

Theology. The study of God. For many Christians, theology is the business of pastors and professional ministers. They believe it to be too “heady” for themselves and impractical.

But if you are going to have a deep and growing relationship with God, you must seek a deeper knowledge of God.

Compare your relationship with God to your relationship with your spouse. Certainly, the first thing to draw us to our spouse is some characteristic or attribute of that person that we find attractive. They may be good looking, smart, or funny. You begin to date and you confirm that whatever attribute that first attracted you to your spouse is genuine. But then you stop getting to know them. You attempt to build a relationship as serious as marriage on just those attributes that first drew your attention. Now, what happens when your spouse’s looks begin to fade, their mind begins to go, or they are no longer funny. If you never attain a more complete and intimate knowledge of your spouse, you will almost certainly find your relationship struggling if not failing.

The same holds true in our relationship with God. We are drawn to him by his love, his mercy, his kindness. We date him for a while and upon verifying those traits we surrender our lives to him; a very serious relationship indeed. Then the bad times and struggles come. We begin to doubt his love, mercy, and kindness. We begin to experience his justness, jealousy, and discipline. And because we have never gotten any deeper in our knowledge of him, our relationship begins to struggle; sometimes, even to the point of walking away from him.

Having a lasting, growing, intimate relationship with God is just one reason why we need to go deeper in our knowledge and understanding of God. And this morning, we are going to see several other reasons we should strive for a deeper knowledge and understanding of God.

Scripture: Isaiah 43:10

## I. Need to Know

### A. A Means to Guard Us against Error

1. Beliefs
2. You can’t spot a counterfeit if you don’t know the real thing
3. Behavior
  - a. “We are cruel to ourselves if we try to live in this world without knowing about the God whose world this is and who runs it.”<sup>[1]</sup>

### B. A Means to God’s Desired End

1. Knowledge about God is not the desired end
  - a. Knowledge for knowledge’s sake leads to sin
    - i. Arrogance (1 Cor. 1:8)
    - ii. Self-righteousness (Luke 11:52)
    - iii. Judgmentalism

- b. “To be preoccupied with getting theological knowledge as an end in itself, to approach Bible study with no higher a motive than a desire to know all the answers, is the direct route to a state of self-satisfied self-deception”<sup>[2]</sup>
- 2. Obedience resulting in Righteous Behavior is the desired end
  - a. To know God is to know him intimately
    - i. His will (Rom. 12:2)
    - ii. How to worship (John 4:22)
    - iii. How to serve him (Matt. 25:14-30; 24:42-51)

### **C. God Means for Us Know Him**

- 1. He has revealed himself to us
  - a. General (Rom. 1:20)
  - b. Special (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- 2. He has chosen and appointed us to know him
  - a. Is. 43:10
  - b. Acts 22:14
- 3. He has provided a way for us to know him
  - a. I John 5:20
- 4. He has given us a heart that desires to know him
  - a. Jer. 24:7

One of the most amazing things about God is not that he knows all about you, but that he wants you to know all about him. He wants to spend time with you so you might better understand him. The only reason he would desire such a thing is that he values you. He doesn't value you because you're good or because you're better than others. He values you because he created you in his image to serve and worship him. He values you so much that he sent Jesus to die for you, to reconcile you to him, so that he might adopt you into his family.

Are you willing to reciprocate by taking the time and putting forth the effort necessary to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the God who values you so much? He already has an intimate knowledge of you. Will you commit to gaining an intimate knowledge of him?

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[i] Packer, J.I., *Knowing God*, (InterVarsity Press:Downers Grove, IL), 1973, p.19.

[ii] Ibid., p.22.