

Do You Know God?

1 John 2:3

- I. What does it mean to know or not know God; to be known or not be known by God?
 - A. Knowing God/Knowing About God = Knowing Him as Creator (Romans 1:18-21)
 - B. Knowing God = Eternal Life (John 17:3)
 - C. Known by God = Eternal Life (Galatians 4:9; John 10:27-28; 2 Timothy 2:19)
 - D. Not Knowing God = No Eternal Life (Galatians 4:8; 1 Corinthians 1:21; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Titus 1:16; 1 John 3:1)
 - E. Not Known by God = No Eternal Life (Matthew 7:23; Luke 13:24-28)
 - F. **Knowing = Intimacy (Genesis 4:1, 17, 25; Amos 3:2; Deuteronomy 34:10)**
- II. How is John using the expression "know Him [God]"?
 - A. This is the first of 12 "by this we know" statements in 1 John.
 - B. I suggest John **COULD NOT MEAN** that this is how we know we are saved.
 - 1. Assurance **IS NOT** the purpose of the book of 1 John.
 - 2. John already knew his readers were saved. (1 John 2:12; cf. 2:12-14, 21, 27)
 - 3. We have assurance based on the promise of God to save all those who believe. (John 6:37; John 20:30-31 cf. also Acts 16:30-31; Romans 4:1-5)
 - 4. How could we know we are saved by keeping His commands? If we sinned, should we doubt our salvation?
 - 5. The ability to live righteously is hard enough with having to do so in light of doubting our salvation. That is, if we can't have assurance that we are saved until we keep His commandments, then how could we ever have the strength to keep his commandments?
 - C. I suggest John **DOES MEAN** how we can know if we have intimacy with God via our fellowship with Him.
 - 1. There no reason to think that John has left the subject of fellowship behind. (1 John 1:3, 6-7)
 - 2. It seems more reasonable, given that John already knew that his readers were saved and given that John had been discussing fellowship in the context, that knowing God here has to do with fellowship/intimacy with God. (cf. John 14:21-23)
- 3. One can be a Christian and still not "know" God.**
- III. We know if we know God by whether we keep His commandments. (1 John 2:3)
 - A. What does John mean by keeping God's commandments?
 - 1. other phrases in 1 John besides keeping His commandments:
 - a. keeping His word (2:5)
 - b. abiding in Him (2:6)
 - c. walking as Jesus walked (2:6)
 - d. abiding in the light (2:10)
 - e. not loving the world (2:15-17)
 - 2. Some commandments are no longer binding on us or were never binding on us in the first place.
 - B. What are God's commandments?
 - a. believe on Jesus (John 6:29; 1 John 3:23)
 - b. repentance (= from unbelief to belief; Acts 17:30)
 - c. work (2 Thessalonians 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12)

- d. prayer (Luke 18:1)
- e. the rich not to be haughty but to share (1 Timothy 6:17-19)
- f. doctrinal purity in the Church (2 Thessalonians 3:6)
- g. LOVE (1 John 4:8; cf. also John 13:34-35; John 15:12)

IV. What does it mean to love one's brother?

- 1. visit widows and orphans (James 1:27)
- 2. provide for brothers and sisters (James 2:15-16; Romans 12:13)
- 3. esteem others better than yourself (Philippians 2:3)
- 4. serve (Philippians 2:4)
- 5. restore (Galatians 6:1)
- 6. forgive (Matthew 18:21-22)
- 7. be kind (Ephesians 4:32)
- 8. have compassion (Colossians 3:12-13)
- 9. love without hypocrisy (Romans 12:9)
- 10. be kindly affectionate (Romans 12:10)
- 11. give preference to one another (Romans 12:10)
- 12. 1 Corinthians 13

V. How can all this be done? (1 John 5:3)

- 1. First John 5:3 tells us that His commandments are not burdensome.
- 2. Why are God's commandments not burdensome?
 - a. We are not to do these things in order to establish righteousness before God. (Romans 10:1-4)
 - b. We are saved by grace. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - c. We have assurance of that salvation based on the veracity (truthfulness) of God. (1 John 5:11-13)
 - d. Failure in our lives does not undo the faithfulness of God. (2 Timothy 2:13)
 - e. We are set free, therefore we can with liberty set ourselves to do good because we want too. (Galatians 5:13-14)

VI. Growth is not automatic, but is commanded. (2 Peter 3:17-18)

- 1. Growth can be thwarted by:
 - a. evil company (1 Corinthians 15:33)
 - b. the cares of this world (Matthew 13:22)
 - c. false doctrine (2 Timothy 2:18)
 - d. lack of self-discipline (1 Corinthians 9:27)
 - e. forgetfulness (James 1:24-25; Deuteronomy 8:11-14)
 - f. of our own sin (James 1:22-25)
 - g. of our salvation in Christ (2 Peter 1:8-9)
- 2. Growth is accomplished:
 - a. By the study of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 2:1-2; 2 Peter 1:3-4; cf. Hebrews 12:10)
 - b. Within the body of Christ (i.e., not alone) (Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:16)
 - c. From God (Colossians 2:19)
 - d. By God's chastening (Hebrews 12:6-11)