The apostle Paul wrote to the churches of Christ in Galatia and talked about a time when they did NOT know God. But that changed when those people came to know God. Paul wrote, “But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world....” (Galatians 4:9.) Yes, we can know God, or rather as Paul says, we have presented ourselves so as to become known by God.

Knowing God is similar to knowing another person, for instance, to get to know someone you must present yourself to that person. You must desire to be known by that person. But knowing God is also very different from knowing the one you know best. God is a person but because He is God there will be some things we will never know about Him in this life. That’s right. For instance, the scripture says that “God’s voice thunders in marvelous ways; He does great things beyond our understanding” (Job 37:5). “Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and His paths beyond tracing out” (Romans 11:33)! “Beyond all question,” Paul wrote, “great is the mystery of godliness” (1 Timothy 3:16). Isaiah saw and heard angels saying of

God, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." (Isaiah 6:3.)

Just as we know a person by seeing what they do, we can know something about God by observing what He has done. Just as Isaiah said, the whole earth is full of God's glory. So whatever little part of the earth we can see we can see God's handiwork. The heavens and the earth shout God's existence and His power. This marvelous creation exists! Its powerful, marvelous designer also exists!

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.² Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.³ *There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard.* Psalms 19:1-3 (NKJV)

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.² Out of the mouth of babes and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.³ When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him.... Psalms 8:1-4 (ESV)

Yes, the heavens and the earth say a lot about God; the creation of man himself also says a lot about God, but if we are to know God then He must reveal more about Himself than just His great wisdom and power. God's human family must also be able to listen to the words of this great person who is our creator. The Bible is His revelation to mankind.

It is quite natural that a person such as God would communicate. One of the characteristics of human personality is the ability to communicate. This is what makes for happy marriages. This is what it takes to make a great friendship. Somehow, by some means, there must be communication whereby we can know the thinking of another person. Indeed, whereby we may know the love of another person!

The human creation is blessed because God has revealed Himself to the world in every generation. That's right. God's written revelation spans the ages. The question is, have we come to know God?

Many people have read the Bible and come to have a certain amount of knowledge of God's thinking, but they have not become known by God. That is, God has not come to live with them! Jesus said to some wayward Christians,
²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. Rev 3:20 (NKJV)
 Jesus was inviting a closer relationship with Himself than those Christians were currently having. They had begun slipping away from Christ.

One of Jesus' apostles asked him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" **²³** Jesus answered him, "**If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.** John 14:22-23 (ESV)

Furthermore, while Jesus' disciples were carrying the gospel of Christ to the world, Jesus promised, "I will be with you even to the end of the world."
 (Matthew 28:20.)

The writer of the book of Hebrews commanded,

⁵ Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." **⁶ So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"** Heb 13:5-6 (ESV)

Just as we know another person by listening to them and seeing their actions, God will know us by listening to us and watching our actions. When He sees us repent of sin and turn to Him, He knows our hearts. The Thessalonians demonstrated their newly found acquaintance with God by turning to God from idols in order to begin serving the living and true God. They were also now willing to "wait for God's son from heaven, whom God had raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come." (1 Thess 1:9-10, ESV.)

To know God then is not only to know His teaching but to have His presence with us from day to day. Christians live in the presence of God because God is with

them. The Bible teaches that God's presence, and the presence of Christ, is through the Holy Spirit of God. That's right. The apostle Paul wrote:

¹⁸ For through [Christ Jesus] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. ¹⁹ Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; ²⁰ And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; ²¹ In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: ²² In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Eph 2:18-22, KJV.)

You see, Christians become a place where God lives through His Spirit. The church of Christ at Corinth was asked:

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. (1 Cor 3:16-17, ESV.)

Yes, God dwells in the church of Christ. The way He does that is dwelling in each Christian. Over in chapter 6 of 1 Corinthians, Paul commanded,

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. (1 Cor 6:18-20, ESV.)

Friends, to know God is not only to know about Him, but to present ourselves to Him and become known by Him. We can only come to know God this way through His Son, Jesus Christ.

¹⁰ He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. ¹¹ And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 1 John 5:10-12 (KJV)

We are certain that we come from God and that the rest of the world is under the power of the devil. We know that Jesus Christ the Son of God has come and has shown us the true God. And because of Jesus, we now belong to the true God who gives eternal life. [Friends], you must stay away from idols. (1 John 5:19-21, CEV.)

⁵ For though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"— [with a little "g" and a little "l"] -
⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. (1 Corinthians 8:5-6, ESV.)

If you have a desire to KNOW God and to BE KNOWN by God, then yours is a worthy journey to find a true friend, your creator, your sustainer. Do you want to know God? Please allow the churches of Christ to help you in your pursuit of God. God wants you to know Him.