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## Knowing God

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Allow me to present a series of questions, which I have recently been pondering deeply... It has come to my attention that we as Christians tend to read things in the Bible, many times in-fact, without really stopping to think what the text is actually trying to convey.

For example, when the Bible says of someone that they “know God”, what exactly does that mean? What is knowing God? Is knowing God simply knowing the Bible, or is there something more to it? These are the questions we will be exploring today.

In the interest of efficiency and to be fair to each question, let’s begin with the assumption that I hear most people make: Most people I have talked with (including Christian), think that knowing God is simply memorizing the Bible well. After all, The Bible is God’s Word... so knowing God would be studying the Bible right?

Now I can understand the logic of that belief, and on the surface it seems perfectly correct, but there is more to knowing God than just memorizing scripture.

Take a look at some of the definitions of the word *know* from the American Heritage Dictionary:

1.
  - To perceive as familiar; recognize
  - To be acquainted with
2. To be able to distinguish; recognize as distinct
3. To discern the character or nature of

Now please do not misunderstand... I am not suggesting that studying scripture is not a very important part of knowing God (and being Christian), however there is more than head-knowledge involved to truly know God. Take the first definition from the list above; *to perceive as familiar*, as an example. If you had read about an automobile all of your life but never actually saw one, and had no real concept of its components or what it looked like, how familiar would it be to you? So you see how truly knowing God requires more than simple head-work in memorizing the Bible, although God’s Word is a part of it.

## The Triad of Knowing

So then what is knowing God? To truly know God is as much a heart and soul knowledge as it is a head knowledge (that is why it is called a triad). What that means is simply this:

Take Hollywood celebrities as an example... Some people make it their life to watch celebrities, to read all they can about them, to take pictures of them and to watch them in television and movies. However none of that conveys the personality, nor the true being of the individual. We can watch, and read and learn all about a person, but unless we talk with that person regularly (or live with that person) we don't really know them.

I have some personal experience with that... There was a certain celebrity that I had always wanted to meet, two in-fact; and as it would turn out, I ended up at the very movie-set location where these two were together. Now from what I knew of these two gentlemen from writings and the media, they both seemed like people I would be proud to meet, real stand-up men of good character.

Well when I finally met these gentlemen in person, it turns out that their real character was not as I thought... one anyway. The one gentlemen who I had previously admired, turned out to be extremely arrogant and rude, and not just on one day but every day I was there for the entire time.

Now the point I am trying to make by sharing this story with you is that to truly know someone, you have to spend real time with them, and it's the same with God.

Reading the Bible is fine and very good. So is going to a good church important, but neither of those things can take the place of actually spending time with the Lord.

### **Spending time with God**

So what does it mean to spend time with God? It's not like He is going to hang out for a game of Chess or something.

Well that's true, but there's more to spending time with God than hanging-out with a buddy. Time with God is a deeply spiritual and heart-oriented thing. Notice that I said deeply *spiritual* and not deeply *ritualistic*! There are many people I have spoken with that believe in order to spend time with God they must go through a long deep ritual; my friends that is not the case.

When Jesus died on the cross the Bible records that the veil of the temple was torn in-half. That was to symbolize that we now have access to God through Jesus, no more are animal sacrifices and long rituals required; Jesus is what matters now.

So again we come to the question, what does it mean to spend time with God? Prayer is a great way to spend time with God. He wants to hear our prayers, and we were created to worship Him. Reading the Bible in a prayerful mind with a heart to really learn about God (more than simply memorizing scripture) is another way we can spend quality time with the Lord.

Whenever we spend time with God, where He has an active part or role in the activity is important. Then God becomes more than a passing thought and then we become productive in Christ as He then has a part in what we are doing. In this way we can do what the scripture says: “acknowledge Him in all of our ways” (Proverbs 3:6)

### **Conclusion**

So now hopefully we see how knowing God is much more than simply head-knowledge and memorizing scripture. It is as much about our heart and soul as it is our brain.

To truly know God is to be so close to Him that we understand His ways and understand His wants and desires for our lives. To truly know Him – as the dictionary puts it – is to be familiar with Him, to not see the Lord as someone who is distant or foreign or unreachable; but someone who is loving and near to us.

It is my sincere wish that we all grow closer to God and truly get to know Him better and spend more quality time with Him so that we can experience the fullness of His love for us and see the best of His plans for our lives.

Rise to the Challenge!

James