



KNOWING GOD INTIMATELY

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Knowing God Intimately

It is not enough to casually know about God; we were created to know God intimately and to enjoy Him personally. Yet many believers will settle with feeling infatuated with His works, and never know Him face-to-face.

Adrian Rogers says, “To know about God is to see God’s works; to know God intimately is to know God’s way.”

In Exodus 33:11-16, Moses demonstrates the beauty of knowing God intimately, seeing beyond an infatuation with His works to know His ways.

To know God intimately brings tranquility and peace to our troubled souls.

“And He said, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest’” (Exodus 33:14). If we only see God outwardly—His miraculous works—we will live with worry. We often disappoint ourselves when He doesn’t act how we think He should. But knowing God’s ways helps us recognize His presence in every situation, and that is what gives us rest.

Knowing God intimately also gives us stability in our lives.

By nature, feelings of infatuation are fickle. But Christians who seek the unchanging heart of God have stability in their faith, no matter their circumstances.

Finally, knowing God intimately is necessary for victory.

In Exodus 33, the Israelites had strayed in their devotion to God, and Moses was interceding on their behalf. He begged for God’s mercy, and in response, God promised His protection and provision, but He would not be with them.

It is frightening to know we can have God’s protection and provision without His presence. Seeing how easy it is to be satisfied in worldly things, we cannot take anything as a substitution for knowing God intimately.

We cannot know God intimately by human reason. We know Him by directly dealing with Him, turning to Him in every circumstance or difficulty.

Adrian Rogers says, “To know Him is to love Him; to love Him is to trust Him. To trust Him is to obey Him; to obey Him is to be blessed, and to be blessed is to be a blessing.”

Life Application

Adrian Rogers says, “You cannot know God by hearing sermons about knowing God; you can’t know anybody that you don’t spend time with.” Don’t take anything as a substitute for knowing God intimately. Turn to Him today, and spend some intimate time in His Word.



Knowing God Intimately

SERMON REFERENCE: Exodus 33:11-16

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1874

1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Many people know about God, but few people know God intimately.
 - i) How sad it will be in the resurrection to meet God face to face and not know Him heart to heart.
- b) Exodus 33:11-16
 - i) This passage of Scripture deals with the necessity of knowing God personally.
 - ii) The key to knowing God intimately is found in verse 13.
 - (1) This is a prayer of Moses.
 - (2) In order to know God intimately, we have to know the ways of God.
- c) There are two ways that we can know God:
 - i) Casually
 - ii) Intimately
- d) We can know about God, or we can know God.
 - i) To know about God is to know God's works.
 - ii) To know God intimately is to know God's ways.
 - iii) All that most people know are the works of God.
 - (1) They know what God does, but they do not know the ways of God or who God is.
- e) Psalm 103:7
 - i) Another word for "acts" is "works."
 - ii) God made His ways known unto Moses, and He made known His works to the children of Israel.
- f) There are many people today who know what God does, but they don't know who God is.
 - i) They don't know God intimately.
 - ii) They know about God and see the works of God.
 - (1) We need to look beyond the works of God and see the ways of God.
- g) There are others who know God intimately.
 - i) Does God have favorites?
 - (1) No, but He does have intimates.
 - (a) Even in the New Testament, we find that Peter, James, and John were not necessarily favorites of the Lord Jesus, but they were intimates of the Lord Jesus.
 - (2) How would you like to be on intimate terms with God?
 - (3) How would you like for God to show you His ways?
 - (a) Knowing the ways of God will bring peace to our troubled souls, stability to our lives, and victory in our lifestyles.
- h) The difference between knowing God's ways and His works is the difference between intimacy and infatuation.
 - i) A lot of people are simply infatuated with God, just like a boy gets infatuated with a girl.



- (1) When a boy sees a girl, he doesn't know anything about her ways.
 - (a) He sees her appearance, her style, and the way she handles herself.
 - (b) He may think he is in love with her, but he is not really in love with her.
 - (i) A person cannot be in love with someone until they know their ways.
 - (ii) This is infatuation.
- ii) Many people get divorced for trivial reasons.
 - (1) This is because they got married for trivial reasons.
 - (a) It was infatuation; they really did not know one another.
- i) In today's message, we will look at three aspects of knowing God intimately.

2) TO KNOW GOD INTIMATELY IS THE WAY OF TRANQUILITY (EXODUS 33:14)

- a) It will give us rest.
- b) If you only know God casually and only see His works, then you will never have rest.
 - i) We will constantly be pushing the panic button.
- c) The children of Israel were constantly worried and murmuring because all they saw were the works of God.
 - i) They saw God perform His miracles.
 - (1) They saw God open the Red Sea.
 - (a) Exodus 14:21-22
 - (2) They saw God give manna in the wilderness.
 - (a) Exodus 16
 - (3) They saw God give water out of a rock.
 - (a) Exodus 17:3-6
 - ii) They did not know the ways of God.
 - iii) Hebrews 3:10-11
 - (1) God was grieved by this generation of the children of Israel.
 - (a) They did not know God's ways, and they would not have His rest.
- d) Psalm 103:7
 - i) If all we see is what God does and do not know Him intimately, then we will never have rest.
- e) Exodus 33:14
- f) The children of Israel were doing fine as long as the works of God pleased them.
 - i) But, when God did not do things just the way they wanted, they panicked.
 - (1) Our ways and God's ways are very different.
 - (2) We will never have peace until we understand the ways of God.
 - (3) God's ways are often confusing to human wisdom.
 - (a) The Apostles Peter and James were both arrested and put in prison for preaching the Gospel.
 - (i) James was beheaded, but Peter was delivered miraculously out of the same prison.
 - (b) Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, and 3,000 souls came to Christ.
 - (i) Stephen preached, and he was stoned to death.
 - (4) If all we see are the works of God, then we will be hopelessly confused.



- (a) If we don't have a deeper insight into the ways of God, then we will be pushing the panic button all the time.
- (b) We will never rest until we know God intimately.
- g) To know the ways of God is the way of tranquility.
 - i) God says that He will give us rest when His presence goes with us.
 - (1) Exodus 33:14
 - ii) There is nothing that will bring rest to a troubled soul like an intimate knowledge of God.

3) TO KNOW GOD INTIMATELY IS THE WAY OF STABILITY (EXODUS 14-15)

- a) The difference between Moses and the children of Israel was that the children of Israel were fickle.
 - i) Fickle Christians are infatuated with God.
 - ii) When God parted the Red Sea, the children of Israel sang the song of Moses and the Lamb.
 - (1) Exodus 15
 - (2) They were leaping, dancing, and praising God for what He had done.
 - iii) Three days later, they were in the wilderness without water, and they were murmuring and complaining.
 - (1) They wanted to go back to Egypt.
 - (2) They had been singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and now they were criticizing Moses.
 - (a) They were fickle.
- b) If we don't know God intimately, then we will not be stable Christians.
 - i) We will be just like the children of Israel.
 - ii) Sometimes we are up, and sometimes we are down
 - (1) Because all we see are the works of God without knowing the ways of God.
 - (2) We do not know the heart and mind of God.
- c) There were those who followed Jesus when they saw His works.
 - i) John 2:23-25
 - (1) The words "believe" in verse 23 and "commit" in verse 24 are the same word in the Greek language.
 - (a) They believed in Jesus, but Jesus didn't believe in them.
 - (2) Jesus knew that they were just miracle-mongers and did not know His ways.
 - (a) All they saw were His works; they saw the miracles that He performed.
 - (i) They didn't see the crucifixion.
 - (ii) They didn't see the coming cross.
 - ii) John 6:1-14
 - (1) Jesus fed the 5,000, and crowds of people followed Him.
 - (2) But when He talked to them about deeper spiritual principles, they left Him.
 - (a) John 6:26-67
 - (b) They were fickle and had no stability.
- d) If we only see the works of God when everything is fine, then when adversity and difficulty come, we will be asking, "God, why did You do this? How did You allow this?"
 - i) We will be fickle because we don't know God intimately.

**4) TO KNOW GOD INTIMATELY IS THE WAY OF NECESSITY (EXODUS 33:1-3, 15)**

- a) What had happened for Moses to pray this prayer?
 - i) Exodus 32:1-14
 - ii) Moses had gone up on Mt. Sinai, and God gave Moses the Ten Commandments and the plan for the tabernacle.
 - iii) Moses came down from Mt. Sinai and saw that Aaron had made a golden calf, like the Egyptians worshipped, for the children of Israel to worship.
 - iv) God's anger burned against them, and Moses was frightened for his people.
 - (1) Moses knew that God had every right to eradicate them.
 - (2) But Moses interceded for the children of Israel.
 - (a) Only a person who knows God intimately can be an intercessor.
- b) Exodus 33:1-3
 - i) In answer to Moses' intercession:
 - (1) God would send His angel before them to drive out the inhabitants of the land.
 - (2) They would have protection and victory.
 - (3) They would have a land flowing with milk and honey.
 - (a) But God would not go with them.
- c) Exodus 33:15
 - i) Moses said that if God was not going with them, then he was not going.
 - (1) Moses did not want Canaan without God.
 - (2) He did not want the blessing without the Blessor.
 - (3) He did not want the victory without the Victor.
 - (4) He did not want the land without the Lord.
- d) We can have provision and protection and still not have God's presence.
 - i) This should frighten us.
 - ii) A lot of people just settle for eternal security.
 - (1) They say that they are saved and going to Heaven, but they do not want the intimate presence of God.
 - iii) Many people would have taken what was offered to Moses and not have been bothered that God's presence was not with them.
 - iv) Do not think that because you have the things you want that you know God intimately.
 - (1) On another occasion concerning the Israelites, God gave them the desire of their hearts and sent leanness into their souls.
 - (a) Psalm 106:15
 - (2) The problem for many people is that we are just doing fine.
 - (a) We may live in a beautiful home.
 - (b) Our children may be healthy.
 - (c) We have a job, and we are putting money in the bank.
 - (d) Our retirement looks good, and we are satisfied.
 - (i) We live in a prison of prosperity and think that everything is fine.
 - v) So often we say that money will not satisfy.



- (1) The problem is not that money does not satisfy.
 - (a) The greater danger is that money does satisfy.
- vi) It is a very dangerous thing to be satisfied with the things of this world and have Canaan without the presence.
- e) To know God intimately is tranquility, stability, and necessity.
 - i) Don't take prosperity, victory, a land flowing with milk and honey, or anything else as a substitute for knowing God intimately.
- f) St. Augustine, one of the early church fathers, once asked this question:
 - i) If God were to come to you and offer you anything you wanted, every pleasure you desired, that you would live forever, but you would never see His face, would you take that proposition?
 - (1) If you would say no to that, then you would have the pure love of God.
 - (a) This would mean that God means more to you than this whole world.
 - (b) That's what Moses decided.
 - (i) He didn't want Canaan without God.
 - (ii) He didn't want the angel and the victory.
 - (iii) He didn't want milk and honey.
 - (iv) He wanted God.
- g) God is not satisfied with us and is not finished with us until our chief desire is God and God alone.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) You will not know God intimately by human reason.
- b) You know God intimately by directly dealing with God.
 - i) This is why God kept bringing the children of Israel into situations.
 - (1) Why did God bring them to the Red Sea?
 - (2) Why did God bring them to a place where there was no water?
 - (3) Why did God bring them into difficulty?
 - (a) So that they would have to deal with God.
 - ii) God wants you to come face to face with Him.
 - (1) When the Israelites came to difficulties, the only way they could turn was to God.
- c) You cannot know God by hearing sermons about knowing God or reading books about knowing God.
 - i) You cannot know anybody that you do not spend time with.
 - ii) To know Him is to love Him.
 - iii) To love Him is to trust Him.
 - iv) To trust Him is to obey Him.
 - v) To obey Him is to be blessed.
 - vi) To be blessed is to be a blessing.
 - (1) It all begins with knowing Him.
- d) If all you see are the works of God, then you are just infatuated with Him.
 - i) When the bad times come, off you will go.



- ii) But when you know God, when you know the ways of God, when you know the heart and mind of God, and when God speaks to you face to face as He spoke to Moses, it is wonderful.
 - (1) This is knowing God intimately.
- e) The first step in knowing God intimately is to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.
 - i) It is to ask Him to come into your heart, forgive your sin, and to save you.
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



Knowing God Intimately

SERMON REFERENCE: Exodus 33:11-16

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1874

Take your Bibles, and turn to the book of Exodus, if you will, chapter 33, Exodus chapter 33 and in a moment we're going to begin reading in verse 11. Now I want to talk to you about not just simply knowing about God; I think all of us here know about God, but I would dare say that not everybody here, even those who claim to be saved, know God intimately. And frankly, folks, that's one of the great problems in today's church. We have many who know about God, few who know God intimately. And how sad it will be in the resurrection to meet a God face to face, that we have not known heart to heart.

Now look, if you will, in Exodus chapter 33 and verse 11 through 16, "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Now how would you like that? How does that sound? It sounds wonderful to me. "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. And Moses said unto the Lord, 'See, Thou sayest unto me, 'Bring up this people:' and Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me. Yet Thou hast said, 'I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in My sight.' And now therefore I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, and that I may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people. And He said, 'My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.' And he said unto Him," that is Moses said to Jehovah, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

Now if that passage seems a little complicated to you, I want you to stay tuned, because it is an incredible passage that deals with the necessity of knowing God personally. Now the key is in verse 13. And in verse 13 is a prayer of Moses. I want you to look at it very carefully. Get your Bibles now, right now, and look in Exodus chapter 33 and verse 13 if you want to know God intimately. Here's the key: Moses prays this, "Now, therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight." Have you been saved by grace? Then don't stop there. "If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way that I may know Thee. Show me now Thy way that I may know Thee." Underscore that. "Show me now Thy way that I may know Thee." Have you got it? "Show me now Thy way," W-A-Y, "that I may know Thee." In order to know God intimately, you have to know the ways of God. Have you got that? In order to know God intimately, you have to know the ways of God.

Now there're two ways that you can know God, casually or intimately. You can know about God, or you can know God. Now to know about God is to know God's works. To know God intimately is to know God's way. Have you got that? To know about God is to see God's works. To know God intimately, is to know God's way. Most people know God on the first level. All they know is the works of God. They know what God does, but they don't know the ways of God. They don't know who God is.

Now put in your margin Psalm 103 and verse 7. Now Moses prayed, "Lord, show me Thy way." Was that prayer answered? Absolutely. Psalm 103 verse 7 says this clearly, "He made known His ways, unto Moses, and His acts," A-C-T-S. Another word for that would be His works, "His works unto the children of Israel. He made known His ways to Moses. He made known His acts," or His works, "to the children of Israel." Moses knew God



in a way the rest of the people didn't know. The rest of the people saw the works of God, but Moses knew the ways of God. And folks, that just divides everybody up. There are those people today who know what God does, but they don't know who God is. They don't know God intimately. They know about God.

Now what we need to do today is to look beyond the works of God, and to see the ways of God. Some people know God in a different way than other people know God, because they know the ways of God. They know God intimately. Now that brings a question: does God have favorites? No, but He does have intimates. And even in the New Testament you'll find there was that little trinity of disciples, Peter, James, and John, who were not necessarily the favorites of the Lord Jesus, but they were the intimates of the Lord Jesus. How would you like to be on intimate terms with God? How would you like for God to show you His ways? When you know the ways of God that will bring peace to your troubled soul. It will bring stability to your life. It will bring victory in your lifestyle.

Now the difference between knowing God's ways and God's works is the difference between intimacy and infatuation. Now a lot of folks are simply infatuated with God, just like a boy gets infatuated with a girl. I mean he sees a girl, he doesn't know anything about her ways, but boy, he looks at her, and she's beautiful. I mean he sees her style. He looks at the way she's formed physically. He looks at her, the way she just handles herself, and he thinks he falls in love with her. But he's not really in love with her. You can't be in love with someone until you know their ways. And many a man has made the mistake of falling in love with a dimple and marrying the whole girl. And the problem is its infatuation.

Have you ever noticed that some people seem to get divorced for trivial reasons? Do you know why folks get divorced for trivial reasons? They got married for trivial reasons. I mean that was infatuation. They really did not know one another. And I can tell you after these years of living with Joyce, I know her ways. She knows my ways, and I love her all the more. And I thank God for the physical charm and all of those outward attributes, but oh for that deeper love that God gives to a man and wife when they know each other intimately.

Now, let's talk about knowing God intimately. And I want to say three things about knowing God intimately. And then I want to tell you how you can know God intimately. Now, **to know God intimately will give you tranquility.** It will give you rest. Look in Exodus 33 verse 14. "And He said, 'My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.'" Now if you only know God casually, if you're only infatuated with God, if you only see God outwardly, if you only see God's works, you will never have rest. As a matter of fact, you will be constantly pushing the panic button. Now God made known His ways to Moses. God made known His acts to the children of Israel.

Now you see the children of Israel, they were constantly frenetic, constantly worried, constantly murmuring. Why? Because all they saw were the works of God. They saw God do His miracles. They saw God open the Red Sea. They saw God give manna in the wilderness. They saw God give water out of the rock. You'd think that would satisfy them, wouldn't you? You'd think that they'd just have a heart full of rest, but they were constantly murmuring. Why? They didn't know the ways of God. All they knew were the works of God, and here's a key verse. And put this verse down in your margin also. Hebrews chapter 3, listen to it, verses 10 and 11. It is a very key verse. Hebrews chapter 3 verse 10 and 11, listen to it. God speaks of those Israelites who were constantly murmuring, and yammering, and carping, and complaining, and were filled with fear; no rest. And here's what God said about them, "Wherefore, I was grieved with that generation," this is Hebrews 3 verse 10, "Wherefore, I was grieved with that generation, and said, they do always err in their



heart,” Now notice this, “and have not known My ways.” They don’t know My ways. “So I swear in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest.” They don’t know My ways; they’ll not have My rest. I’m grieved with them. They don’t know the ways of God.

Now remember Psalm 103 verse 7, “God made known His ways unto Moses, and His acts unto the children of Israel?” Hey folks, let me tell you something. If all you see is what God does, and you don’t know God intimately, you’ll never have rest. You’ll have the spiritual heebee jeebees all of your life. Listen, God said, “My presence will go with thee, and I will give the rest.” Exodus 33 verse 14. You see the children of Israel were doing fine as long as the works of God pleased them. I mean as long as God was opening the Red Sea, as long as God was giving them water out of the rock, as long as God was feeding them with manna from Heaven, they were doing fine, as long as the works of God pleased them. But then when God didn’t do things just the way they thought that God ought to do, then they pushed the panic button.

There’s an oft repeated illustration about the bookmark that some of us have in our older Bibles. Beautifully embroidered, on one side of the book mark is just a mass of tangled threads, but on the other side it says, “God is love.” And when it’s embroidered, in order to embroider it on one side you just have all those threads you know, but you turn it over, and the message is on the other side. Now some just look at it from the back side, and they just see that tangled mass of threads. They don’t understand the ways of God, that God is love. But, you see, our ways and God’s ways are so different. And you’ll never have that deep peace until you understand the ways of God. Because, folks, God’s ways are often confusing to human wisdom.

In Acts chapter 12, Peter and James were both put in prison. They were servants of the Lord Jesus, apostles of Christ, arrested and put in prison for preaching the Gospel. Old Herod put them both in prison. You know what happened to James? His head was cut off. Do you know what happened to Peter? Peter was delivered miraculously out of the same prison. Folks, how you going to explain that? Are you going to say, “Don’t worry about when you go into prison, because an angel will get you out?” Or are you going to say, “When you go to prison, get ready to have your head cut off.” Are you going to say that God loved Peter more than he loved James?

In Acts chapter 2, Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost. He stood up for the Lord Jesus Christ and accused that crowd of crucifying Jesus, and 3,000 souls came to Christ. Stephen preached. He didn’t get 3,000 souls; he got 3,000 stones. They stoned him to death in Acts 7 verses 54 through 60. Folks, if all you see are the works of God, you’re going to be hopelessly confused. You’re going to say, “Does God have people’s heads cut off,” or, “Does God let people out of prison? Does, does God give 3,000 souls when you preach, or do you get stoned when you preach?” I mean if all you see is what God does, if you don’t have a deeper insight into the ways of God, you’re going to be pushing the panic button all the time. You will never have rest until you know God intimately. You see, to know the ways of God is the way of tranquility. To know God intimately is the way of tranquility. God says in that verse, look at it again, Exodus 33 verse 14, “I will give you rest when My presence goes with you.” There is nothing that will bring rest to your trouble soul like an intimate knowledge of God. If all you see is what God does in this world, folks, you are going to be one nervous Christian, until you learn to know the ways of God. Have you got that one? All right, to know the way of God is the way of tranquility.

Now let me show you something else. Look, if you will, to know the ways of God, to know God intimately is not only the way of tranquility, **it is the way of stability**, it’s the way of stability. Now the difference between Moses and Israel; Israel, who only saw what God did, they were so fickle, they were so fickle. You ever know



any fickle Christians, these are the ones, they're just infatuated with God, that's fickleness, that's infatuation.

In Exodus 14 verses 15 through 31, when God opened that 48-lane superhighway through the Red Sea, boy, they went through the Red Sea just like this, towering walls of water on either side. They got on the other side, and then all that water tumbled in on the Egyptians. You know what the Bible says, first song in the Bible recorded right there in Exodus 15 verses 1 through 21. They sang the song of Moses and the Lamb. They were leaping and dancing and praising God for what God had done. "What a mighty God we serve," they wanted to sing. And He is a mighty God.

Three days later, just three days later, in Exodus 15 verses 23 and 24, they got out there in the wilderness, and no water, and they're murmuring. They're complaining. They want to go back to Egypt, just like a girl gets married, and three days into the honeymoon, she wants to go home to Mama. I mean, the honeymoon is over. They had been singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and now they're criticizing Moses. Moses has gone from hero to zero in three days. I mean not a greater leader than Moses. He brought us through the Red Sea. And then they say, "What'd you do, bring us out in the wilderness to die? There's no water out here." They were so fickle!

To know God intimately is the way of tranquility. To know God intimately is the way of stability. If you don't know God intimately, you'll not be able a stable Christian. You'll be just like Israel was. You'll blow hot and blow cold, good Lord, good devil. Sometime I'm up. Sometime I'm down. Why? Because all you see is the works of God. You don't know the ways of God. You don't know the heart and mind of God. You don't know God intimately, so you blow hot and blow cold.

I've seen it happen in churches. Boy, a church, you know, it'll be sailing along and everything is up. The income is up. The Sunday school attendance is up. The building program is up, the statistics are up, and people join a church when the bloom is on it. It's good to be a part of church when the bloom is on it. Bloom's on this church right now, and I thank God for it. That's wonderful. That's a lot of folks, you know. They join when the bloom is on a church. Then you let trouble come. Let persecution come, let difficulty come, let adversity come, and they leave. Why? They don't know God intimately. All they see are the works of God, and if the works of God please them, then, "Fine, just count me on. I'm on." But then you let difficulty come and they say, "You know I think maybe we need a new pastor." Just like people said, "You know, Moses, you're not the leader we thought you were. I mean you brought us through the Red Sea. That was great, but now look. Here we are out here in the wilderness and no water." Why? No stability. And why no stability? All they see are the works of God; they don't know the ways of God. Psalm 103:7, "He'd made known His acts unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." We need, in our lives, stability.

You know, there were those who followed the Lord Jesus when they saw His works. It's an interesting thing. It's worth turning to. Turn to John chapter 2, just turn to this. Keep your book mark there in Exodus 13, and turn with me to John chapter 2 and look with me in verse 23. See if this doesn't remind you of a lot of folks that you know of right now. "Now when He was in Jerusalem," this is speaking of Jesus, "When He was in Jerusalem at the Passover and the feast day, many believed in His name," now notice this, "when they saw the miracles that He did." You see that? What was the miracle? That He just turned water into wine? They saw His works. "Man," they said, "I like that! Did you see what He did? He turned water into wine! Sign me up! I want to be a part."



But notice in John 2 verses 24 and 25, "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them." Now the word commit in verse 24 and the word believe in verse 23, in the Greek language are the same word. They believed in Jesus, but Jesus didn't believe in them. "Because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man." Jesus knew these were just miracle mongers. Jesus knew that they didn't know His ways, all they saw were His works. They saw the miracles that He did. That's all they saw. They didn't see the crucifixion. They didn't see the coming cross.

You go on a few chapters in John the fifth chapter and the sixth chapter where Jesus fed 5,000. Oh boy, the crowds were following Him. But when He talked to them about the deeper spiritual verities, eating His flesh, and drinking His blood and all of that, they left Him. Jesus had so say to His disciples in John 6:67, "Will you also go away? Will you also go away?" Fickleness, no stability!

If all you do is to see the works of God, when everything is fine, the sun is shining, and all of that, boy, you'll be marching in the parade. But just let adversity come. Just let difficulty come. Let something come that you can't understand. You say, "God, why did You do this? How did You allow this? I'm going home to Mama." You know why, why you want to hot foot it back to Egypt? You're fickle. You don't know God intimately. You can't stick. You see, listen, to know God intimately is the way of tranquility. To know God intimately is the way of stability.

Now here's the third thing I want you to notice, that **to know God intimately is the way of necessity**. It's not just simply that you're going to get tranquility and stability. I mean it is necessity. Look if you will in Exodus 33 verses 1 and 2, let's get the context of this whole story. When you see a text in its context then it begins to make sense. Now what has happened is this. I mean how does this prayer come about anyway, where Moses is praying this prayer?

Well, Moses had gone up on Mt. Sinai, and up on Mt. Sinai, God was giving to Moses the Ten Commandments. And not only is God giving to Moses the Ten Commandments, he's giving to Moses the plan for the tabernacle. And now Moses comes down from Mt. Sinai, and Moses brother Aaron has collected golden earrings from all of the people, melted the gold, made a golden calf like they worshiped in Egypt, and the people, in a naked orgy, in debauchery, are dancing around an idol, a golden calf. And God's wrath, God's anger is burning against them, and well it might. Moses is frightened for his people. He knows that God has every right to eradicate them. Moses begins to stand in the gap. Moses begins to intercede. And by the way only the person who knows the ways of God knows how to intercede. Only a person who knows God intimately can be an intercessor. And Moses begins to intercede. And Moses says, "Oh God, don't do it. Don't destroy this people. Oh God, God have mercy."

And then in answer to that prayer, look in Exodus 33 verses 1 and 2, "And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou has brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I swear unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, 'Unto thy seed will give it.'"' He says, "All right, okay, then go on to Canaan. "And I will send an angel before thee; and will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite." These are all the Canaanites. These were all demonically empowered people. And God says, "I'm going to send an angel before you. This angel's going to clear out that bunch." And then he says in verse 3, "I'm going send you into a land flowing with milk and honey," but now notice this, "for I will not go up in the midst of thee. For thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way."



Now God says, "All right, all right, you want the land, you want victory over the Canaanites, you want the Promised Land, you want somebody to provide for you and protect you. I'm going to take my chief angel. 'Angel, go with those folks. Take care of those of Hivites, and those Jebusites, and Perizzites, and termites. Take care of them. Just drive them all out. Let those people go into that land. Let them have the milk. Let them have the honey. Let them have the corn, the wine, the oil, and pomegranates. Let them have it.'" But God says, "I'm not going with you. I am not going with you." "You will go, but you won't have My presence." Boy, when Moses heard that, a chill went over him.

And look if you will in Exodus 33 verse 15. Now here's what Moses prays. "And he said unto Him, 'If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.'" That is, "God, if You're not going, I'm not going. God, I'm, Lord, I don't want Canaan without You. I don't want the blessing without the Blessor. I don't want the victory without the Victor. I don't want the land without the Lord. I don't want it. God, if You're not going, I am not going." You see, to know God intimately means tranquility. To know God intimately means stability, but to know God intimately is necessity. Now, so many of us don't understand this. This is what it's all about.

You see, learn this folks, and learn it well. You can have provision, and you can have protection, and still not have God's presence. Now that ought to frighten you. You know a lot of folks just settle for eternal security. They just say, "Well, I'm saved. I'm going to Heaven. That's all right, I don't want the intimate presence of God. As long as I'm saved." You're just like this bunch here. I mean, there are a lot of people who would have taken that deal in a heartbeat. You say, "You mean, God, you're going to send an angel. I'm going to have victory all the way. You mean I'm going to have the land that flows with milk and honey. I'm going to know victory. Thank you, Lord." And they would not have been bothered that God's presence was not with them.

Now folks, let me tell you one of the most frightening I can tell you; you can have provision, and you can have protection without having the presence. That's what this teaches. It's possible. Don't just think that because you have the things you want that you know God intimately. The Bible says on another occasion in Psalm 106:15, concerning these Israelites that, "God gave them the desire of their heart and sent leanness into their souls."

You know the problem with many of you, maybe many of us, right now you're just doing fine. You live in a beautiful home. Your children are healthy. They're making good grades. You've got a job. You're putting money in the bank. Your retirement looks good, and you're satisfied. May God have mercy upon you; you are satisfied. Moses said, "I don't want Canaan, Lord without You." Many people would have taken that first deal. And you live in a prison of prosperity. And you think because you're there, that everything is fine.

You know what Dr. Vance Havner said? We miss Dr. Havner. He's gone to Heaven now. But Dr. Vance Havner said this, and I quote from him. He says, "I'm often amused and amazed at the way we equate Christianity with success, popularity, and prosperity. We may not admit it, but we use the same old gauge the world uses, except we employ religious language. It would appear that gain is godliness with us, in spite of Paul's formula that godliness plus contentment equals prosperity." So often we say that money will not satisfy, but listen to me folks, that all depends on what we're trying to satisfy. The problem is not that money doesn't satisfy. Come up close and listen now. The problem is not that money doesn't satisfy; the greater danger is that money does. I mean, that you have it and you're satisfied.

H. H. Farmer wrote these words, "To Jesus, the terrible thing about having wrong values in life, and pursuing wrong things is not that you're doomed to bitter disappointment, but that you are not; not that



you do not achieve what you want, but that you do." Now think about it. You say, "Pastor, I don't know what you're saying." I'm saying, folks, that if you can be satisfied with the things of this world, if you can have Canaan without the presence, victory, and angel clearing the way; that's a very dangerous thing. You see, to know God intimately, to know God intimately, that's tranquility. To know God intimately, that is stability. To know God intimately, that is necessity, and don't you take prosperity, don't you take victory, don't you take a land flowing with milk and honey, don't take anything as a substitute for knowing God intimately.

St. Augustine, one of the early church fathers, asked this question. "If God were to come to you, and God were to say to you, 'I'll give you anything you want, every pleasure you desire. Nothing will be withheld. You will live forever. Every desire of your heart will be met. Nothing will be a sin to you. You can have whatever you want with this one exception: you will never see My face.' Would you take that proposition?" St. Augustine said, "If you would say no to that then you have the pure love of God." He said, "If a chill went over your soul when you heard that phrase, 'You will never see My face,' he said, "thank God for that chill. That is the most precious thing about you, because it means you have the pure love of God." That means more to you than this whole wide world. And that's what Moses said. Moses said, "Hey, I don't want Canaan without You. I don't want an angel. I don't want victory. I don't want milk and honey. I want You, oh God." And God is not satisfied with you, and God is not finished with you until your chief desire is God and God alone. To know God intimately, folks, it brings tranquility. It brings stability. It is necessity to know God intimately.

Well, how do you know God intimately? Obviously, you're not going to know God intimately by human reason. Can a man by reason find out God? The answer is obviously no. How do you know God intimately? You know God intimately by direct dealing with God. This is why God kept bringing them into situations. Why did God bring them to the Red Sea? Why did God bring them to a place where there was no water? Why was God bringing them into this situation and into that situation? Why was God bringing them to difficulty? Why? So they'd have to deal with God.

Now if you're a counselor and people come to you with problems, and you're a counselor, if you solve the problems for those people, you're not a good counselor. Do you know what good counseling does? It brings people to God. I mean, why do you have those difficulties? Why do you have those problems? God is wanting you to come face to face with Him. You learn God by direct dealing with God, and God puts you in places where there's nowhere but up, when they came, nowhere out but up. When they came to the Red Sea, the only way that they could turn was to God, to God, to know to God intimately.

Now listen folks, you cannot know God by hearing sermons about knowing God. Sorry about that. You cannot know God by reading books about knowing God. You can't know anybody that you don't spend time with. You see. To know Him is to love Him. To love Him is to trust Him. To trust Him is to obey Him. To obey Him is to be blessed. And to be blessed is to be a blessing. And it all begins with knowing Him. And you can't know anybody that you don't spend time with. How do I know Joyce? We've just been married all these years. I've spent time with her. She's spent time with me. If all you see are the works of God, you're just infatuated with God. When the bad times come, like a scared rabbit, off you'll go. But when you know God, when you know the ways of God, when you know the heart and mind of God, when God speaks to you face to face as He spoke with Moses, folks that's wonderful; to know God intimately.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed. Eyes are closed. And you know the first step in knowing God intimately? The first step in knowing God intimately is to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, to ask Him to come into your heart, forgive your sin, and save you. If you're not saved, I want to invite



you to ask Him into your heart right now. Pray like this, “Dear God, I need You. I want You. My heart cries out for You, oh God. I want my sin forgiven, but more than that I want Your presence in my life. I want to know that I will live forever with You. Lord Jesus, You died for me on that cross. Thank You for paying my sin debt with your blood. Thank You that You were raised from the dead. You promised to save me if I would trust You, Lord Jesus. I do trust You right now.” Would You tell him that? “I trust You right now, Lord Jesus.” Tell Him that. “I trust You right now, Lord Jesus. Come into my heart, forgive my sin, save me, Lord Jesus.” Ask Him. Pray it and mean it. “Save me, Lord Jesus.” Father, I pray that many prayed that prayer today, in the holy name of Jesus, Amen.



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