

KNOWING GOD
LESSON I: INTRODUCTION
 John 17:3

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** I have come to believe that the absolutely most important determinant of our faithfulness, steadfastness, zeal, dedication, and happiness as Christians is directly related with the depth of our knowledge of God.
2. Well did the prophet of long ago say: **Hos. 4:6**: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”
3. ****** Our knowledge, or lack thereof, of God is so critical:

“The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father.” (C. H. Spurgeon)

“It is my opinion that the Christian conception of God current in these middle years of the twentieth century is so decadent (corrupt, cvt) as to be utterly beneath the dignity of the Most High God and actually constitute for professed believers something amounting to a moral calamity.” (A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 10)
4. ****** It is impossible to spend too much of our time in searching God’s book from cover-to-cover, from front-to-back, and back-to-front, in order to **KNOW HIM!** And, remember, His word alone reveals Him! (1 Cor. 2:6-13)

****Jn. 17:3**: “And this is eternal life, that they may **know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”
5. But, I must admit, the study of the nature, character, personality, and attributes of God is an awesome and overwhelming task:
 - A. Certainly not because it is boring or tedious.
 - B. But, rather, because it is so vast.
6. **3** In the next several lessons it will be my aim to help us, **in some small way**, to come to a deeper knowledge of God; a more elevated appreciation for His nature, His attributes, and His character. I’ve entitled this series of lessons: **KNOWING GOD**.
7. I cannot lay claim to being fully able to cover all the Bible tells us about God. My mission is merely to whet our appetites so each of us who truly love Him might spend the rest of our days seeking to know Him more fully.

II. DISCUSSION:

I. 4 Why is this study so important?

- A. **** General**: Why is it so important to truly *know* God?
 - (1) **** Humbles the mind**: “No subject of contemplation will tend more to humble the mind, than thoughts of God...” (C. H. Spurgeon)
 - (a) Awareness of our pathetic limitations and God’s absolute power is so important.
 - (b) Only when we make this fact a constant realization in our minds will we come to the recognition of our utter and complete dependence on God.

Psa. 18:27: “For You will save the humble people, But will bring down haughty looks.”

Psa. 25:9: “The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way.”

- (2) **** Expands the mind:** “He who often thinks of God, will have a larger mind than the man who simply plods around this narrow globe...” (C. H. Spurgeon)

Psa. 119:15: “I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways.”

Psa. 8:3-4: “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, 4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?”

Only when we comprehend our own littleness in the vast expanse of space and time can we have any hope of coming to a true knowledge of God.

- (3) **** Consoles the mind:** “Oh, there is, in contemplating Christ, a balm for every wound; in musing on the Father, there is a quietus for every grief; and in the influence of the Holy Ghost, there is a balsam for every sore. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead.” (C. H. Spurgeon)

Psa. 23:1-6: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

- (4) **** Corrects our misconceptions of God:** Our concept of God is so critical to the way we view **everything**. What is your perception of God? The world has many false and conflicting perceptions of God:

- (a) **5 Doting grandfather:** God's is an old, white-haired, albeit stately, grandfatherly figure. Implied in this view is that since God is a God of love; His sole purpose for existence is to spoil and indulge mankind, just as a doting grandfather spoils his grandchildren.

Even though He wants us to do good and most of us don't, He will ultimately not hold anyone responsible and accountable for sin. Sin has no consequences, because it is somehow automatically covered by Granddaddy's love. And any way, sin is merely “a lapse in judgment,” or “a slight misunderstanding” (eventual understanding is always implied!), or “a sign of some immaturity” (as if eventual maturity is always attained!), etc. After all, “Don't you know everyone is going to heaven!”

- (b) **** Impersonal scientist:** In this view, God created the Universe as some great laboratory experiment that eventually went awry. And now he has shut himself up in his great celestial office and only periodically glances out. And when he does, he usually shakes his head and mumbles, “Boy, aren't they having a hard time of it.” This is a very “fatalistic view” of God. In this view, God has secluded and hid himself from us and has only occasional and passing interest in our affairs. And, at best, his interest in us is cold, detached, and impersonal.

- (c) **** Merlin the magician:** This is the Pentecostal view of God. In this view God constantly runs around, at our behest, performing miracles upon our command.

These miracles are designed to make our life on this planet more physically comfortable and enjoyable. In this view, God is some grand, cosmic “David Copperfield” that is meant to entertain us and provide us with a more comfortable life in the here and now.

- (d) **** Cosmic bug zapper:** In this view, God sits in heaven with the cross hairs of his trillion gigawatt ray gun aimed directly at us just waiting for us to make the slightest misstep...then ZZZAP!, we’re toast! This view of God robs him of his grace, mercy, compassion, and love.
- (e) **** Celestial Santa Claus:** This view of God can manifest itself in several ways; however, two are most common.
 - (i) First, is what I call the “the god of the health, wealth, and prosperity gospel”. This is the god promoted so often by the “tele-evangelists.” For example, Oral Robert’s “seed money”; “send me your money and God will bless you with financial prosperity and good health.”
 - (ii) Second, is what I call the god of “break glass only in case of emergency” (aka: eager bellhop). This view of God means you don’t have to pay any attention to him whatsoever **until** you have an emergency in your life. For example, there is an old saying that “there are no atheists in foxholes.” You don’t call on God unless you are really, really in urgent need and dire circumstance. Then quickly break the glass and pull him out like a fire extinguisher. But once the fire is out, put him back and don’t pay him any attention until the next emergency.
- (f) More on our concept of God:
 - (i) Each of these perceptions of God is false, because that is exactly what they are...**perceptions**. They are based on what people feel and not what the Bible says.

6“The god of this century no more resembles the Sovereign of Holy Writ than does the dim flickering candle the glory of the midday sun. The god who is talked about in the average pulpit, spoken of in the ordinary Sunday school, mentioned in much of the religious literature of the day, and preached in most of the so-called Christian conferences, is a figment of human imagination, an invention of maudlin sentimentality. The heathen outside the pale of Christendom form gods of wood and stone, while millions of heathen inside Christendom manufacture a god out of their carnal minds. In reality, they are but atheists, for there is no other possible alternative between an absolutely supreme God, and no God at all. A ‘god’ whose will is resisted, whose designs are frustrated, whose purpose is checkmated, possesses no title to Deity, and so far from being a fit object of worship, merits naught but contempt.” (Arthur Pink, *Gleanings in the Godhead*, pp. 28-29)
 - (ii) We often preach, and rightly so, that the sum total of man’s reason for existence is expressed in:

Eccl. 12:13-14: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.”
 - (iii) Certainly, this passage is true and we can never minimize the importance of obedience to God’s commands. In fact, in the course of our study, as we get

to know God better and better; it will become even more clearly evident that knowing and loving God is intimately tied with obeying His commands.

- (iv) However, we must always remember that there is much more to it than mere “robotic” obedience to God’s commands. Notice:

Hos. 6:6: “For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.”

Jer. 9:23-24: “Thus says the LORD: ‘Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24 But let him who glories glory in this, **That he understands and knows Me**, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,’ says the LORD.”

Jn. 17:3: “And this is eternal life, that they may **know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

- (v) **7** I submit to you that there is nothing more important than our concept of God. Actually, it goes much, much further than mere **concept**. Our knowledge of God, not merely knowledge about God; but deep, intimate knowledge of every facet of His personality, His character, and His attributes is our most important pursuit. Why? Because, this knowledge or lack thereof; molds our entire perception of:

- ☛ ****The world we live in, how we relate to it:** **Phil. 3:8-10:** “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,”
- ☛ ****All our relationships:** (nature and quality) with our families, our brethren, our government, our friends, our co-workers, and with people in general: Lk. 14:26; Matt. 19:9-10; Eph. 5:25, 28; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 6:1-4; 6:5-9; 1 Pet. 1:22
- ☛ ****Insight into God’s word:** and whether we truly understand its message and application in our life: **Psa. 119:14-20:** “I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. 15 I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. 16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word. 17 Deal bountifully with Your servant, That I may live and keep Your word. 18 Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law. 19 I am a stranger in the earth; Do not hide Your commandments from me. 20 My soul breaks with longing For Your judgments at all times.”
- ☛ ****Our goals and aim in life:** **Phil. 1:21:** “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

B. 8 Specific: Why is it so important to truly know God? Knowing God is...

- (1) **** Eternal life:**

Jn. 17:3: “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

1 Jn. 5:20: “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

(2) **** Delights Him:**

Jer. 9:23-24: “Thus says the LORD: ‘Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,’ says the LORD.”

(3) **** Foundation:**

☛ Faith, hope:

Heb. 11:6: “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

Rom. 5:3-5: “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

☛ Prayer and worship: Psa. 54:2; Rev. 4:8; Heb. 10:24-25

☛ Evangelism: Matt. 16:26

1 Pet. 2:9-10: “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, **that you may proclaim the praises of Him** who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

☛ Bible study:

Psa. 1:1-2: “Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night”; cf. Psa. 119

2 Tim. 2:15: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

☛ Perspective on life: Knowing God helps us view life from His perspective versus our “earthly” perspective.

Phil. 1:21: “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Phil. 3:8-10: “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,”

2. **9 Themes:** We will stress similar themes throughout this series; such as:

A. **** Godhead of God:** qualities of deity which separate God from man: Rom. 1:20

Psa. 50:21: “These things you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; But I will rebuke you, And set them in order before your eyes.”; Job 38-42

Isa. 55:8-9: *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. 9 ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.’”*

- (1) **** Self-existence:** the eternalness of God:

Ex. 3:11-14: *“But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?’ 12 So He said, ‘I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.’ 13 Then Moses said to God, ‘Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?’ 14 And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”*

Psa. 90:2: *“Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”*

- (2) **** Infinite:** immeasurably or inconceivably great or extensive; subject to no limitation or external determination,

Heb. 1:10-12: *“And: ‘You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail.”*

- (3) **** Unchangeable:** constant, fixed, immovable, immutable, invariable, unalterable, unmodifiable, unmovable.

Num. 23:19: *“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”*

Psa. 102:27: *“But You are the same, And Your years will have no end.”*

Mal. 3:6: *“For I am the LORD, I do not change...”*

Heb. 13:8: *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”*

B. 10 Powers of God: God’s abilities which prove His deity.

- (1) **Omnipotence:** His “almightiness” (He has unlimited authority, power, and influence).

Dan. 2:20-22: *“Daniel answered and said: ‘Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. 21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. 22 He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.”*

God questions Job in chapters 38-41, Job answers

Job 42:1-6: *“Then Job answered the LORD and said: 2 ‘I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. 3 You asked, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 4 Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, ‘I will question you, and you shall answer Me.’ 5 ‘I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. 6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes.”*

- (2) **Omniscience:** infinite awareness, understanding, knowledge and insight.

Psa. 147:5: “Great is our LORD, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.”

Rom. 4:17: “(as it is written, ‘I have made you a father of many nations’) in the presence of Him whom he believed; God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;”

Heb. 4:12-13: “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

- (3) Omnipresence: present in all places at all times.

Psa. 139:3-10: “You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. 5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it. 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.”

- C. **I I** Perfections of God: the aspects of his moral character which are manifested in His words and deeds, such as His:

- (1) Holiness: supremely good, His purity, majesty and glory.

Rev. 4:8: “The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!’”

- (2) Love and mercy: ultimate kindness.

I Jn. 4:8: “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

- (3) Truthfulness: utter reliability.

Psa. 31:5: “Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.”

Ex. 34:6: “And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,’”

- (4) Faithfulness: completely trustworthy, worthy of complete confidence.

I Pet. 4:19: “Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.”

- (5) Goodness: absolutely morally honorable.

Ex. 33:19: “Then He said, ‘I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.’”

Psa. 33:5: “He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.”

- (6) Patience and longsuffering: self-restraint in the face of provocation.

2 Pet. 3:9: “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

(7) Justice: what is totally right.

Psa. 89:14: “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.”

Psa. 111:7: “The works of His hands are verity and justice; All His precepts are sure.”

(8) Wrath: hot anger arising from inward indignation.

Psa. 21:8-9: “Your hand will find all Your enemies; Your right hand will find those who hate You. 9 You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger; The LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath, And the fire shall devour them.”

Psa. 38:1: “O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your wrath, Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure!”

Jer. 10:10: “But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, And the nations will not be able to endure His indignation.”

He possesses all His attributes to an infinite and perfect degree!

3. **12 How?** How will we come to “Know God”? We must come to understand and appreciate five basic truths:

A. **** God has spoken:** God has spoken to man, and the Bible is his Word, given to us to make us wise unto salvation:

1 Cor. 2:9-11: “But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”

2 Tim. 3:14-17: “But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

B. **** God is sovereign:** God is Lord and King over the entire Universe! He rules all things for his own glory, to display his perfections in all that He does, in order that men and angels may worship and adore Him:

1 Tim. 6:15-16: “He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.”

Phil. 2:9-11: “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”; cf. Matt. 28:18

- C. **** God is Savior:** His active and sovereign love through the Lord Jesus Christ rescues believers from the guilt and power of sin, adopts them as His children and blesses them accordingly,

Rom. 5:8: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Rom. 8:16-17: “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

Jn. 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” (cf. Acts 4:12)

- D. **** God is triune:** There is within the Godhead three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; and the work of salvation is one in which all three act together, the Father purposing (planning) redemption, the Son securing (assuring) it and the Spirit revealing it (Eph. 3:10-11; 1:7; 3:3-5).

- E. **** Godliness:** we must pursue true godliness! Godliness means responding to God’s revelation in trust and obedience, faith and worship, prayer and praise, submission and service. Life must be seen and lived totally in the light of God’s Word. This, and nothing else, is true religion.

Psa. 119:10-12: “With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You! 12 Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes!”

1 Tim. 2:2: “...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”

1 Tim. 4:7-8: “...exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.”

(1) The word godliness is from Greek *eusebeia* from *eu*, (well) and *sebomai* (to be devout).

(2) Vine says it “denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him.”

2 Pet. 1:3-8: “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith ...virtue ...knowledge ...self-control ...perseverance ...godliness ...brotherly kindness ...love ...”

2 Cor. 6:16-18 (God will dwell in us only IF we separate ourselves from the world!)

2 Cor. 7:1: “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

4. **I3 Goal:** What is our goal in “Knowing God”?

- A. Our motives must be pure as we pursue a deeper knowledge of God:
B. I want our study to be eminently practical; not just an academic exercise.

1 Cor. 8:1b-2: “Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. 2 And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.”

“The study of the nature and character of God is the most practical project anyone can engage in. Knowing God is crucially important for the living of our lives.” (J. I. Packer, **Knowing God**)

C. Through this study I hope we may all achieve at least 6 things:

(1) **** Draw near:** Draw ourselves ever closer to God (manner of life, prayer, worship):

Heb. 11:5: “By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found, because God had taken him; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”

“No one ever makes it to heaven by the ‘skin of their teeth’. We either have an abundant entrance or no entrance at all!” (Leon Odom, gospel preacher)

(2) **** Deepen our faith and hope:**

Heb. 11:6: “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

Rom. 5:3-5: “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

Titus 2:13: “looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,” (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6-8)

(3) **** Overcome the trials of life:** Provide us comfort when the trials and the troubles of life close in.

“The world becomes a strange, mad, painful place, and life in it is disappointing and unpleasant business, for those who do not know God.” (J. I. Packer, **Knowing God**)

(a) Importance of our study of the Psalms! **Jn. 10:10b:** “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

(b) Paul:

2 Cor. 4:16-5:1: “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

(4) **** Immunize ourselves to unbelief:**

Heb. 3:12-4:2: “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said: ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.’ 16 For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. 4:1

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 **For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.**

- (5) **** Spiritual maturity:** That we all might achieve a higher level of spiritual maturity.

Phil. 1:21: “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Phil. 3:8-10: “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,”

- (6) **** Readiness:** Ready ourselves for eternity.

Jn. 17:3: “And this is eternal life, that they may **know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (Eccl. 12:13-14; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:7-10)

III. CONCLUSION: 14

- I. I encourage you to take notes; review the sermon outlines and powerpoints.

A. Take time during the week and read the passages we mention in the lessons.

- B. It is equally essential to meditate on the passages and pray for wisdom. Meditation is such a lost art! **Meditate! Think!** Prov. 23:7

Phil. 4:8: “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things.”

Deut. 6:6-9: “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

- C. **Pray!** 1 Thess. 5:17

Jas. 1:5: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

Col. 4:2: “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;”

4. Lord willing we will continue our study, “Knowing God” next Lord’s Day.

5. Invitation

Some of the material in this sermon is from *Knowing God*, J. I. Packer