

Knowing God

“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him,

I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.”

Genesis 17:1

Introduction:

1. The Lord impressed this subject and text on me very definitely about two weeks ago during the night.
2. The most important matter we can ever learn and practice is to know, fear, love, and serve our God.
3. This is the first and great commandment, and our personal relationship with Him is second to nothing.
4. We also have two couples getting married in coming weeks, and this subject is very needful to them.
5. Do not be fatalistic and slothfully presume on His knowledge of you (Gal 4:9; II Tim 2:19; Mat 7:23).
6. Some who believe and teach the sovereignty of God go to sleep fatalistically without pursuing Him.
7. The lesson is very simple, but your flesh, the world, and Satan will hinder you with combined might.
8. Ignore any details that distract from the lesson of personally seeking a closer relationship with God.
9. Do not let the conviction you should (and hopefully will) experience dissipate once you leave church.
10. Your life is worthless, the CO2 you exhale a crime, and your presence a presumption ... without this.
11. You will soon meet God whether you want to or not, and you will wish you had sought Him here.
12. Our first father presumptuously lost his relationship with God and did not seek to repair it, and the consequences in his life, the lives of all men, and the eternal destiny of most men is overwhelming.

The Text.

1. There are three clauses – the introduction, the transitional command, and the final command.
2. God introduced Himself to Abraham, which is one of the grandest and profoundest facts.
3. *I am the Almighty God* ... a personal introduction of Himself to Abraham (compare Ex 6:3).
4. The living and true God fills heaven and earth, but He introduced Himself again to Abraham, for we are forgetful creatures, and sometimes we need to be reminded of spiritual realities.
5. There is much written of Abraham, but let us simply point out a few reminders from Genesis.
6. God called Abraham 500 miles from Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen 12), blessed him financially (Gen 13), blessed him militarily (Gen 14), promised Him a great seed (Gen 15), endured the Hagar affair (Gen 16), promised him the seed of Sarah (Gen 17), accepted his bartering for Sodom (Gen 18), protected him from Abimelech (Gen 20), fulfilled His promise of Sarah (Gen 21), tried him with Isaac (Gen 22), and provided a wife for Isaac (Gen 24).
7. Abraham left his home to worship God (Gen 12), graciously accepted less than Lot (Gen 13), boldly pursued four kings and paid tithes of all (Gen 14), wished for more than God (Gen 15), played the fool with Hagar (Gen 16), laughed at God's mention of Sarah (Gen 17), entertained and begged the Lord (Gen 18), showed his weakness again with Abimelech (Gen 20), celebrated God's goodness in Isaac (Gen 21), passed his trial with Isaac (Gen 22), swore to marry only in the Lord (Gen 24), and died in a good old age very successful (Gen 25).
8. *Walk before me* ... as you have been doing, a very God-conscious life, a lifestyle that pleases me, seeking and appreciating my presence, by total faith and dependence on me, according to my given commandments and ones that I shall yet give, through trials and troubles, knowing that I see all good and evil, and I will be with you through all and help you to overcome all.
9. Let me delight in you, Abraham, as the friend I have chosen for many special blessings!
10. Abraham had been walking before God for 24 years! Without realizing the full blessings yet!
11. Abraham is known as the friend of God – a glorious goal (Jas 2:23; II Chr 20:7; Isaiah 41:8).
12. The fact that you are here this morning ... is God appearing to you and saying, “I am ...”

God is knowable.

1. Deists and those with Deistic thinking are wrong, who admit Him as Creator and no more.
2. Eliphaz reminded Job, "Acquaint now thyself with him" (Job 22:21), for God is knowable.
 - a. Knowing God brings peace, for He passes any earthly difficulties (Is 26:3-4; Phil 4:6-7).
 - b. Knowing God brings prosperity, for He rewards righteous seekers (Ps 37:4; 91:14-16).
3. God is not watching from a distance as some, but draws nigh to men drawing nigh (Jas 4:8).
4. He calls to men to seek His face, to pursue closeness with Him, and they respond (Ps 27:8).
5. Again, remember that Abraham was the friend of God ... God counted Abram His friend!
6. Enoch and Noah walked with God, and God took Enoch home early (Gen 5:22,24; 6:9).

God made man with capacity to know.

1. We are not like beasts that know nothing at all (Psalm 32:9; Job 35:11; 32:8; Eccl 3:21).
2. When men live ... eat, sleep, work, reproduce ... without knowing God, the Bible refers to them as brutish, for they are as insensible as dogs and cattle (Ps 73:22; 92:6; 94:8; Jer 10:14).
3. In fact, God compares such men not knowing Him to several animals and less than animals, like dogs, pigs, and wild asses (Prov 26:11; II Pet 2:22; Isaiah 1:3; Jer 2:23-24; 8:7; etc.)!
4. The conscience in man is the candle of the Lord, which we should use for Him (Prov 20:27).
5. As we grow older, our consciences and spirits develop to where we can know God and others, and if we do not use this ability, then we are as sottish children (Jer 4:22; 8:7)!

What is there to know?

1. Moses sought to know God better, and we may be surprised by the results (Ex 33:12 – 34:9).
2. Paul prayed for aspects of His relationship to us to be known (Eph 1:15-23; 3:14-21; etc.).
3. Hebrews 11:6, a verse known by many, identifies two aspects of Him that we want to know.
 - a. He exists, and His existence is that of an infinite Person that fills heaven and earth.
 - b. He rewards diligent seekers, which follows the description of Enoch and his joyful end.
4. Knowing God includes knowing what He has created and done (Ps 143:5), and by thinking and speaking of these things, we have grounds for delight and praise (Ps 145:5,6,11).
5. Do you know God has been there, is there now, and will always be there ... for you to trust?
6. We want to know Him, not about Him, so seek His face, presence, fellowship, approval, etc.
7. We want a relationship with Him, not a religion about Him: one is fabulous, the other fatal.
8. Consider the way John introduced His epistle with one another fellowship (I John 1:1-7).

It is a glorious thing.

1. When reading Exodus 33, do you notice Joshua's choice to pursue God (Exodus 33)? Why?
2. Jeremiah describes it in superlatives compared to any other privileges of life (Jer 9:23-24).
3. David said it was sweet (Ps 43:4; 63:5-6; 104:34), Habakkuk surpassing all (Hab 3:17-19).
4. Contentment, a chief ingredient for a successful life, depends on knowing Him (Heb 13:5).
5. He loves those who delight in Him, and He rewards them for the honor (Ps 37:4; Is 58:14).

How important is it?

1. Paul counted all things loss for the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, and this included a measure of experimental knowledge of Him, His power, His sufferings, etc. (Phil 3:8-14).
2. Asaph said it was all he desired in heaven or earth, his strength, his portion (Psalm 73:25-26).
3. Jesus will come with mighty angels and flaming fire on them that know not (II Thess 1:7-10).

4. God made you for Himself, and you should want to fulfill your destiny or purpose actively, by knowing Him, fearing Him, and loving Him ... lest you fulfill your destiny or purpose passively under His ferocious judgment (Pr 16:4; Rev 4:11).
5. Jesus died for us to know God His Father, be accepted by Him, be adopted by Him, etc., and this glorious object of salvation should not be neglected (John 17:2-3; I John 5:20).

How do we know him?

1. It is not hearing, believing, saying, reading, doctrine, etc. It is personal affection and service.
2. It is the Spirit of God that regenerates and moves us toward God (Rom 8:9-17; Gal 5:16-25).
3. It is God conscious living, as David explained to Solomon before dying (I Chronicles 28:9).
4. It is altering priorities to put God and His things first in your life for affection, time, etc., etc.
5. It is a pursuit of God based on faith, not feelings; the lack of feelings does not bother faith.
6. We draw nigh by separation, humility, submission, resistance, and repentance (Jas 4:4-10).
7. If you want to know and be closer to anyone, you know exactly what to do in the way of pursuit, service, help, kindness, obedience, praise, etc. But with God we know He responds!
8. Isaiah described the character of those to whom God will discover Himself (Isaiah 66:2).
9. The glory God revealed to Moses is a glory we can read about extensively in the Bible.
10. The name God revealed to Moses is a name we can know and understand, especially in Jesus, and this name was a very special and unique blessing to Moses (Exodus 6:3).
11. We seek God, as David did, by committing ourselves to the requisite holiness (Psalm 101).
12. We pray for Him to reveal Himself to us by His Spirit, which is given to us for this purpose, just as Moses asked God to show him His glory (Ex 33:18; Ps 63:1-3; Luke 11:13).
13. We choose to be magnificent toward God as was David, whom God rewarded gloriously for it.
14. No man can come to God but by and through Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Matt 11:28), and even Abraham rejoiced to see His day by faith (John 8:56)!
15. It is more a choice than details. It is more an emphasis than a doctrine. It is more experimental than factual. Make it an obsession. Let it drive the rest of your life.
16. He will abide and dwell with those who love Him and obey Him (John 14:15-18,23).

Conclusion:

1. No man knows God but by Jesus (John 14:6; Matt 11:28). Abraham rejoiced to see His day (Jn 8:56)!
2. Jesus stands knocking in every man's life, seeking intimate fellowship and friendship (Rev 3:20), and all any man needs to do is open that door and receive Him in for that personal relationship.
3. Sin separates (Is 59:1-2), and it grieves and quenches God (Eph 4:30; I Thess 5:19), so be zealous to live a holy life (I John 1:6-7) and confess all sins as soon as possible (I John 1:9).

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "Walking with God," ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/pdf/walking-with-god.pdf>.
2. The sermon outline, "Heart of David," ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/pdf/heart-of-david.pdf>.
3. The sermon outline, "Knowing Christ," ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/pdf/knowning-christ.pdf>.
4. The sermon outline, "We Would See Jesus," ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/pdf/we-would-see-jesus.pdf>.
5. The sermon outline, "Revelation 3:20," ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/pdf/revelation-3-20-reclaimed.pdf>.
6. The sermon outline, "Delighting in the Lord," from Psalm 37:4 ... not available in e-format at this time.