

This Should Be Your Highest Priority in Life

The psalmist described knowing God this way: “One thing I have asked from the Lord, that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple” (Ps. 27:4). In other words, for the psalmist, knowing God was his ultimate priority—his “one thing.” He wanted to behold the Lord, to grow in his knowledge of God, and to learn more about Him all the days of his life.

Growing in the knowledge of God means we are learning more about Him, which is the greatest pursuit of the human mind. The subject of God is transcendent, as vast as infinity. Studying the scriptural subject of God is the most satisfying, uplifting, edifying, expanding and glorious task we can ever undertake. Psalm 100:3a says, “Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves.”

Nothing could be more important than learning all we can about Him in whose image we were formed. The more we learn about Him, the more we’re awestruck with the majesty of His being.

But don’t think I’m merely talking about an intellectual or theological pursuit. The knowledge of God I’m talking about here is deeply personal.

According to Philippians 3:10, this was the deepest aspiration of the apostle Paul. He summarized his life’s purpose in one phrase: “That I may know Him” (Phil. 3:10a, NASB).

We ask: “Why, Paul, don’t you know Christ? Didn’t you meet Him on the Damascus Road? Haven’t you been serving Him for years?”

Yes, but it’s one thing to meet someone and another to develop an intimate knowledge and an abiding friendship with him.

In simple terms, getting to know God is no different than getting to know another person. When spending time with a friend, we talk to them and listen to them, learning each other's stories. We become better acquainted. By spending more time together, our relationship grows. Our knowledge of the other deepens, and we grow in our mutual love and concern. A few of these friends become our dearest, best and closest friends. Even then, we can't take the relationship for granted. If time passes without communication and fellowship, we drift apart.

Getting to know God is the same. We get to know Him better by spending time with Him, conversing, talking with Him in prayer, and listening to Him through His Word. When we neglect our fellowship with God, the spiritual quality of our lives begins to dim.

If we aren't careful, we become "trained" Christians, people who have learned to do the things others expect outwardly. But while maintaining those outward traditions, we may be God-starved inwardly. This even happened to the Christians in Ephesus who, despite their outstanding Christian character, drifted from their first love (see Rev. 2:4).

Here is the key: We can only worship someone we love, and we can only love someone we know. Worship fundamentally begins in the heart when we come to know God. If we really know Him as He wants to be known, we will love Him. Trying to manufacture that from the outside in doesn't work.

That isn't something you do once a week on Sunday morning. It's a matter of becoming a walking doxology, as it were, all the time, doing everything for His glory.

Suppose the only time you communicated with your husband or wife was once a week, when, on Sunday morning, you gave your spouse a box of chocolates. Even if the box were wrapped in gold foil and contained the finest Belgian candies, it

wouldn't be nearly enough to maintain a meaningful relationship. If your entire relationship with your loved one consisted in a box of chocolates every seventh day, the marriage would wither.

That's what some people do with God. We give Him a box of chocolates or a bouquet of flowers once a week, so to speak; then we wonder why our spiritual relationship never grows. Serious problems develop when we don't grow in the knowledge of God.

If we don't truly know Him, we'll inevitably create a god convenient to us. A lot of people worship a god of their own fancy, a god created out of their own heart. When people don't know the true God, they fabricate gods that fit their lifestyle. A. W. Tozer wrote, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us... We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God."

In coming to know Him, we will come to love Him. And when we love Him, worship will be an explosion from within our souls that we'll be unable to contain. That's why knowing God is our greatest priority. {eoa}

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