

## "We Must Know God"

God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Well what truth does God want us to know? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. This is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring what we must know to be right with God.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way. We're here to search the Scriptures to find God's will. For 44 years the Search program has come into your home with messages from the Bible, because the Scriptures are God's source of truth today. Nothing can replace the Bible. Our computers and smart phones give us data about nearly anything; but having information isn't the same thing as having wisdom and knowing God. If we want eternal life, we must study the Scriptures to know God. We'd love to hear from you and we hope the time that we spend together blesses your life. We want to be part of your life each week.

Searching for knowledge and wisdom fills our lives. Educators, mentors, and family members often guide us from being naïve to maturity; but an education in everything but God and His will is missing some of the most important lessons. We need God. There is an afterlife in heaven or in hell; and there is a God, to whom we must one day give an account. And since this is true, doesn't it make sense to know as much about God and His will as is possible? We don't want anyone to have to face God unprepared.

2 Corinthians 5:10 to 11 says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men." We want people to be saved and to know the truth about God. We don't want anyone to be lost because they don't know God or they fail to believe in Him. And so we search the Lord's way and share what the Scriptures say, because they contain the words of Jesus, the words of eternal life (John 6 and verse 68). Are you prepared for judgment?

Today we're going to discuss things we must know about God, and we offer the information on this program free. If you'd like a printed copy of our study and you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org) and on YouTube.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from James 3:13 to 18, and we'll talk about knowing God.

Our reading today come from James 3 verses 13 to 18 and talks about the difference between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God.

Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

That's a reading from God's holy word. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You give us wisdom from above. That helps us to find peace and hope and love. And Father we pray that we'll always seek to do Your will and to live pleasing to You. In Jesus name, Amen.

We must all come to know God. You'll never have a greater blessing than to know God. Jeremiah 9:23 to 24 says: Thus says the LORD, 'Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,' declares the LORD.

Many people believe the important things of life have to do with how smart, how strong, or how rich they are. And people who don't know God often boast in these things. However, they're all outward things; and while they have value in this life, they can't give us eternal life. We have no reason as Christians to boast in the outward things, that will one day perish. Rather, it's written in 1 Corinthians 1:31, "Let him who boasts, boast in the LORD."

Now this passage reveals what we need to know about God. Whoever has that knowledge realizes that the Lord exercises lovingkindness. And this lovingkindness is a covenant kind of love, a loyal or faithful love. He also is the God who exercises "justice." Justice is a legal term suggesting God's actions toward people and that they're right and fair because of his just nature. He also exercises righteousness; God always does what is right. Now these three terms describe not only the attributes of God; they also describe the kind of lives that God wants in His people. He is faithful, just, and righteous and He expects us to be faithful, just, and righteous.

To say we know God is more than some kind of an intellectual exercise. You see how we live declares to everyone whether or not we know God. God's Word says in 1 John 2:3 to 6, "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked." Knowing God means keeping His commandments. Keeping the commandments is not some small matter to God. Keeping His word is how God measures our love. He considers the person who keeps His word as someone perfected in love.

Today's culture contains millions who've shut God out of their lives and millions who've never known Him. The devil, frankly, has blinded many from knowing the gospel truth about Jesus Christ. And much of what passes for Christianity today has little resemblance to the Christianity found in the New Testament. Men have rejected the Lord's way and moved away from the teaching given in Scripture to ideas and doctrines that they like. For many Christianity has become religious entertainment an industry that's money-making, an enterprise. Some speak more about their ministry than they do about Christ. Now God intended for people to hold fast to His ways, not reinvent Christianity to their own liking.

You know reinvented Christianity isn't the divine Christianity of the Bible; it's man-made. Now we can't ignore God's Word and God's ways and expect God to be pleased with us. Our task is not to dream up new ways but to stick with the Word of God. Paul instructed Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1 to 4, "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: (here's what he says) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths."

God takes what He teaches, in the word, seriously, and so must we. When a message moves away from the truth presented in Scripture; it moves us away from what God requires of us. Oh, it may tickle our ears, it may please us; but if it doesn't please God, it can cause us to be lost. I'm reminded of Eve who listened to the devil. Satan deceived her with lies about the forbidden fruit that made her feel good and to desire the fruit. She gave in to her desires rather than listen to God, and the world has never been the same.

I'm reminded of the children of Israel who listened to the ten men who spied out of the land of Canaan, a land that was filled with milk and honey. And they brought back a bad report that the land was filled with giants and it was impossible to conquer. And the people wept and trembled in doubt and fear. They didn't believe God would help them take the land. They took the word of men over the word of God. According to Deuteronomy 1:26, the people rebelled against God and grumbled in their tents. And as a consequence, they spent forty years wandering in the wilderness until that generation perished and another came along that would follow God into the promised land.

I'm reminded of Leviticus 10 verses 1 to 2, which says, "Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized ( or strange) fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them. And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD." Nadab and Abihu presumptuously acted on their own initiative, offering up incense with unauthorized fire. God hadn't commanded them to do this. They presumed God would accept their offering, but God punished them for acting on their own authority. Verse three explains why.

Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" When people draw near God, they must listen to God and follow His instructions not follow their own desires. If we presume to act on our own authority rather than listen to God, we've failed to honor God. This was sadly true for Nadab and Abihu, and, you know what, it's true for us today. When people forsake the ways of God even in little matters, they begin filling their lives with ways that will hurt or destroy them.

We must know God and His will. When people ignore God, they fill their lives with heartaches and fantasies. When people push God out, they bring on themselves a multitude of problems. Without God, there's only moral confusion. And without God there is no hope for eternal life. Without God people don't know how to love, or forgive, or to stand for the good and oppose evil. Without God our moral and spiritual values have no foundation and change with the wind. Without God there's only anarchy, where the strong abuse the weak and where everyone becomes utterly selfish. Is that really the world we want. Is that what we want for world? How we want to live? How we want the world to be?

God said in 2 Timothy 3:1 to 7, "But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at the knowledge of the truth." You see without a knowledge of God, our whole world becomes ugly and wicked. The greatest need of our day or any day is to know God and His will for our lives.

Paul described what life is like when people don't know God. And he does this in Ephesians 4:17 to 19. He said, "So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness." Well, that's the way it was among the pagans in the first century, and I fear many are living that pagan life now.

Oh this is a terrible state, but you know what, we have hope in the knowledge of Christ! You see Ephesians goes on and it says in verses 20 to 24 a contrast. It says, "But that is not the way you learned Christ!—(it's different) assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." Now knowing Jesus, knowing God, matters. We begin to see the difference between love and indifference, between good and evil, between a self-centered life and a life of service, and between forgiveness and revenge. Oh it matters greatly whether you know the Lord!

If we know the Lord, we'll also realize that we're accountable to Him for the lives we live. The Lord is God, and we are His creatures who must one day give an account of ourselves to Him. You know some think of God like a benign and senile grandfather who never knows what we're doing, never requires anything of us, and will bless us no matter what we do. Nothing could be farther from the truth. God knows all our thoughts, all our words, and all our actions. Because He loves us, He holds us accountable. Because He loves us, He expects us to forsake the things that are sinful and to become godly and righteous.

Yes, God revealed what will happen in Romans 2:6 to 11: "He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality." Whether we do God's will matters greatly. And it matters what we believe and whether we decide to follow Him. God doesn't show partiality, and no one is exempt from serving Him.

Well why are we talking about this? Because whether we know, love, and serve God is necessary to please God. Our Lord "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth". And we love you, so we'd rather tell you the truth than leave you uninformed. Our eternal destiny is at stake; and we won't live on this earth forever. God promised in 2 Peter 3 and verse 7 that the "heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly." Now knowing these things will happen, what sort of person should you be? Are you right with God?

Let's pray. Oh Father help us to take Your word and Your will seriously. To love You and to serve You all our days. In Jesus name, Amen.

Nothing's more important to your soul than the gospel truth found in God's Word. Now the truth isn't always easy to face, yet nothing can substitute for it. Nothing can bless you more than knowing the truth, and nothing can hurt you more than ignoring the truth. Solomon said in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding." The most important use of your

time today or any day is to study the Bible, to find out for yourself what God wills for you to know. Study the Word, memorize the Word, love the Word, and share the Word with everyone you know!

Paul wrote in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel (of Christ), for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Now the Bible that you have at your house is not simply another book. It's God's Holy Word, filled with wisdom and truth. It contains God's gracious gospel of love and salvation. And when you believe and obey the gospel, the Lord saves you and makes you His child. It gives you the words of eternal life with the Father in heaven.

The Bible says that in order for one to become a Christian and a child of God, one must truly believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He must forsake his sins and turn to the ways of the Lord. He must make his faith known by confessing it before others and be baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his sins. Acts 22:16 says, "Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name." Now that's God's way to become a Christian. Staying with your faith and love means keeping His commandments. Oh, I pray you'll become a Christian today!

We hope that today's lesson has stirred your heart to study the Bible. If you want a free printed copy of this message and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's also a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). SEARCH is on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and like the programs that we offer. Remember that the church needs you and if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be glad help you find one. As always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.