

# Knowledge Of God

2 Peter 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup> Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: <sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. <sup>3</sup> His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and (virtue). <sup>4</sup> Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.  
(2 Peter 1:1-4)

In the closing words of the message last week, I asked the ever-so important question, “Do you know God?” And perhaps you haven’t taken the opportunity to think much about it over these past few day, so may I ask the question again, because this question may be the most important question that you and I will ever consider! “Do you know God?” If you believe that you do know Him, then how well do you know Him? Do you just know about him, or do you know Him personally and intimately?”

As I have studied through and meditated on these words of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1, I have sensed a strong unction from the Holy Spirit to pursue a deeper understanding of what they mean; because somehow I know without question that these words about “knowing God” are at the very heart of all that we will ever think and say and do, both in our relationship with God and in all that we will do in the many pursuits of this life.

And while I don’t yet know why God has so impressed this understanding and this unction upon my heart, I find that I am eagerly in full agreement with Him, that it is in “knowing Him” and in “knowing Jesus our Lord” that every answer and every solution for “life and godliness” will be found.

But how then do I, do you, pursue after and gain this precious “knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” that’s spoken about here? That answer can easily be found beginning right here in verses 19-21. Listen!

<sup>19</sup> And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For

prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:19-21 (NIV))

Here, we are instructed to go to these scriptures, to the words, the “prophecies” given by God through the “prophets”, through Moses, through David, and through all the other prophets of the Old and New Testaments. And we are told to read and to study these scriptures carefully, to learn them, to know them. They are the “sure and certain” witness of who God is, said here to be even “more certain” than even the “eye-witness” testimony that the Apostle Peter enjoyed as He witnessed the voice of God testifying about the “authority” and the “son-ship” of Jesus, saying “this is my beloved son, hear Him”.

And note here in these words that all that these scriptures tell us comes directly from the unction and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Verse 21,

<sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21 (NIV))

Every minute detail of these scriptures, though they flowed through the minds of men, were carefully written by the Holy Spirit of God.

And then to make it all so much easier for us to comprehend, God also sent His Holy Spirit to dwell within our hearts, our souls and our minds. And as we read these words, the Holy Spirit takes each of them and carefully makes them understandable to us.

Listen to these words from Jesus in John 16!

<sup>12</sup> "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup> He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. (John 16:12-14 (NIV))

The Holy Spirit who comes to live within you and me from the first moment that we are saved will take each word of God the Father and of God the Son and He will make all those things known and clear and understandable to us.

And listen to what God tells us about the person and the role of the Holy Spirit regarding these scriptures. 1 Corinthians 2, verse 7

<sup>7</sup> . . . we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has

prepared for those who love him”—<sup>10</sup> these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.<sup>11</sup> For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.<sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.<sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.  
(1 Corinthians 2:1-13 (ESV))

This is how you and I are able to clearly comprehend the incomprehensible truths of God. Simply put, with only the ordinary mental faculties within each of us, we are woefully incapable of learning and understanding and knowing the deeper things of God. But with God’s Holy Spirit within us, as we read and study these scriptures, He shines His light upon the words and gives them meanings that we cannot otherwise comprehend. That is what God is speaking about in these words in verse 19,

<sup>19</sup> And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. (2 Peter 1:19 (NIV))

May I say this again! The Holy Spirit shines His special “light of understanding” on what would otherwise be incomprehensible words of truth. And then, mysteriously, we are able to understand things that we have never known before.

As we are told there in 1 Corinthians 2, no one knows the mind of God like His Own Holy Spirit. And don’t you love the simplicity that God uses in this explanation here in 1 Corinthians 2 when He says,

<sup>11</sup> For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.  
(1 Corinthians 2:11 (ESV))

Here God gives us such a simple example, saying, “when you want to know what you think about a matter, you don’t go to someone else and ask them what you think. No one else can know what you think. You instead “ask yourself” what you think. That is what God is saying here. He is saying that “My Holy Spirit knows everything about me and everything about the Lord Jesus, and He will carefully explain everything exactly as it should be, and He will help you to understand it and to guide you into all truth.”

May we take a moment and go back and resay some of the things that we shared in last week’s message about this word, “Knowledge”. You will recall that we said that the

“knowledge of God” spoken about here in verse 2 is a very special kind of knowledge, a knowledge that is like no other. It comes to us from the Greek word “epignosis”.

But then, on further down in verses 5 and 6, we encounter another word that is also translated as “knowledge”. But there, though similar in meaning, those words are different. There, the Greek word is “gnosis”, the same word as before, but without the “epi” as the prefix, words translated the same, but having a significant difference in their meanings.

In verses 5 and 6, the word for knowledge (gnosis) has the more simple meaning of “learning”, such as the kind of knowledge that we might gain from study and training and science. But the word in verse 2 for “knowledge” “epignosis” has the deeper and fuller meaning of “full discernment”, and “experiential” knowledge, the kind of knowledge that is most always gained in the context of personal relationships with people.

And again, you would not use this word “epignosis” when talking about the “knowledge” that is required to solve a math problem, or to “know” how to speak a foreign language, or other such matters.

The more appropriate use of this word “epignosis” would be when speaking about knowing a person. And not just knowing them, but knowing them intimately, as with a wife or a husband, or a good friend, someone you would have a caring and loving relationship with.

And that same kind of “knowledge” would also be said to apply to these scriptures. Because these scriptures are words that “reveal God”, revealing His Person, His nature, His character, His plans and His purposes. It is then proper to say that through our knowledge (epignosis) of these scriptures, God’s Holy Spirit will give us a “revealed knowledge of the Person and Nature of God”, an “epignosis” of Him, “knowledge of God”.

Folks, thank you for bearing with me in this grammar lesson. Grammar lessons can be tedious, but as you can see, they are so very important to our fuller understanding. And please bear with me just a little bit further.

As I read another of my favorite passages in these scriptures that has to do with “knowing God and knowing Jesus our Lord”, Philippians 3:10-11, I encounter another similar Greek word about “knowing God”, but like the others, it is also somewhat different. Listen!

<sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:10-11 (NIV))

Here again, is this plea of the heart to “know God and to know Christ”. This Greek word for “know” is “ginosko”, and it adds even more impetus to our understanding. This word adds the understanding of an “absolute”, and “complete” knowledge of the Lord Jesus. And also, within that complete “knowledge” is a strong sense of emotional “feeling”, a sense of a caring and loving relationship with Him.

So then, as my heart cries out to God,

<sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:10-11 (NIV))

The Holy Spirit will, along with giving me a full and complete sense of knowing Christ, will also put a strong sense of a “feeling” of love within my heart. And Wow, that is a precious gift!

And with this, I am reminded that I am not just someone to whom God has been generous and is allowing me to come into His kingdom. No, I am reminded that I am His “son”, His beloved son, that when I received Christ as my Savior and Lord, everything changed, especially my relationship with Him.

Folks, may I repeat this favorite theme of mine, and that is that when you and I receive Christ as our Savior and Lord, we really do become His “sons”, “sons” of God. And as His “sons”, we are privileged to know our Father intimately and to genuinely “love” Him and “love” the Lord Jesus, with the deepest of love. And He accentuates that privilege with the “first and greatest” command. You will recall that there was an occasion when Jesus was asked the question, “of all the commands of God, which is the most important”? And Jesus responded by saying,

<sup>30</sup> . . . you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ (Mark 12:29-30 (ESV))

Here in these words, God cannot say it more plainly. Of all the important things that are required of you and me in this life, “loving” Him is by far the most important. And our love is not to be of the kind that we frivolously speak about in our daily dalliances. The love that we are to have for God is to be with every ounce of desire and purpose that we have within us, with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, and with all of our strength, nothing less!

And that kind of deep and intimate love can only come when we fully “know” Him, the Person of God, His nature, His character, His plans and His purposes.

The Lord willing, we will spend more time on these thoughts next week. But may we close with another question, similar to the one I asked last week?

Considering the words that I gave a few moments ago from Philippians 3,

<sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:10-11 (NIV))

The question . . . “Do you have this “desire” within you, to really “know” Christ, to know Him intimately?” May I strongly encourage you to consider this question. And I do beseech the Holy Spirit to put that desire within you. It will be the most important thing that could ever take place in your life! Listen again as we close!

<sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:10-11 (NIV))