

Knowing the God of Light *Intimately!*

1 John 2.3-11

How well do you know God? Fellowship with God is more than a casual affiliation. It is intimate companionship. It's what John wants all of us to experience. What does knowing God intimately involve? More than just believing in Him! Do you know God *intimately*? Do you *want* to?

- Avoiding a common error: 'Knowing God' ≠ 'being a Christian'

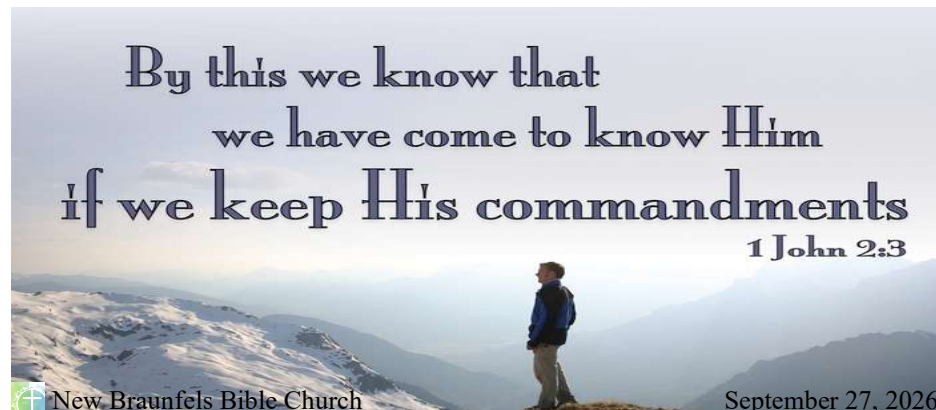
Question: What does it mean 'to know God' (vv3-4)?

Wrong Answer: It means to 'be a Christian'.

Right Answer: It means to 'know God intimately'!

- Keeping God's commandments is His "love language" (2.3-5)
- Walking like Jesus in love (2.6-8)
- Avoiding the darkness of hate! (2.9-11)

1. It's critical when studying a New Testament epistle to never forget who the author is addressing in his letter, and what his primary goal is in writing. Let's do a quick review of what we've covered so far. Is John writing to Christians or non-Christians? How does he refer to them? Is he calling on them to believe in Jesus in order to be saved, or to live their Christian lives in fellowship with God? What does he say about dealing with sin in their lives?
2. John is a good teacher, and as an old saying puts it, "Repetition is the mother of learning." John uses repeated phrases to emphasize his message (do you see any in chapter one?). What phrase does John repeat three times in 1 John 2.3, 6, and 9? In each case, a person is claiming something about their Christian life. What is their claim, and what does John say shows whether their claim is true or not?
3. John's references to loving God, keeping His commandments, and abiding in Him, remind us of perhaps the most memorable night in John's life – in the Upper Room the night Jesus was betrayed. On that night, Jesus prepared His disciples for their lives after He was gone – He instructed them on essentials for the Christian life! Read John 13.34; 14.15, 21a, 23a, 24a; 15.4-14. What lessons that Jesus gave on that night does John pass on to his own disciples here?
4. We say "I've come to know the Lord" to describe that we are saved (going to heaven), but that isn't what John is talking about in 2.3-4. How do we know? The verb "know" is in the perfect tense in Greek, and means "to know Him *intimately*." What must we do to "know" God in this way? What does this show about us (v5)?
5. John continues to focus on what we must do to have intimacy with God in 1 John 2.6-11. What will a Christian who says he is abiding in Christ do (v6)? When was this "old commandment" given (v7)? How is it a "new commandment" now (v8)? What is passing away (v17)? What 'new world' is coming? What does our attitude toward other Christians show about our intimacy with God (9-11)? What is the effect of a lack of love on our spiritual lives?



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