



Knowing God in a Personal Relationship - By Karen Sue Nyquist

1. Can a person really know God? - Yes! In the Bible and around the world, there are many people who know God. In the Old Testament, God uses the Hebrew word “yada” for “to know,” which according to Google, means - **“Intimate Knowledge: It describes a close, personal understanding gained through experience rather than just mental awareness. Knowing God: When applied to God, yada means having a dynamic, interactive relationship with Him—knowing His character and being known by Him intimately.”**

2. What are the benefits for those who know God? - “Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good *things*, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (Psalm 103:2-5). As a loving father, God gives us help, protection, comfort, joy, hope, and peace!

3. Let’s look at three people, in the Bible’s Old Testament, who knew God personally.

a. God said through Jeremiah: “‘But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows (*yada*) Me, That I *am* the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,’ says the Lord” (Jeremiah 9:24).

b. God answered Moses’ prayer: “... if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know (*yada*) You” (Exodus 33:13). We’ll look at David later.

4. How can we get to know God? - Since God is a spirit and is invisible, we have to seek Him with our heart (*spirit*). God invites us to do just that. “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

5. How do we seek God? - How do we seek to get to know anyone? We spend time talking with them, doing things together, reading texts from each other, and visiting each others’ homes. If we, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to” us (James 4:8). So let’s:

a. Talk to God by praying to Him and expecting Him to respond. - We can express our needs, our concerns, ask for God’s help, even just chat about our day. Then thank Him, showing that we know He is listening, will answer our prayers, and will act on our behalf.

b. Thank God for all the good He is doing **and praise Him** for His faithfulness. - “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name” (Psalm 100:4). This is a poetic way of describing entering God’s presence. Often, we can actually feel God when we are in His presence! It is so wonderful!

c. Acknowledge His presence - Jesus, God’s Son, says, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20). Just because we can’t see Him, doesn’t mean He is not with us. “The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, And in the night His song *shall be* with me — A prayer to the God of my life” (Psalm 42:8). We can “Practice God’s Presence” by mentally and verbally praying to Him and thinking of Him throughout the day and even in bed at night.

d. Read the Bible, His word - God often speaks to us as we are reading and studying the Bible. We can even read it aloud to the Lord, so we are sharing the experience together. Doing these, we are drawing nearer to God and He is drawing nearer to us! (James 4:8)

e. Go to “God’s house,” a church where we can feel God’s presence and we can freely worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:24). Jesus says He will be there too, in spirit (Matthew 18:20)!

6. What if later on, we want to develop an even more intimate relationship with God? - When we feel this, rejoice! That means God is drawing us even closer to Himself. God is telling us, “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you” (Jeremiah 31:3). Let’s not miss these opportunities! “Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near” (Isaiah 55:6). David knew God, but cried out for more ...

7. Experiencing a Deep Thirst for God - ... In the Bible, David said, “As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? ... When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul within me” (Psalm 42:1-4). During these times, the depths of God are calling deeply into our souls. Then we should respond with all our hearts, crying out to Him, expressing our thirst. When He responds, we may even feel waves of God’s glorious presence washing over us. “Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me” (Psalm 42:7). This is so awesome! David responds, “You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11).

8. In the New Testament, God has made it even easier for us to get to know Him. How? - He sent Jesus, His Son, so we could actually see God, hear His voice, and learn more about Him. Since it is written in Greek, let's look at the two Greek words that mean "to know:"

- a. Eido - To see physically with the eyes, or to perceive and know mentally.
- b. Ginosko - to become known, to grow in knowledge through experience and an ongoing relationship, a **mental** and **heart** experience.

9. Let's look at some of the reasons God sent His Son. -

a. **Jesus said, "All things have been delivered to Me** by My Father, and no one knows (*ginōskō*) the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know (*ginōskō*) the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*" (Matthew 11:27). Now that God has sent Jesus, He wants to reveal the Father and Himself to us.

b. **Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.** If you had known (*ginosko*) Me, you would have known (*eido*) My Father also; and from now on you know (*ginosko*) Him and have seen Him" (John 14:6-7). Now, we can only get to the Father, through Jesus. If we knew (*eido*) the Father before, now through Jesus, our relationship with the Father can grow so we can know (*ginosko*) Him. Jesus said, "And this is eternal life, that they may know (*ginosko*) You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3). So we can know God and have eternal life in heaven (John 14:2-3)!

c. **How do we "go through" Jesus to the Father?** - We believe in Him and receive Him as our Lord and Savior. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him" (Colossians 2:6).

10. Jesus does have a warning for those who believe in Him. - Jesus requires us to:

a) do the will of God, b) and to know the Father and Himself by having a relationship with them. **So we must also be sure that we are not:** a. **Religiously serving Jesus without a relationship** - Jesus said, "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. Many will say to Me in that day, '... have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew (*ginosko*) you;' depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Matthew 7:22-23).

b. **Letting our relationship with Him burn out** - Jesus told this parable: "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom." ... Five had brought oil, kept their lamps burning while waiting for him, and went into the wedding with him when he arrived. Then the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins, whose oil and lamps had burned out, came saying, ... "Lord, Lord, open to us!" But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know (*eido*) you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man (*Jesus*) is coming" (Matthew 25:10-13). - The lamps represent our hearts, burning with a loving relationship with Jesus (Matthew 22:37) and fueled by the oil of the Holy Spirit. Jesus even warns us not to lose "our first love" for Him (Revelation 2:1-5).

11. If you want to do God's will, here is a suggested prayer: "Dear Jesus, I repent from my sins and want to do the will of God. Forgive me and cleanse me from all my sinful ways, making me more pleasing to God. Jesus, 1) I believe You died for my sins, then rose again to give me eternal life. 2) I want to have a personal relationship with You and the Father. 3) I am opening my heart and receiving You as my personal Lord and Savior. 4) I will lovingly follow You for the rest of my life. Thank You, amen!" Name _____ Date _____

12. God kindly gives us assurance of salvation - "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know (*eido*) that you have eternal life, and that you may **continue to believe** in the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13). Daily, ask God to be involved in your life, requesting His advice, direction, even correction. Obey Him when He reveals His will to you. Go to a good church where you feel God's presence, they preach the Bible, you can get baptized in water, and be filled with His Holy Spirit. Come visit us, we want to help you grow in your relationship with God!

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