

Know God

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 22 March 2015

[0 : 00] Let us look along the line of knowing God.

Knowing God. And today we're continuing our series on the family, on relationships, on the home, on love and life. And I put it to you carefully this morning, this truth, that what matters most is our relationship with God.

Our relationship with God. It's the all-important question. Do I know God? Notice this. I'm not asking you, do you know about God?

There's lots of very well-informed, wrongly informed, but well-informed and smart atheists and sceptics in the world today. They know the Bible, back to front, some of them.

They know the Bible, but they do know nothing if they don't know God. You can know about God, you can know about theology, you can know about the Bible, but not know God.

[1 : 11] Know God. And as we consider what happened at the time of the cross, it's a good time to reflect on this. So take time for self-examination. The Word tells us examine yourselves.

What is the most important truth in life? I put it to you that it is this. How do we stand before God? Do we know Him? Where are we at today?

It's good to reflect on this. How is our relationship with God? It's been said that no God equals no peace. Know God and you know peace.

The Bible says there is no peace for the wicked, for those who do not know God. That's Isaiah 48, verse 22. But there is peace for those who do know God.

They know Him. Paul says this is important, to get to know this, this all-important knowledge. It's important that we get this. Philippians 3, verse 8, it says, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

[2 : 21] Paul at this time, he could talk about lots of things that he knew that he had done and things he could maybe humanly take credit for. But no, he says, this pales into insignificance to this knowledge, the excellency of this knowledge, the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The excellency of knowing Jesus as my Lord. Notice that, my Lord. This is the critical truth for humanity to make a real sense out of life, to find that eternal purpose to live by.

Do we know Him? What's life's ultimate purpose? It's something each of us can come to know personally. Philippians 3, verse 10, Paul goes on to say, that I may know Him, know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.

Paul says, I might know a lot of things, but this one thing, that I may know Him, that's what matters. This is what counts, to know the cross, to know His sufferings, to know His rising again.

And it was for me, to know Him, that I may know Him. And friends, today, we can come to know God personally. That's what matters.

[3 : 37] How do we get to know God? That's the question. Abraham had this same experience. It says of him that Abraham knew God personally as a friend.

James 2, verse 23, it says, And the scripture was fulfilled, but saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.

And he was called the friend of God. So his believing was reckoned as righteousness. He believed God. He knew God by grace through faith, by grace through faith.

Some people mistakenly look back on those in the Old Testament, that somehow people were saved somehow differently back then than they are in the New Testament or now.

But no, everyone gets saved the same way. All are saved by the same grace through faith. There is no other way.

[4 : 35] No other way. Ephesians 2, verse 8, For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.

A precious gift. It's free, but it's for a limited time only. Free, but it's for a limited time only. This is life eternal to know him.

John 17. And this is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. The enemy of the cross is dead religion.

We're not here to promote religion, but a relationship with God. It's not religion we need, it's relationship with God.

How can we get in right relationship with God? There's a problem. There's an obstacle. There's a barrier. God calls it sin. Why do we need the cross today?

[5 : 32] We need the cross because there's an impenetrable barrier between God and man. You know, there's this barrier between us and God, and it's called sin. The Bible says, Isaiah 59, your sins are separated between you and your God.

And the only way to break through that sin barrier is the blood shed for us, the precious blood shed for us at the cross. That's what makes relationship with God possible today for you and me.

At the cross, God took our guilt. In His grace, He took our penalty. And through faith, we can receive His gift, His forgiveness today.

That's an amazing truth that just makes everything make sense, really, doesn't it? And the question for each one here today, as you examine yourselves at this time, do I know that?

That's saving grace through faith. There is no other way. Someone has said, the ground is all level at the foot of the cross. The ground is all level at the foot of the cross.

[6 : 42] You know, there's no discrimination there at the foot of the cross. There's no colour, there's no culture there. There's no rank there, no status there at the foot of the cross.

We are all equally as bad as one another. Okay? You can't claim to be worse than me. I can't claim to be worse than you.

No one gets an advantage. The Bible says there is none good. None good. No, not one. Not one. There's none good.

No, not one. No one gets an advantage. We're all as equally as bad as one another. We're all stand equally condemned, guilty, on death's road.

But the good news is that grace came. The gift of God has come. And it can have that same saving effect. The ground is all equal at the foot of the cross.

[7 : 38] That we can all equally know that saving power, that grace, that pardon, that forgiveness, that breaking of the prison bars, that escape, that release, that redemption, that setting free.

No matter how deep our sin is, his grace is greater than all our sin. And his saving power can make the foulest clean. The question for all of us today is, are you saved by grace through faith?

Now this is a time where believers are prompted and reminded as we have this tangible representation of the cross, of his love, of his grace, of faith.

And you can know this precious relationship. The precious relationship. We're talking about relationships in the family. This relationship is the most fundamental and most important of all.

For every soul. A precious relationship with God. And I urge you today, if you've yet to trust him, you can trust him now. In a moment. In a moment of time, you can trust him now and have an eternal change of direction.

[8 : 46] And you can have a relationship that is out of this world with God. That he is your friend. And you can be a friend of God. That's amazing, isn't it?

And it's close too. It's a close relationship. God is not far away in outer space. He's close to you. He's a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

He's very close and personal. And that's what it means to know God. So just some thoughts along that theme. That this relationship matters. And it's by God's provision.

And it's our privilege to be invited into that knowledge. To know communion with God. Relationships can get damaged. But God brings forgiveness, doesn't he?

And that relationship with him. That barrier that is between us and him is broken by the blood. That sin barrier he breaks through. And the wonderful truth is that you and I can know God.

[9 : 44] Know God. Wow. Philipians, Psalm 46.10. He says, Be still. And know that I am God. Know that I am God.

Examine yourself today. You can know God today by grace through faith. And the relationship with God is the most important relationship of all.

I pray that you'll know that today. That you'll be reminded of that as we think of this time. As we think of the cross. It's our works that... Our works don't make our relationship with God. It's not our works that make our relationship with God. It's not religion. It's not having some superstitious, holy feeling. It's not me coming along and sprinkling holy water on your head. Or making a sign of a cross on your head. Or saying some spooky words. Or getting you to pray some magical prayer. It's between you and God. And I urge you today.

[10 : 39] Do you know Him? Do you know Him? Do you know Him personally? Is He your friend? Are you His friend? I urge you. I beseech you. I plead with you to know this truth personally today.

It's not your works that make relationship with God. They follow on. As a result of your relationship with God. But you can enter into a covenant relationship with God by His grace today.

It's made possible by His grace through faith. You can personally know God. You can personally come to know Him. I'll call the ushers to help distribute the bread and cup.

Just for those that might be familiar, we pass the bread and cup to those who know God and those who want to know God. Trust Him now. By faith, simply that.

Trust Him now. Examine yourself. Do you know Him? If you don't know Him, you can know Him now. By faith. In that moment. And say, Lord, I believe. I believe. I trust You now.

[11 : 40] Thank You for dying on the cross for my sin. Rising from the dead. I trust You now. I live for You. I follow You. I love You now. Let us trust Him. And as we wait for one another, they'll pass from the front through to the back and hold the cup and bread and we'll wait for one another as we take that together.

Hold the bread and cup. The Bible says that that night in which He was betrayed, betrayed by those who seemed to be the closest to Him, one of the twelve turned His back and betrayed our God.

Trust Him now. Trust Him now. Be amongst that number that will trust Him. Trust Him now. He took the bread and He said, this represents my body.

He took the cup, the fruit, the red fruit of the vine speaks of the precious red blood, the precious blood that was shed.

As He poured it out, even in the garden, as He prayed for us there, in love He was poured out. As His blood was pouring out, His love poured out and still pours out today.

[13 : 00] Trust Him now. Trust Him now. Put your trust in Him. There's nothing magical about these tangible things we hold in our hands, but there is that reminder that we need.

We always do need that reminding and I urge you to trust Him now. Put your trust in Him. The Bible says that He was wounded for our sins.

He was bruised for our sins. He was beaten black and blue, bleeding for you, for me. We can't conceive it really, can we? How could He do that?

Why did He do that? It was love. It was love that held Him to the cross. Love that held Him to the cross, not the nails. Love that held Him to the cross. He could have called down many angels to scatter them and to smite them that hurt Him, but He did not.

He loved them still. He loved them. Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing. Love held Him to the cross for you and we should love Him.

[14 : 08] Love Him more dearly. As we just meditate, the Bible says, examine yourselves. Examine yourselves. Lord, we know there's much to be desired in this man speaking here.

We know there's much lack and much need, much want, much failing, much failure, much sin. Lord, we pray that your grace would avail and touch each life here today, this morning.

Each life would be touched by your Holy Spirit. If there's any yet to trust you, they'll trust you now, even this moment of faith. That faith would spring up like a little, a little plant springing up out of the earth.

New life would be created in hearts today. Lord, that each one would know what it is to trust you. to trust that you took our place as we were in that death's row cell, as it were, no hope.

Pardon came. Pardon from the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Still guilty, yet pardoned.

[15 : 21] Pardoned. Payment made, the penalty paid, we set free. Praise you. I'll ask one of the ushers to give thanks for the bread.

I've heard it said that we need the ushers to talk a bit louder when they give thanks, so someone with a big loud voice let your prayer be heard so we can give thanks together. Perhaps, Ian, would you like to give thanks to the bread, the body of Christ?

Father, I come to you in the Lord Jesus' name. I thank you, my Lord, for the salvation that we have in the blood of your Son. Lord, we are not able to save ourselves but it is needed a sacrifice, my Lord, a pure and sinless and holy sacrifice that we might be saved. And your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, offered himself upon the cross that we might be with him eternally. We eat this bread in remembrance of the sacrifice in the Lord Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Let's take, eat and bless the Lord. Just as we dwell on the cross, think of the precious blood today.

[16 : 35] Lord, we thank you for your blood that was shared on the cross and thank you for your love that extends freely still. The grace that still is pouring out until the last one comes to you that you choose.

Lord, we thank you that our grace is still extended to humanity today. Thank you, Lord, that we've got that wonderful joy of knowing you because of the blood that was shed for us for our sins. That we can know you. Help us, Lord, to know you more, to grow closer in that relationship with you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. He says, take it, this is my blood. Thank you, Lord. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.