

## The Harvest is Plentiful – Can we really know God & be known by Him? **Isaiah 43:1-12**

It's one thing to know that God exists... & to know information about Him (He is all-powerful & good)... **But can we really know God relationally?**

**And can we be truly known by Him, personally?** Again, how can we be sure?

I've received a lot of mailings about candidates in this upcoming election... They tell me a lot of information about the candidate (usually about the one they are running against), but I don't "know" these people personally!

I've never been face to face with them, or had a conversation with them, or shook their hand. I can't say I "know them" in any real way... I only know what they say about themselves or what others say about them...

**Is our knowledge of God any different than this?**

Can we know Him in a real sense that goes beyond just raw data?

If the answer is "no", what impact would that have on the following:

- **The way we worship God when we gather on Sunday to sing Him praise?**
- **The way we pray to God... How we engage with Him in conversation?**
- **The way we read God's Word, when it comes to us second hand?**

Why do we seem at times to be unmoved, disinterested, bored even when engaging in these things? **Maybe it's because our connection with God is only a head knowledge, and not a heart engagement & a relational pursuit!**

Last week I celebrated 23 years of marriage to Kristin... When I was a junior in high school, I "knew" some information about her... but as I started to pursue her & my heart was drawn to her, only then did things get exciting!

Now after 23 yrs of marriage, **it's easy to revert back to the head knowledge... & lose the heart engagement & the sense of pursuit!** Same is true w/ God!

What if the answer to the previous question of *"Can we know God in a real sense beyond raw data"* was "Yes & Amen"... what impact would that have...

- **If we were truly worshipping a God who we can, & do, know personally?**
- **If we can pray and know that He not only hears us but is listening to us?**
- **If when we read His Word, we know it's straight from the heart of God?**

When we say, "I know God", "I love God", "I am known by God" & "God loves me", what do we really mean when we say such things?

How can we truly know Him when we can't see, touch or hear His voice?

**John 1:18 – "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."** Jesus makes the unseen God known to us!

If you want to know God, I mean really know Him, get to know Jesus! He is the one who makes God visible, touchable, audible... real to us!

Also get to know His Word because **the Bible is more than a history book...** It's living & active... It's revealing & transforming... It opens eyes, not shuts!

**Psalms 119:33-48...** Are we hungry for more of God in His Word, or are we just looking within it for quick and easy answers to some of life's questions?

**Google & ChatGPT can give you answers, but God's Word can give you life!**

**John 17:3 – "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."** Eternal life is more than just what we receive when we die or what we experience in heaven, it is **knowing God**

When you get to know God in such ways, it's then that you discover what it means to truly love Him, even when you can't see him with your own eyes...

**1 Peter 1:8 – "Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory."** Do we know & love God in such ways?

And what's more is that we are not only able to know & love God like this, but God also knows us & loves us back in return! That love goes both ways!

**James 4:8 – "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you."** This is relational engagement... **It is a pursuit of intimacy not just information!**

The intimacy that we can share with God is beyond all comparison! The marriage relationship is the closest we can get humanly speaking but listen to the closeness that is made possible in a relationship with God...

**John 14:23 – "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home within him."**

There is no great closeness, no greater knowledge, no greater love than what we can experience in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ...

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