

Sunday, January 16, 2022 am

DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD (2)

Do you know God?

2 Thessalonians 1:8

Last week, I announced and introduced our theme for 2022, Drawing Closer to God. This ought to be a goal every Christian desires, will strive for and keep increasing in as time goes on.

As we begin our study of drawing closer to God, I will devote the first few lessons to remind us of who God is. It is my belief that you cannot draw closer to God if you do not know Him – who He is, what He expects of me, etc. So in this lesson I want to ask the question, “Do you know God?” and discuss what it means to know God.

I. God’s Word Tells us that We Need to Know Him

- a. There are many passages that speak about knowing God. Here are a few that address our NEED to know God.
- b. Jeremiah 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; 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.*
- c. Hosea 6:3, (a contemporary of Isaiah, who was told to marry a harlot to demonstrate Israel’s unfaithfulness and why they were being put away. Later in the letter, we find a call for repentance. *Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.*
- d. 1 John 2:13-14 – John writes to them because they have known the Father. Written as something they needed.
- e. John 17:3, Jesus in His prayer noted that eternal life is found in knowing God
- f. Hebrews 8:11 – A quote from Jeremiah 31:31-34 where God’s New Covenant was one in which everyone would know Him. It is an attribute that made it superior to the Old Law (where one was born into the covenant).
- g. Romans 1:20-21 – creation declares God. We cannot honestly look at this world (it’s design, its laws of energy, man’s sense of morality, man’s ability to reason and appreciate beauty, etc.) and deny that God exists. WHO God is, is another story, but to deny Him is willful blindness. Yet that is exactly what far too many in the world have done.
- h. Sadly, many do not know God. It is demonstrated by their conduct.
 - i. Romans 1:21 – although they knew God, they did not glorify God
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 1:21 – the world in its own wisdom did not know God. Man typically explains God away.
 - iii. 2 Thessalonians 1:8 – God will take vengeance on those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel – this tells us it is something we CAN do. In fact, we MUST know God.
 - iv. John 17:25 – the world has not known you, the apostles and disciples did.

II. How Do You Get to Know God?

- a. **You need to spend time with God –**
 - i. This really summarizes the process of getting to know God – and it is a crucial element of that process. In fact, it correlates with how well you know Him.
 - ii. It is going to take time. Think of those you are closest to – family. You know that in time you get to know them better. Their strengths, weaknesses, quirks, etc. You might say in time you get to know who they really are. Similarly, you will not know God unless you take the time to get to know Him and spend time with Him.

- iii. How do we spend time with God? By doing the things He wants you to do – study His word, pray to Him, worship Him, set aside time to think about Him, by spending time with your brethren, by serving others, by sharing Him with others, etc.
- b. ***By knowing Jesus*** –
- i. Colossians 1:15 tells us that He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. Also, Hebrews 1:3
 - ii. One of the reasons Jesus came to this earth was so that we could know God better. John 14:6-7ff – He emphasized this to His apostles.
 - iii. Matthew 11:27 tells us that we know Father because of His Son.
 - iv. John 7:28-29 – Jesus exposed the corrupt leaders by noting that they did know God.
 - v. Do you know Jesus? This is a lesson within itself, but the point is clear – if you know Jesus, you know God and vice-versa.
- c. ***We need to love Him*** –
- i. Love is one of our foundational attitudes whether we are dealing with mankind or with God. We must love God if we are to have a hope of relationship with Him.
 - ii. Matthew 22:37 – it was the first and great commandment.
 - iii. 1 Corinthians 8:3 – whether or not God knows us is based upon our love for Him.
 - iv. 1 John 4:7-8 – love is a quality that shows we love and know God. This text also emphasizes that the only way we can love God is by loving one another.
 - v. 1 John 5:20 concluded his letter with this observation. Notice 1 John 5:20-21.
- d. ***We need to worship Him*** –
- i. Psalm 29:2 says, *Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*
 - ii. One of the ways we draw closer to God is through worship. This has always been a quality associated of relationship with Him.
 - iii. John 4:22-24 – we must worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Jesus discussed KNOWING what you worship. Note that Jesus pointed out that God IS Spirit. This is something we NEED TO KNOW about Him as we worship Him.
 - iv. John 17:23 – as Paul began his message in Athens he noted their false objects of worship and then sought to introduce them to the true God whom they needed to worship.
 - v. We have noted in times past that every act of worship is directed toward God – praising and glorifying Him. We worship praise God because we know Him – Hebrews 13:15.
- e. ***We need to reverence Him*** –
- i. We cannot address knowing God without being reminded of the fear of the Lord. Furthermore, we emphasize the need to give God the reverence He is due because of who He is (we cannot do this if we do not know Him).
 - ii. Romans 11:22 says to behold both the goodness and severity of God. We need to understand both.
 - iii. When we properly fear God it keeps our perspective Him where it needs to be. Hebrews 10:31 tells us it is a fearful thing to fall into His hands (His judgment).
 - iv. When we fear Him for who He is, it leads to giving Him the reverence He deserves. He is not like one of our buddies on earth, but our heavenly Father – creator, sustainer and judge. We HAVE to respect Him in His holiness – 1 Peter 1:15-16. Psalm 111:9 says that “holy and awesome is His name.”
 - v. Hebrews 12:28-29 tells us to serve Him with reverence and godly fear, because He is a consuming fire.
- f. ***We need to let His word abide in us*** –
- i. His word reveals who He is, what He expects of us, etc.

1. Ephesians 1:17, *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,*
 2. 1 Corinthians 2:9-12, we know God because of what the Spirit revealed
 3. Romans 1:17 – in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed.
 4. 1 Cor. 1:21 – it pleased God through the message preached to save.
- ii. 1 John 2:14 speaks of His word abiding in us. Colossians 3:16 – let His word dwell richly in you.
 - iii. Psalm 1:1-2 introduces the psalms by noting we meditate on His word day and night.
 - iv. John 8:31 – *if you abide in My word, You are My disciples indeed.*
 - v. 2 Timothy 3:15 – Timothy was commended because the word had been with him since childhood.
 - vi. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 – it was also true under the LOM as well.
 - vii. We need to be studying His word often so that we can learn more about Him.
- g. ***We need to obey Him*** –
- i. All the knowledge in the world is meaningless if we are unwilling to obey it.
 - ii. 1 John 2:3-6 clearly tells us that we know Him by keeping His commandments.
 - iii. 1 John 3:6 – if we keep sinning, we do not know Him. Consider also Titus 1:16 – they profess to know God, but in works they deny Him.
- h. ***We need to trust Him***
- i. Hebrews 11:1 describes what faith is. It is crucial to pleasing God.
 - ii. Be reminded that genuine faith involves both believing God and trusting God. The greater our faith, the greater our trust.
 - iii. Proverbs 3:5 calls for us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts... and He will direct your steps.
 - iv. Trust is not always easy, especially with God, when we are facing uncertainties. But when we put our trust in Him and “let it go”, we come out stronger on the other end. And the more He delivers, the greater we know Him. I am convinced that is part of what Romans 8:31-39 – in Him we are more than conquerors. Nothing can separate us from His love.
 - v. Do you know Him well enough to trust Him as you ought?
- i. ***By remaining faithful*** –
- i. Galatians 4:8-9 – after you have known God... Paul was concerned
 - ii. Hebrews 10:38-39 – the just shall live by faith
 - iii. Consider 2 Peter 2:20-22 – the strong warning about returning to the world.
 - iv. If you really know God, you would not DARE walk away from Him after establishing that relationship with Him. You know better. That was the point the Hebrew writer was trying to make.

And thus we can see some things that will help us to know God the way that we should. When we know God, we WANT to draw closer to Him. Many of the things we have discussed in this lesson will be further developed as we go through this year, but for now I commend this to you for your consideration. How well do you know God? Think about it!