

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE Knowing God More

SERIES

DATE 7/31/2022

KEY SCRIPTURE Psalm 103:8

SYNOPSIS God has some great character qualities which inspire us to know him better.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ **Knowing God More**

We've been talking about the name of the Lord the last couple of weeks. God calls himself Yahweh. His name indicates that he is the source of all existence and reality. He always was, He is, and He always will be. We also talked about how the four letters of God's name, YHWH represent breathing sounds. When pronounced without the vowels, it actually sounds like breathing. YH (inhale): WH (exhale). God chose to give himself a name that we can't help but speak every moment we're alive.

We can personally know God by experience. God shows kindness to people, being good, faithful, and merciful. But God is also just and he judges fairly because he sees and knows all things. And, God is righteous, always doing the right thing, and he will ultimately make all ☞ things right. **Everything in this Christian walk hinges upon knowing the Lord.**

--A. W. Tozer... *What is God like? Christianity at any given time is strong or weak depending upon her concept of God. The basic trouble with the church today is her unworthy conception of God. What I believe about God is the most important thing about me.*

☞ **Psalms 103:8**

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

This is a quote from Exodus 34:5-7, when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments and then passed in front of him. He made this proclamation about himself. He is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in love.

Here again, we see the name of the LORD. It should be in all caps in your bible, indicating his name, Yahweh. He is the creator and sustainer of all things and he is over and above all creation. There is no one and nothing like him. He alone is God and lord. But, what is his nature?

☞ **God is compassionate**

Compassionate = merciful; deep love; tender affection

Isaiah 49:15 talks about the compassion a mother has on her newborn infant. Even though she may, in some extreme case, harden and forget that child, God will never forget us.

Psalms 145:9

The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out.

A Christian Scientist came along and said: "You only think that you are in a pit"

A Pharisee said: "Only bad people fall into a pit"

A Fundamentalist said: "You deserve your pit"

An IRS man asked if he was paying taxes on the pit.



A Hyper-Charismatic said: "Just confess you're not in a pit"
An Optimist said: "Things could be worse"
A Pessimist said: "Things will get worse!"
Jesus, seeing the man, took him by the hand and lifted him out of the pit.

That is exactly how God showed his compassion for us. Romans 5:8 says, "But God ☞ demonstrates his own love for us in this: **While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**" He joined us in this world so that he could save us and lift us out of our sins.

He is still compassionate towards us – he cares about everything in our lives. It's been said, **if it ☞ matters to you, it matters to God.**

--James S. Hewett... *A little girl was sent on an errand by her mother. She took much too long in coming back. Mother, therefore, demanded an explanation when she finally did return. The little girl explained that on her way she had met a little friend who was crying because she had broken her doll. "Oh," said the mother, "then you stopped to help her fix her doll?" "Oh, no," replied the little girl. "I stopped to help her cry."*

2 Corinthians 1:3-4
the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles,

☞ **God is gracious**

Gracious = from root – to bend or stoop in kindness; to favor

--Erma Bombeck... *Every mother has a favorite child. She cannot help it. She is only human. I have mine -- the child for whom I feel a special closeness, with whom I share a love that no one else could possibly understand. My favorite child is the one who was too sick to eat ice cream at his birthday party -- who had measles at Christmas -- who wore leg braces to bed because he toed in -- who had a fever in the middle of the night, the asthma attack, the child in my arms at the emergency ward.*

My favorite child spent Christmas alone away from the family, was stranded after the game with a gas tank on E, lost the money for his class ring.

My favorite child is the one who messed up the piano recital, misspelled committee in a spelling bee, ran the wrong way with the football, and had his bike stolen because he was careless.

My favorite child is the one I punished for lying, grounded for insensitivity to other people's feelings, and informed he was a royal pain to the entire family.

My favorite child slammed doors in frustration, cried when she didn't think I saw her, withdrew and said she could not talk to me.

My favorite child always needed a haircut, had hair that wouldn't curl, had no date for Saturday night, and a car that cost \$600 to fix. My favorite child was selfish, immature, bad-tempered and self-centered. He was vulnerable, lonely, unsure of what he was doing in this world -- and quite wonderful.



All mothers have their favorite child. It is always the same one: the one who needs you at the moment. Who needs you for whatever reason -- to cling to, to shout at, to hurt, to hug, to flatter, to reverse charges to, to unload on -- but mostly just to be there.

This is an apt description of God, I think, as well. In Matthew 9:36, Jesus had compassion on the crowd because they were helpless and harassed. The Lord is full of grace toward people. **He shows favor when we don't deserve it.**

Psalms 86:5
You are forgiving and good, O Lord...

Isaiah 55:7 talks about turning to the LORD because he will have mercy and will freely pardon.

Ephesians 1 describes how God gives grace – he lavishes it on us. **His grace super-abounds; it comes in excess; it is far more than enough.** We don't deserve it, but he gives us his grace in such a measure that it overflows.

God is slow to anger

Slow = long; patient; showing restraint

☞ Can God get angry? Yes! But he has a long fuse; **he is so patient and self-restraining**, that he is slow to become angry. We all know that person with the short fuse. One wrong step, one wrong comment, and boom, they explode! God is nothing like that. He is slow to anger.

☞ **God is never mean.** He's righteous and just, which can require discipline and appropriate punishment, but, he's never mean. He's slow to anger and when he does get angry it is short-lived.

--Charles Spurgeon... God soon turns from his wrath, but he never turns from his love.

God is abounding in love

Abounding = plentiful; great; exceeding

True love is to do the best for someone that we can. This is what God does for those he loves – the best he can; and the measure of the best that God can do is his omnipotence!

1 John 4, verses 8 and 16 both say that God is love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love (God) is **patient**, love is **kind**. It does **not envy**, it does **not boast**, it is **not proud**. **5** It is **not rude**, it is **not self-seeking**, it is **not easily angered**, it **keeps no record of wrongs**. **6** Love does **not delight in evil** but **rejoices with the truth**. **7** It **always protects**, **always trusts**, **always hopes**, **always perseveres**. **8** Love **never fails**.



Psalms 86:5

You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you.

--A.W. Tozer... From God's other known attributes, we may learn much about his love. We can know, for instance, that because God is eternal, his love can have no end; because he is infinite, it has no limit; because he is holy, it is the highest representative of all spotless purity; because he is immense, his love is an incomprehensibly vast, bottomless, shoreless sea...

His love is unconditional, impartial, everlasting, infinite, perfect! God is love!

--Tony Campolo... God carries your picture in his wallet.

God is compassionate

God is gracious

God is slow to anger

God is abounding in love

I want you to know God more and more. How could you not be drawn to someone who is so compassionate, gracious, patient and loving?