

**FROM THE BIBLE**

# ***How To Know God Personally***

**New Life Publishing**

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Parentheses ( ): are used to state a known truth from other parts of the Bible and to give the scripture reference of a verse in the Bible.

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## Introduction

It goes without saying that to be a Christian is to have a personal relationship with our Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ His Son — that is the very definition of Christianity. To come to know God personally and to live in that relationship we must believe and have confidence in the inspired word of God—the Bible. It is faith that we need and “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). But how have millions of Christians come to believe and have faith and confidence in this book we call the Bible? It is because they opened their minds and their hearts as they read and heard—then God did the rest. “For the word of God is alive and full of power” (Hebrews 4:12a). In addition, our Lord is present with anyone who reads His Word with an open mind and heart—He helps them understand and believe. When that happens, a whole new world is opened—a world filled with God’s love and fellowship through a personal relationship with Him. As we enter into an exchange of love with Him, we begin to be more like Jesus. Then our heavenly Father begins to guide us into the plan that He has for our lives. And we begin to experience joy, peace, and a sense of satisfaction and belonging that is beyond understanding.

To know God personally is the most important thing man can ever experience and the Bible is the guidebook for that kind of life. What you are about to read is selected portions of God’s Word that talk about the subject before us—how to know God personally. It says in Revelation 3:20 that He stands at the door desiring to come in. If you open the door of your mind and heart, He will enter in and your life will never be the same.

## God Loves You

The Lord appeared in the past to me, saying, "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love:

therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you" (Jeremiah 31:3).

"For I know the thoughts and plans that I have toward you," says the Lord, "thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope in your future" (Jeremiah 29:11).

"I have loved you," says the Lord (Malachi 1:2a).

My intense bitterness obstructed my peace but You have loved my life back from the pit of corruption and nothingness; for You have cast all my sins behind Your back (Isaiah 38:17).

We know and believe the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him (1 John 4:16).

## God Is Merciful And Gracious

In His steadfast love, the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is God's steadfast love toward those who with godly fear, reverence Him (Psalm 103:8,11).

But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting for those who, with godly fear, reverence Him, ... to those who remember to obey His commandments (Psalm 103: 17,18b).

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end (Lamentations 3:22).

For though He allows grief, He will have compassion according to the abundance of His steadfast love (Lamentations 3:3 2).

With the merciful, You will show Yourself merciful. With those completed in You, You will show Yourself complete (Psalm 18:25).

O give thanks to the Lord; for He is good; for

His loving mercy endures forever

(1 Chronicles 16:34).

...You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and of great kindness. When sinners turn to You, You revoke the sentence of [spiritual] death (Jonah 4:2b).

## Living Independently of God

### Is Refusing His Mercy and Grace

The Lord is with you, when you are with Him; and if you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you (2 Chronicles 15:2b).

The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is desperately corrupt. There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death (Jeremiah 17:9 & Proverbs 16:25).

What does the Lord require of you but to act justly, love kindness and mercy and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8). Note: This is impossible if we live independently of God.

If a man doesn't remain united with me, he is thrown out as a branch. The branch withers and is gathered up, thrown into the fire, and burned (John 15:6). Note: We can be united with God through a personal relationship.

## The Greatest Thing In Life Is To Know God Personally

...But the people who know their God personally shall prove themselves strong, and shall stand firm and take action for God (Daniel 11:32b).

What we have seen and heard from the Father, we are telling you so that you, too, may realize and enjoy fellowship as partners and partakers with us. And this companionship that we have (which is the distinguishing mark of Christians) is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah (1 John 1:3).

God is faithful and ever true to His promise and can be depended on for companionship and fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Corinthians 1:9).

Love the Lord your God, and obey His voice, and hold fast to Him. For He is your life, and the length of your days... (Deuteronomy 30:20a).

He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exodus 33:14).  
Note: Rest comes as we respond to His presence.

We know that the Son of God has come and has given us the understanding to know Him [personally] (1 John 5:20).

**To Know God or Anyone,**

**We Must Seek Them**

You shall seek Me, and find Me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).

Keep on asking and it will be given you. Keep on seeking the Lord and you will find Him (Matthew 7:7).

I love those who love Me. Those who seek Me diligently will find Me (Proverbs 8:17).

The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul that seeks Him (Lamentations 3:25).

But as for me, I would seek [to know] God [personally]--to God I commit my cause (Job 5:8).

Without faith it is impossible to please God. Anyone who desires to respond to God must believe that He exists, and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

**God Wants Us To Come To Him --**

**To Respond To Him**

...For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away His face from you, if you return to Him (2 Chronicles 30:9b).

For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, abounding in steadfast love for all those who call on You (Psalm 86:5).

Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you (James 4:8a).

The Lord is near to all those who call on Him, to all who call on Him [personally] in truth (Psalm 145:18).

“Come to me, all you who labor and have heavy burdens, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

Him who comes to Me I will most certainly not cast out -- I will never, no never reject one of them who comes to Me (John 6:37b).

## God's Commandments Make A

### Loving Relationship Possible

The person who has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me (John 14:21a).

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself (Luke 10:27b).

Note: One must receive God's love to be able to return His love and obey this command.

Do not be conformed to the ways and attitudes of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind having new ideals and new attitudes so that you may prove what is good and acceptable to God (Romans 12:2).

Note: Renewal comes through a personal relationship with our Lord.

Jesus answered them, "Have continuing faith in God. If you keep My commandments, you will live in My love just as I keep My Father's commandments and continually live in His love" (Mark 11:22b & John 15:10).

Note: When we realize who Jesus is, we will want to keep His commandments.

## Who Is Jesus?

### He Is God Incarnate

Without controversy, the hidden truth of godliness is great: God was made visible in human flesh

(1 Timothy 3:16a).

For in Him (Jesus) the whole fullness of deity continues to dwell in bodily form [God incarnate] (Colossians 2:9).

For to us a child is born [Jesus]... and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

He is the exact likeness (incarnation) of the invisible God (Colossians 1: 15a).

Note: Jesus, the Messiah, God incarnate, came to be a sacrifice for sin—a fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies.

## Jesus Came To Die For The Sin Of The World

It was the will of the Lord to give Him as a sacrifice. He shall make His soul an offering for sin (Isaiah 53: 10a). Note: Only one of many Old Testament prophecies.

This Jesus was delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God and crucified and killed by the hand of lawless men (Acts 2:23).

I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me--I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again (John 10:17b, 18a).

My soul is troubled and distressed. Should I say, Father, save Me (Jesus) from this [death]? No. It was for this very purpose that I have come into this world (John 12:27).

The things, which God announced by the mouth of all his prophets, who foretold that Jesus Christ would suffer (and die), have been fulfilled (Acts 3:18).

They led Jesus away bearing His own cross to the place called Golgotha. There they crucified Him. When the centurion that stood facing Him saw how He died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God" (John 19:17,18a & Mark 15:39).

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

## Jesus Conquered Death So That

### We Might Live Forever

They said, "He (Jesus) is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you that the Son of Man must be given over to the hands of sinful men and be crucified; and on the third day rise from death" (Luke 24:6,7).

I mentioned to you right from the beginning that Christ died for our sins just as the scriptures said He would (Isaiah 53) and that He was buried and three days later rose from the grave just as the prophets foretold. He was seen by Peter and all the apostles; and after that, He was seen by more than five hundred Christian brothers (1 Corinthians 15:3-6a).

I have been crucified with Christ and shared His crucifixion. It is no longer I who live but Christ, the Messiah lives in me.

This Jesus God raised from the dead--it was not possible that He should be held by it [death] (Acts 2:24).

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me--the life I'm living in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20). Note: We can receive forgiveness and live with God forever.

## Repentance Brings God's

### Loving Forgiveness

The Lord draws close to those whose hearts are breaking--He saves those who are humbly sorry for their sins (Psalm 34:18).

I finally admitted that I am sinful and stopped trying to hide it. I said to myself, "I will confess my sins to the Lord," and You forgave me--all my guilt is gone (Psalm 32:5).

If we freely admit that we have sinned, He is faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all past and present wrongs (1 John 1:9).

Note: Sin is separation from God. Forgiveness through a loving relationship changes that and gives us the right to stand before God.

Repent--change your mind and attitude--turn to God, so that He can cleanse away your sins, and send you wonderful times of refreshment (personal peace — a whole new life) (Acts 3:19).

### Through Jesus We Have New Life

Truly I say to you, unless you are born again, you can never get into the Kingdom of God (John 3:3).

The testimony is this that God gave to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has the life. He who doesn't have God's Son doesn't have the life (1 John 5:11,12).

But God, being rich in mercy, loved us with His great love, even when we were dead through our trespasses. He made us alive together with Christ (by grace we have been saved) (Ephesians 2:4,5).

Therefore if any one receives Jesus Christ, he is a new person--old things pass away--all things become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. Be full of desire for the true milk of the word, as babies at their mothers' breasts, so that you may go on to salvation (become a part of the family of God) (1 Peter 1:23: 2:2).

### God Is A Father To His People

A father of the fatherless, and a defender of the widows, is God in His holy habitation (Psalm 68:5).

But now, O Lord, You are our Father. You are the potter; we are the clay. We all are the work of Your hand. You, O Lord, are our Father--our Redeemer from everlasting is Your name (Isaiah 64:8; 63:16b).

...And it shall come to pass that, in the place where it was said to them, You are not My people, it shall be said to them, You are the sons of the living God (Hosea 1:10b).

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in Heaven give good things to those who ask Him! Pray like this, "Our Father, who is in Heaven, may Your name be kept holy" (Matthew 7:11, 6:9).

"I will receive you. I will be to you a Father. You will be to me sons and daughters," says the Lord Almighty (2 Corinthians 6:1 7b, 18).

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are children of God (Romans 8:14).

But as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become God's children, to those who believe in Him (John 1:12).

## Our Lord Offers Us Love, Joy, and Peace

I'm leaving you with peace of mind and heart, the peace I give isn't fragile like the peace the world gives, so do not be troubled or afraid (John 14:27).

I have loved you just as the Father has loved me; abide in My love--continue in the Father's love with Me. If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and remain in His love. I have spoken these things to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full (John 15:9-11).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace... (Galatians 5:22a).

You show me the path of life, and in Your presence is fullness of joy (Psalm 16:11).

He who doesn't love doesn't know God [personally]; for God is love..., and he who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him (1 John 4:8, 16b).

Note: To remain in God means having a continuing personal relationship with Him.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! (Habakkuk 3:18).

Because we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).

## Not All Who Profess To Follow Jesus

### Know Him Personally

They claim to know God, [personally] but they deny Him by their actions (Titus 1:16a).

These people draw near to Me with their words, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me (Matthew 15:8).

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father who is in Heaven. Many will tell Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy by Your name, by Your name cast out demons, and by Your name do many mighty works?" Then I will tell them, I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who do evil (Matthew 7:21-23).  
Note: Those that have a personal relationship will be dedicated to the keeping of His commandments.

This is how we can be sure that we have come to know Him: if we continually keep His commandments. The one who says, "I have come to know Him," but does not continually keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in that person (1 John 2:3-4).

### Promises To Those Who Love God

Do not fear for I am with you--do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, and help you--I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness (Isaiah 41:10).

Even if my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me in (adopt me as His child) (Psalm 27:10).

And we know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and are fitting into His plans for our lives (Romans 8:28).

If men say evil things about you because you are a Christian, blessed are you, because the manifestation of His presence rests on you (1 Peter 4:14a).

Blessed is the man who endures the trial and temptation, for when he has passed the test, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to those who love Him (James 1:12).

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me ... For He will give you into the care of His angels to guard you wherever you go (Psalm 23:4a; 91:11).

My God will fully supply your every need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

If you love Me, obey Me and I will ask the Father to give you another Counselor (Holy Spirit) to be with you forever (John 14:15,16).

## **Obey And Receive God's Love And**

### **Be Filled With The Holy Spirit**

God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32b).

...That He would grant, according to the riches of His glory, that you may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man You will know the love of Christ [personally], which goes far beyond knowledge, and you will be filled with all the fullness of God (the Holy Spirit) (Ephesians 3:16,19).

They asked, "What shall we do?" Peter said to them: "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37b,8).

Don't be drunk with wine, in which is an abandoned life, but be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:13). Note: We must ask and receive.

If you remain in Me, and my words remain in you, you will ask whatever you desire, and it will be done to you (John 15:7). Note: The fullness of the Holy Spirit should be the desire of every Christian and we must pray for that fullness on a continuing basis.

You have received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry, "Abba Father; oh, my Father." The Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts assuring us that we are children of God (Romans 8: 15b).

## Conclusion:

### We Must Open The Door

Jesus said that He is always at the door of our hearts desiring to come in and fellowship with us (Revelation 3:20). But it is up to us to give up the sin that separates us and open the door. We have seen in the preceding Bible verses that God earnestly desires that we enter into loving fellowship with Him. There is a grand old hymn that talks about this—it says:

The Savior is waiting to enter your heart.

Why don't you let Him come in?

There is nothing in this world to keep you apart.

What is your answer to Him?

Time after time He has waited before

And now He is waiting again

To see if you are willing

To open the door.

Oh, how He wants to come in!

At any time, we can open the door and ask Him to come in—even right now. Simply tell Him that you want to know Him personally and live

with Him forever—that you want to love and obey Him—that you know that Jesus paid the penalty for your sin on the cross and now offers you His loving forgiveness. Then out of simple faith in what God has said, open the door and receive Him. Receive His love, His forgiveness and the fullness of His Holy Spirit.

When we are sorry for our sin and receive God's loving forgiveness and the fullness of His Holy Spirit, the burden of sin is lifted. There is a new freedom to fellowship with Him through a loving Father-child relationship. As we receive more and more of His love, mercy, and grace; thankfulness wells up from deep down inside and ignites a desire to give love to the One who sets us free. Then, with praise and thanksgiving, we return God's love and a personal relationship is established—there is a giving and receiving of love. But, it is not just a one-time experience—it is a day-by-day experience as we work toward a closer and closer (Abba-Father) relationship. If we are diligent, we can know God personally all the days of our lives and throughout eternity.

## SUPPLEMENT

### YOU CAN HEAR GOD

If you ask a Christian what he means when he says that he has been born again, he will probably tell you that he has a personal relationship with the living God. Because of this relationship, he knows that he has a loving heavenly Father and that he, as God's child, can return His love. This Father-child relationship makes it possible for him to hear God, because there is a communication in prayer and in Bible reading that was never there before.

### HEARING GOD

All of us have a great need to hear that "still small voice" of God so that we can receive His guidance and know more and more about the plan He has for our lives. We need communication with Him all through the day— allowing Him to speak to us by placing His thoughts in our minds. We need to hear Him teach us as we read the Scriptures. We need to seek to hear Him much as a child seeks the guidance of a parent.

### BECOMING AS LITTLE CHILDREN

If we are to hear God, we must humble ourselves as a little child. We try so hard to be sophisticated adults—we don't realize that God desires for us to be "as little children". God does not look upon His people as sophisticated adults — if we are Christians, we are "children of God". Of course, older children can become rebellious, but little children are naturally trusting, teachable and submissive to their parents. Is that the way you are with your heavenly Father? Or, are you a sophisticated adult?

God wants His people to be responsible for what they say and do, but He wants them to be as little children in their hearts. Jesus said, "Anyone who humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew

18:4). The desire to be sophisticated adults makes it difficult to humble ourselves as a little child. The way to hear God is through an on-going Father-child relationship. Out of a trusting, teachable and submissive attitude, we can truly commit ourselves to God—He then makes it possible for us to grow in His grace by the power of His Holy Spirit.

It takes strength or power to live this life and God has very clearly promised it to us. Jesus said, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you" (Acts 1:8). Our heavenly Father, through His Holy Spirit, gives us strength to be successful in life—to be what He wants us to be. If we are to have the help and strength we need, we must seek that Father- child relationship with a repentant heart.

## REPENTANCE

Most of us, most of the time, do not realize that we are sinful. We deceive ourselves. Without realizing it, we place ourselves in opposition to God by desiring to be a "special person" or part of a "special group". All of us, sometimes, allow our pride to lead us into this sinful desire. In his classic book, *THE IMITATION OF CHRIST*, Thomas a' Kempis puts it like this: "Never desire to be singularly praised or loved; for this belongs to God alone, who has none like Himself. Neither desire that anyone's heart should be taken up with you; nor be you much taken up with the love of anyone but let Jesus be in you and in every good man." The Bible says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8).

It is only when we see the reality of our sin that we can become truly sorry for it. And it is only when we repent of our sin, that we can gain fellowship with God. When we repent, we open up that Father-child relationship that is so vital for our spiritual growth. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

## **YOU CAN HEAR GOD**

**You may be a businessman, a housewife, a church member, a deacon, an elder or even part of the church staff but if you are not hearing God, you need to become as a little child in your heart. God will give you the power to humble yourself as a little child, truly repent of your sin and receive the forgiveness that Jesus made possible on the cross. Ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit every day. Realize that God loves you, then receive his love and ask Him to help you to return His love—that is a real Father-child relationship. It is also the way to hear God. When we are hearing God, faith is exercised and prayers begin to be answered. As faith and answered prayers increase, the relationship deepens and we begin to share our whole life with our heavenly Father through Jesus our Lord. That is fellowship with the living God because we are hearing God and being heard by Him!**

## RELATED READING

We recommend these related publications:

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Knowing God Personally

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### Leaflets:

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