

1 John — Part 3, Know God — Keep His Commandments

Those who fellowship and really know God keep His commandments. In the first two lessons, we heard about the believers' fellowship with Jesus Christ. Since God is light, we are required to fellowship Him in the light and to be holy as God is holy. Jesus is our example of this type of fellowship and moral behavior. As we walk with God in light, His moral nature and character will influence and change our conduct and nature.

John 17:3 NKJV And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

According to the Gospel of John, receiving eternal life is directly connected to knowing God. If we fail to know Him, we miss out on eternal life and really living.

How do you know that you really know God?

- What do you know about God?
- Where does He live?
- Where is heaven?
- What does God look like?
- What do you know about God's character and nature?
- What do you know of God?

Knowing God is more than knowing that God exists.

John 3:13 NKJV No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

John 14:7 NKJV If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.

If we are going to know God, we must know Jesus Christ. You cannot know the Father without knowing the Son. God has revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:9 NKJV For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Hebrews 1:3 NKJV Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

We can know God by knowing Jesus Christ His Son. How do we know that we know Him?

In 1 John, we are given seven things that certify that we really know God.

1. Do you keep God's Commandments?
2. Do you love one another?
3. Are you growing spiritually?
4. Do you love the world?
5. Are you guarding against antichrists?
6. Does the gospel abide in you?
7. Do you abide in Christ?

Over the next weeks, we are going to look at each of these seven things that certify that we really know God.

How can we be sure that we know Him?

First, do you keep God's Commandments?

1 John 2:3–6 NKJV ³Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is

perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ⁶He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

One of the first steps in knowing that we keep His commandments is we “walk just as He walked.”

We want to certify that we know God.

1 John 2:3 NKJV Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

We know that we know God if we keep His commandments. What are His commandments? Are they the ten commandments that God gave on tablets of stone? Was John telling us to go back to the observance of the Law? What commandments are we to keep?

Matthew 22:37-40 NKJV Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Is John saying, “The way to know God is to study, know and keep the law?” Moses called people to listen to this.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 NKJV I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days...

Deuteronomy 6:6-10 NKJV And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 30:14 NKJV But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

Psalms 119:11 NKJV Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

John said, “We know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.” Knowing what God has said is not enough, we must keep His commandments. This introduces a problem that James discusses.

James 2:10-11 NKJV ¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. ¹¹For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

The law is exact and unchanging. If we are going to keep His commandments, we must keep all of them. Each of us have broken the law of God in some area. According to James, we are guilty of breaking the whole law. In 1 John 1, we are told that we have all sinned. If we all have sinned, we are guilty of breaking all of the law.

Listen to what John says in 1 John 3:23.

1 John 3:23 NKJV And this is His commandment: that we should **believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ** and **love one another**, as He gave us commandment.

Take a look at His commandment.

First, we must believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. If we believe in Jesus Christ, we will come to know God. The pursuit of God is fulfilled in knowing Jesus Christ. Galatians shows us the necessity of the law.

Galatians 3:23-24 NKJV But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

The law was necessary to bring us to Christ. Paul said, "I would not have known sin without the law." When we realize our need, we are drawn to Christ. Jesus Christ is God's solution to bring us to life and to reveal the Father. We cannot by-pass Jesus Christ and know God. When we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved.

Second, we keep God's commandments by loving God and loving one another.

1 John 3:23 NKJV And this is His commandment: that we should **believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ** and **love one another**, as He gave us commandment.

All the commandments of God hang on these two things. Love is the governing force in those who know God. Loving one another changes our actions. True love does not seek to hurt or damage others. We will not offend or sin against one another.

Romans 13:8-10 NKJV Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

How do we know that we know God?

Take these two tests.

First, do you believe in Jesus Christ?

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? More than that, do you walk with Him? Has Jesus Christ become your Advocate and Propitiation for your sins? Do you know Him as your Savior and Lord? Do you surrender your whole life to Jesus Christ?

Second, do you love God and love one another?

1 John 4:8 NKJV He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:16 NKJV And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

If you really know God, you will want to please Him. God is love, and those who know God want to go on to know Him more. The only way we can know more about God is by knowing and following Jesus Christ. Start following Him. Love as He loves and walk as He walks. We cannot fellowship Jesus Christ and walk in darkness and sin. Christ will not compromise and walk the way we walk. We must follow Him and do what He did.

Matthew 7:21 NKJV Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Ephesians 5:1-2 NKJV Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

How do we know that we know Him?

We know that we know Him by the love we have for Him and for one another. That love ties us to the obedience of Christ. Love draws us near to Him. Love for Christ causes us to study Him and seek to know His will, desire, and impulse. Knowing Him causes us to seek to know His nature and thoughts.

1 John 2:6 NKJV He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

What does it mean to walk as He walked?

1 John 1:7 NKJV But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

- We must walk in the light.
- We walk in fellowship with one another.
- We walk cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:2 NKJV And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

We have to live what we profess. If we profess to know God, we must walk as Jesus walked.