

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

Phil O. Waldo
Lead Pastor



1224 Hancock Drive
Boone, Iowa 50036

Phone: 515 432-3329

Website: www.booneopenbible.com
E-mail: office@booneopenbible.com
pastor@booneopenbible.com

SERMON TITLE

How to Know God More

SERIES

DATE

9/15/2024

KEY SCRIPTURE

Various Scriptures

SYNOPSIS

There are some practical steps we can take to Know God More.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ How to Know God More

We've been talking about a Thirsty Heart, Yearning for God and Growing in Knowing God.

Paul had a significant encounter with the Lord in Acts 9, when he saw a bright light from heaven which flashed around him and he heard an audible voice of the Lord in the spiritual realm. That **one encounter radically changed his life**. He went on to experience a miraculous healing from the Lord. He was supernaturally led by the Spirit to various parts of the world, and he performed healings and miracles himself as the Spirit enabled him. This man knew the Lord, he experienced the power of God, and he heard the audible voice of Jesus. Yet, he still wanted to know the Lord more.

Now, he knew all about God. From his youngest days, he had been training to become a Pharisee. He knew the scriptures and studied diligently, but it wasn't the same as personally knowing God. In fact, he says all that stuff was a total loss in comparison to really knowing the Lord. Likewise, **we need more than to know about God - we need to know Him**.

Moses is another example of someone who wanted to really know God. He had seen the burning bush and heard God speak through it. He had seen God inflict the ten plagues on Egypt. He had seen God part the Red Sea and provide a dry path for Israel, and then destroy the Egyptian army. He had seen God provide water from the rock. He had met God at the tent of meeting, where the cloud of God's glory descended. He had spoken to God face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. He had been on the mountain in the presence of God for 40 days and nights, where he received the Ten Commandments, written by the very finger of God. For most of us, that would be more than enough, but not for Moses! After all of this, he dares to ask God (**Exod. 33:18**), "show me Your glory!"

These two mighty men of God knew the Lord much more than most of us ever have, but they still wanted to know him more. Knowing God personally is supremely important! A. W. Tozer wrote, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." This is a profoundly true statement. What we believe about God changes the way we think about ourselves, others, and the world we live in. Just like our relationship with other people, our knowledge of God grows as we get to know Him better.

So, how do we actually do that? How do we get to know God better? Today, let's try to get even more practical on How to Know God More.

☞ I think we must start with **the Word**. The Word of God, the Bible, tells us who God is. There are some scriptures that come right out and describe him. In others, we learn about God by reading how he interacted with different people. God made sure we have the Word, so that we can know him. But, there's a caution here:

There is a difference between knowing about God, and knowing God. The scribes and Pharisees had vast knowledge about God, but received a severe rebuke from Jesus because they could have known God himself, but chose to rivet their attention on things they thought were about God.

John 5:37-40



the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, 38 nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. 39 **You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,** 40 **yet you refuse to come to me to have life.**

We can easily convince ourselves we know God, when our knowledge is actually fragmentary or flawed. **In studying the Word, we must seek to be led to God himself.** When you read your Bible, don't just try to learn facts and details. Try to understand more about who God is. And, if you're not reading your Bible, then let's simply start right there. Read your Bible!

Now typically, just reading about someone doesn't really help us to know them. There needs to be some personal encounter to really know someone. However, **Hebrews 4:12** says, "the word of God is living and active." God has put his supernatural touch on it so that we can actually come to know him personally as we read. And still, to know him personally, there is more than only reading the word.

☞ That leads us to **Worship**. Through worship we begin to enter into an encounter or experience with God. We can actually sense his presence with us.

Psalm 22:3 tells us that God inhabits the praises of his people. When we sing praises and worship God, ☞ we are actually **creating an atmosphere in which God reveals himself**. In the New Testament, Jesus said, "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (**Matthew 18:20**)

Just as in any relationship, closeness helps us know each other better. To really know someone, there has to be time spent in proximity with the other person. Without the closeness, so many things remain unknown. Insert social media here! Tinder and eHarmony may be helpful if you're looking for a relationship, but you never really know until you meet in person. And, with God, worship facilitates the in-person aspect.

Psalm 100 is helpful here:

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. 3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. 5 For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

This short Psalm is all about getting up close with God. We come before him with joyful songs and verse 3 specifically ties it all to knowing God! The gates and courts here are references to the tabernacle, which was where God revealed himself to the priests. They got to see the glory of God and experience his presence up close. The Psalmist is saying that **as we enter into praise and worship, giving thanks, we are actually getting closer to God** and we also can experience his presence and glory.

Psalm 95 has a similar theme. Verses 1-2: Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. And verse 6: Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.



When we sing and make music, giving thanks to God, we are actually coming into his presence. **Come**, let us sing; **Come**, let us bow down. **Come**, let us give thanks! **Worship escorts us into God's presence where we can experience him up close.** In fact, verse 7 tags on the concept of hearing God's voice. It's all part of the worship experience. Worship helps us to know God more.

So, the primary keys to knowing God are in the Word and Worship. But let me add just a couple more briefly.

☞ One is **the Wait**. **Psalms 46:10** says, "Be still, and know that I am God." **Psalm 27:4** talks about the one thing that is most important and that is drawing near to God. And at the end of the chapter it concludes with "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." (**Psalm 27:14**)

There are a number of other Psalms which also talk about waiting on God. I think the main idea is that sometimes waiting is involved so that you can actually hear God speaking. It may not be an audible voice, but **you can feel God leading as you wait and listen.** I've talked before about our busy, noisy world which so easily keeps us from connecting with God. We need to take time to slow down and quietly listen for God to speak to our souls. Elijah had to listen for the quiet whisper of God. As in any relationship, listening is extremely important to really get to know another person. If you're doing all the talking, then you're not getting to know them. So, listen and wait!

☞ Then, the last one I'd like to add is **the Willingness**. As you read the Word, worship the Lord, and wait on him, **be willing** to do what he says. **God reveals himself to those who willingly obey him...**

John 14:21 NLT

Those who accept my commandments and **obey them** are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and **reveal myself to each of them.**"

John 15:14-15

You are my friends if you **do what I command**. I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

If you are willing to do what he says, then he reveals himself more to you. You can actually be the Lord's friend if you do what he commands. Friends are more than mere acquaintances. That's what is possible in a relationship with the Lord. You can be friends with God.

*I can be friends with you; There's no better friend that a man can know
I can be friends with you; And I feel so special 'Cause it's you I know
I don't know the governor Even though I'm a resident
I don't rub shoulders with the dignities Or shake hands with the President
And I know I can be with you And I don't have to wait in line
You're the author and creator of all the world And a personal friend of mine*

**How can you be friends with the Lord? How can you know him more?
Read the Word; Worship; Wait; be Willing to obey.**