

## HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience see that recognizing Jehovah involves much more than knowing facts about him. It means being intimately acquainted with his purposes, deeds, qualities, and feelings. It means *acting* in harmony with that knowledge and assisting others to do so. Instill burning desire to know Jehovah intimately

### **WE HAVE PROSPECT OF ETERNAL LIFE FROM KNOWING GOD** (5 min.)

Means everlasting life to know, or ‘take in knowledge,’ of God and Son (Read John 17:3)

Jesus must have meant more than one’s having knowledge that God exists

Merely having some knowledge of Jehovah and claiming to worship him was not enough to make Samaritans acceptable to God (Joh 4:7-26 [read verse 22]; *w70* 679-83)

Similarly, many today do not know God’s name; confuse God with his Son (*w84* 8/1 20)

Ask yourself: ‘Do I *know* God and his Son in sense needed to have *firm* prospect of eternal life?’

How can we know God in this sense? How can we help our children and Bible students to do so?

### **WHAT KNOWING A PERSON INVOLVES** (5 min.)

Truly knowing someone means more than merely believing that he exists

*Knowing* someone means perceiving his identity and being acquainted with his personality, his feelings

This requires intimate acquaintance and experience over a period of time (*rs* 131 ¶3)

Amalekite who claimed that he had killed Saul certainly did not know David (2Sa 1:1-16)

Did not know David’s view of God’s anointed one (1Sa 26:3-11)

Might wonder: ‘How can I get to know Jehovah? Does he not say that his ways and thoughts are vastly higher than ours?’ (Isa 55:8, 9)

Words in Isaiah 55 were to backsliding, apostate Jews who left God’s ways

Even they could return to Jehovah and come to know him again (Read verses 6, 7)

But in what ways might we search for and come to know him?

### **HOW AND WHY HUMANS CAN TRULY KNOW GOD** (15 min.)

One way we can come to know him is by striving to imitate him

It is possible to imitate him, and that is his will for us (Ge 1:26-28; read Colossians 3:10)

Good qualities that we manifest—love, mercy, wisdom, justice, and so forth—are mere reflections of him

When we forgive another, we are reflecting God’s ways (Read Ephesians 4:32-5:1)

Sin mars man’s reflection of God, yet the more we know him, the more we can reflect Jehovah’s glory (2Co 3:18; *it-1* 964 ¶1; *w90* 7/15 17 ¶6)

Bible helps us to know him in terms we can grasp (*it-2* 13 ¶6-8)

Though he is a spirit, Jehovah is spoken of as having eyes, ears, and a face (1Pe 3:12)

Using these human expressions helps us to comprehend; description in spirit terms would be like trying to describe colors to one who had been born blind

The Bible’s description of Jehovah’s feelings and reactions helps us to know him (Ps 78:36-41)

He is not like us; rather, shows how much *we* are in *his* image

By studying the Bible, then, we can come to know God—his deeds, purposes, qualities, feelings

It is a challenge when reading and studying not just to get facts but to know God

When you teach the Bible to others, do you call attention to what the material reveals about God himself? (*w84* 8/1 16 ¶17, 18)

We can be helped to know God by having a personal relationship with him

Can be illustrated in God’s comment that he ‘became acquainted’ with Abraham, based on their dealings (Ge 18:19; *it-2* 181 ¶2)

Similarly, Abraham had come to know God, was sure of His love, mercy, and justice (Ge 18:25)

By regularly talking to God in prayer about matters of concern and by seeking his guidance, we come to know him better (*w84* 8/1 16 ¶19)

To know Jehovah God also means *recognizing* his position and authority and *acting* in harmony with what we know of him (*w75* 117 ¶15, 16)

Regarding Hebrew term for “knowledge” with reference to knowing God, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* says: “It is thus respectful and obedient acknowledgment of the power and grace and demand of God. This means that knowledge is not thought of in terms of the possession of information. It is possessed only in its exercise” (Vol. 1, p. 698)

Jehovah rejected the Israelites for their lack of knowledge, that is, recognition and obedience (Read Hosea 4:1, 6)

Obviously, they knew who God was but did not act accordingly (Verse 2; *it-2* 181 ¶3)

History proved they belied their claim stated at Hosea 8:2 (Read)

This emphasizes that we need more than head knowledge; our *lives* should manifest our knowing God

We have seen that humans can know God and ways they do this (learning about him, having relationship, recognizing his authority and acting accordingly), but vital questions are: How can I be sure that *I* personally know God? Are there reliable indications?

### **EXAMINE YOURSELF TO SEE HOW WELL YOU KNOW GOD** (15 min.)

One criterion of how well you know God is whether he recognizes you with approval

God's knowing someone often means granting recognition to that one as approved, as acceptable and worthy of his attention (Read Amos 3:1, 2) (*ws* 137 ¶4)

The converse is also true: A person is *not* known if God and Jesus do not recognize or approve of him (Read Matthew 7:21-23) (*w75* 118 ¶18)

Consequently, for you to know God fully, he must first know you (Ga 4:8, 9)

One turning to God with faith in him and on basis of ransom can come to be known, recognized

By growing in faith and avoiding lawlessness, you can continue to be known by God

Another gauge of how well you know God is whether you lovingly obey his commands (1Jo 2:3-6)

If in his heart a person thinks he can obey one command, such as by preaching, but ignore others, such as by engaging in loose conduct, fraud, or lying, he does not know God or Jesus; he is a liar

One sincerely trying to obey *all* God-given commands is coming to know God

Other commands of more personal nature are equally important if one is to know God well

*Husband*, you are commanded to love wife as own body, not be harsh or demanding (Eph 5:28)

If you as a husband treat your wife kindly and patiently (without showing irritation), it is an indication that you know God, who gave you such direction

*Wife*, you are commanded to have respect for your husband, even though he may not completely live up to your expectations (Eph 5:33; *w69* 1/1 31)

Showing respect evidences that you are coming to know God, who has clearly set forth the principle of relative subjection

*Young Christians*, you show a desire to know God by obeying parents, as he commands (Eph 6:1, 2)

By obeying parents' rules that do not break God's law, you advance toward knowing God (*yp* 11-12)

When you strive to avoid unchristian association, you indicate that you know God

If we choose unchristian associates, God cannot associate with us (Ps 15:1-5; *w89* 9/15 26-30)

By being very selective and associating with true Christians, you show that you know God

Turn to God regularly in prayer, thus showing that you trust and know him

One truly knowing God is aware that he welcomes our prayers; any fear of approaching him is thus cast out (*w70* 415; *it-2* 605 ¶2, 3)

Do your prayers indicate that you know God? You can come to know him more by increasing the regularity and intimacy of your prayers to him

If you sin, as all of us do, show you know and trust God by bringing it up in prayer, seeking and accepting forgiveness (Ps 26:1, 2)

But is knowing God just something between the two of you, or is more involved?

### **HELP OTHERS TO JOIN YOU IN KNOWING GOD WELL** (5 min.)

As noted, we can help others know God by emphasizing his requirements, purposes, and qualities (Read Daniel 11:32, 33a) (*w70* 689-90)

Applies now when many are worshiping man-made peace organization

Some people know basic Bible stories, but can you impart to them *understanding*, helping them truly come to *know* God?

In preaching and teaching, call attention to reasons why God acted in the past as he did; encourage confidence in his future actions based on his qualities exemplified in past dealings

By living daily by Bible principles and standards, we help others to see the advisability of coming to know God and to serve him

Paul said Jehovah makes "the knowledge of him perceptible through us in every place" (2Co 2:14)

The knowledge is spread by the way Christians live—exercising knowledge and reflecting its good effects, displaying the new personality

Confidently urge others to take up true worship, coming to know Jehovah and having part in his purposes (1Ch 28:9; Joh 17:3)

Now and in the future, we will not have mere head knowledge of the path of life but will know by experience that pleasant path

Bible assures us that the 'knowledge of God will fill the earth'; does not mean just information, but the *exercise of knowledge* by doing his will because of knowing him (Isa 11:9)

Truly, there is reason for satisfaction and pleasantness in knowing Jehovah and the path of life; this is the knowledge that leads to everlasting life

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read)