

Knowing God and known of God

Part 1

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[00:00:00] John's Gospel, Chapter 10, and verse 14, John's Chapter 10, verse 14.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine, as the Father knows me. Even so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep, and other sheep I have, which a lot of this fold, them also I must bring. And they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 8, 1 Corinthians, Chapter 8, and verse 2, 1 Corinthians, Chapter [00:01:19] 8, verse 2.

And if any man think that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet, as he ought to know.

But if any man love God, for same is known of him.

And in Chapter 13, of the same epistle, Chapter 13, and verse 12, Chapter 13, verse 12.

For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face, now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as also I am known.

[00:02:01] And finally, in 2 Timothy, Chapter 2, 2 Timothy, Chapter 2, and we can begin at verse 19.

In 2 Timothy, Chapter 2, verse 19, nevertheless the foundation of the law of God stands sure, having this seal, the Lord knows them that are his.

And everyone names the name of Christ, apart from iniquity, but in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also wood and of hearth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

[00:03:01] Flee also youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach. Patient in meekness instructing

those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

In reading these scriptures, dearly beloved, it is my desire to just say something about being known of God, being known of God.

And by searching deep and blessed matter to be known of God, what brings it before me was, of course, that verse we had in Galatians chapter 4 and verse 9, where it says, but [00:04:03] now knowing God, but rather being known by God, how do you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements whereby you desire again to be in bondage? But I thought it very wonderful, of course, because they do carry with it responsibility to be known of God. There's an answer called for that.

And I thought it was very nice and precious to our souls to have the side not so much of responsibility brought before us first, and then there will be the, got to be the corresponding answer in our hearts and lives to that great and blessed privileges of ours, to be known by God and to be known by Christ.

And the Lord Jesus Christ, of course, is God, he is the Son of God, and that's why I began with this very precious portion in John 10, known to us all so thoroughly, and where the [00:05:01] Lord Jesus says, I am the good shepherd, I am the good shepherd, oh how precious it is to think of him, isn't it? We can think of the Lord in many, many wonderful ways. We've sung of him as the lamb, and that always affects our hearts, isn't it, to think of him as the lamb, just so helpless and defenseless as it goes, went all the way to Calvary to lay down his precious self for us, to shed his precious blood. When blood from a victim must flow, then, of course, he comes out as the shepherd. This shepherd, in pity, was laid to stand between us and the foe, and willingly died in our stead. Oh, wonderful, blessed Savior, isn't he? Precious Savior, and he says, I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, yes, he knows them all, he knows his sheep, he knows us each and every one, and, you know, even before we come and trust the Savior, he knows us, known in that far past age of eternity, chosen in Christ before the fountains of the world, oh, how wonderful and blessed, known of him, [00:06:05] found of thee before I sought, unto thee in mercy brought, oh, known of him, I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and then the precious thing is, and unknown of mine, dear Saint of God, do you know the shepherd?

Do you know the shepherd? Is he everything to you?

We mentioned Queen Victoria this afternoon, there was one occasion, you know, when she had one of her usual dinners, and there was there, one of her favorite preachers, ministers was there, and there was also the great actor, was it Irving, was one of these great actors was there, great company, and as the time went on, you know, Queen Victoria was very fond of the Psalms, and Sir Henry Irving was asked to recite the 23rd Psalm, of course, excellent diction, that voice that had amazed and bedazzled people on the stage, down drew [00:07:06] away many times, given him his knighthood, and everybody was enraptured by it.

Then she asked this pastor to stand up, he spoke about the 23rd Psalm, Queen Victoria and all the hearts were melted, and Sir Henry Irving said, I know the Psalm, but he knows the shepherd, Saint of God, do you know the shepherd?

Is he everything to you? Oh, yes, I know he is to many hearts, every one of us, he's the one that's

there through thick and thin, oh, you know, when Satan comes in with his bulls and buffets, hey, the shepherd's there, he takes us, you know, he was prepared to go to the far side of the desert for us, lay us on his shoulders and brought us home rejoicing, oh, don't let us worry, if we have a cough [00:08:02] or a sputter, he's there to comfort and sustain us, that blessed good shepherd, yes, and he gave his life for us, and he says, I am Lord of mine, and how are we known of him, as the father knows me, oh, think of that, think of that, no man knoweth the son but the father, dear Saint of God, we've been brought into that wonderful sphere, wonderful sphere of family relationship, into the wonderful sphere of blessing, you know, we often, we often used to speak about the button bends, and to me, you know, it was a privilege to get back to the house in the front room, but she knew you'd really arrived if you went bend, whoosh, right in, right into the back place, into the intimacy of the father's presence, and oh, how wonderful it is, dear Saint of God, that we've been brought into that wonderful knowledge of divine persons, and that's what eternal life is, we've been brought in there, and the Lord, he knows, is known by the father, and even so know I the father, and then he [00:09:06] goes on to say that I lay down my life for the sheep, unreservedly, gave himself, no palms, no holding back, I lay down my life for the sheep, and he'd been speaking of course originally to the Jewish sheep, and they were kept in by a fold, doors and walls round it, barriers round it, and he says, other sheep I have who are not of this fold, not of this fold, them also I must bring, and so it's the Gentiles brought in, Jew and Gentile, the glorious gospel reaching out, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and oh, the wonderful thing, we can thank God, each and every one of us, that we hear the Saviour's voice, the blessed name of Jesus, Jesus, how much the name unfolds to every open ear, the power of those sinners' memory holds, none other, half so dear, you know [00:10:03] I used to travel on the train in London with a dear brother, and you know if he thought some day was a believer, he'd go up and he'd whisper the name of Jesus in their ear, and of course if they were unbeliever they would give one reaction, if they were believer they'd give another reaction, oh the name of Jesus, the precious name of Jesus, them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice, and it says there shall be one, well it says in the authorised version fold, but we know it's really one flock, one flock and one shepherd, because a fold you see is a circle without a centre, that's what a fold is, but a flock is a circle centred, round the centre, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, oh the wonderful circumference of his love, no trammels holding it in, no but drawn, drawn by the wonderful magnetism of the saviour, we might reverently use such a word, centred around him, yes he's [00:11:03] the centre of that company, and oh how blessed a saviour he is, the Lord Jesus Christ, to have the privilege of being known by him, oh how wonderful it is dear saints of God to be known by the Lord Jesus Christ in that wonderful way, and that he went all the way to Calvary for us, and then of course he is God, and we are known by God, we had, it's rather interesting that in these three, three of these references to be known by God, there is a matter, a great important matter of decision to be made, the one in Galatians that we refer to, was dealing with this matter as we've been considering the readings of whether we should be putting ourselves back under law, we who have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our saviour, began in faith, whether we should go back under a legal system, needing [00:12:02] that to complete our faith, and we know only too sadly, how readily our flesh wants to have a system of rules and regulations, and in little bits of bowing to this and bowing to that, I was always amazed throughout my years in work, and I had the privilege on many occasions of having fellowship with dear believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, no question that they'll be in heaven, no question they'll be in heaven, but so often sadly to see that they were still relying on the ways of flesh, so many you know that would be, not only would they celebrate Christmas, that they would be celebrating Advent, not only would they be celebrating Easter, but they'd celebrate the Lent and things like that, you see, they still felt that these things were needed to be done, oh and we used to, I used to labour with them and graciously bring before them that we were liberated from such things into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and sadly so many [00:13:04] dear believers want to be under such systems, and the

Lord Paul there is guided by the Spirit, brings to them this wonderful fact that we're known by God, and being known by God, how can we turn again to the weak and beggary elements, when you desire again to be a new bondage, oh how sad indeed, if and particularly sad, if one has been liberated from such systems, as many are, have been liberated from such systems, if they want to go back into them, the Apostle Paul had said in chapter 2, if we build again the things which we have destroyed, we become transgressors, and that seems to be forgotten today, some say well we were never in these systems, so if we go back into them, we're not, but did you not see that the testimony is clear of such systems, testament of God, and if you go back and into a fellowship with these systems, you're building again that which has [00:14:06] been destroyed, these things have been set aside, a legal system has been set aside, and we have no place to go back in there, we might graciously, of course it doesn't mean that we've got them to cut off, we can have them in our homes to bring the Word of God to them, we can meet with them and go along in a fellowship in a certain way, but there's no way that we can be thoroughly and totally and completely identified with them in that way, so it's the Apostle Paul, you know there's many today, there's somebody wrote a book and said Paul you've been far too harsh, saying such things like that, but you know that's what he says, the Word of God, you're transgressors, if you build again the things which have been destroyed. Anyway in the scripture in 1st Corinthians chapter 8, is the another matter that arises very much amongst the Saints, is this matter of forbearing with dear brothers on matters [00:15:06] of conscience, brothers and sisters on matters of conscience, and one problem that was a great concern to the Corinthian Saints, and it seems to have affected really the Roman Saints too, but it was probably quite a common problem throughout the Greek, Greco-Roman world, and this matter of offerings being given to idols, and for some of the, particularly for the poor Saints, the only way they could get meat was being bought in the shanties, bought in the shanties, and the things that were thrown out after they sacrificed to idols, and of course they had no conscience about eating that, they thought there was nothing of it, there's nothing in these gods, and we can easily eat that meat, and in fact sometimes of course others following on from these sacrifices, then the meat [00:16:02] was served round, and if you wanted a cheap meal, you could go in into the temple and eat this meat, and some of these ones went in and said, well I have no conscience about it, I'm going in and I'll sit down and eat that meat, no trouble, and the Apostle Paul says, Abbot you must remember these dear brethren with a weak conscience about these matters, they see you sitting there, you know, and they walk past, they say, oh brother so-and-so does it, you know, so it must be alright, and you know we tend to look at it that way, but the Apostle Paul says, you know, be forbearing with your conscience, he says, I would no longer eat meat if it offends my brother, what a state and condition, and the Apostle Paul was advising on that, would you destroy your brother with meat, and so we need to be very careful dearly beloved, things that we have no conscience about, don't worry us at all, we've got to be forbearing and patient with those who have consciences about certain matters, and labor [00:17:04] with them and help them, and that's very necessary, and we can't ride roughshod over their conscience, and if we are known by God, you see, three times you have it known by God, and yet, and this is one matter that is associated with it, so it's very important that we take this matter up carefully, and rather summarizing, of course, very briefly, what's in this chapter here, I think most of you are fully aware of it, and he says, you see in verse 9, see, lest any wise this you write, itself be a stumbling block to the weak, you need to be very careful on these matters, how that you don't offend and stumble dear saints, and particularly young saints in our conduct, we may think that certain things will affect personally on us, but we must remember that some dear saints, particularly [00:18:02] those younger in the faith, could be stumbled by these matters, so we often have to refrain from certain matters that might be a stumbling to those who are weak in the faith, and then we come to another challenging matter, in 2nd Timothy chapter 2, back in verse 16, we didn't read it, but the Apostle Paul says to them, Spirit of God, through the Apostle Paul, profane, vain, babbling, and shun,

for they will advance to greater ungodliness, and their work will spread as a canker, or as it really means, gangrene, gangrene, these profane, vain, babblings, and we've not to just dilly-dally with them, and we look at them, and think about them, we've to shun them, read, I saw [00:19:06] recently an article in a paper, I didn't, not yet been able to see the original article, though some dear brothers, I think there are at least two present, have seen the original article, and can confirm what was reported in the daily papers in another country about this article, and the author was raising questions, and saying such things as just raising questions, and saying well, is it really absolutely necessary that we believe that Adam actually lived, you see, Adam actually lived, and he's raised, and that there was actually a flood with Noah, you see, raising questions like that, we must believe that the Lord Jesus lived all right, but do we really need to believe that the, the way that different tongues came in was through the Tower of Babylon, he was raising these questions, but you see cunningly, he didn't say, you know, I don't believe it, I don't believe it, you see, and of [00:20:02] course, when the newspaper was, of course, newspaper article, not some nasty brethren, you know, oh no, you know, when you say these things, it's a lot of nasty brethren that say these things, no it isn't, it's reporters, not men, they may be men of the world, but they see these things, they know what Christianity should be, they know that Adam was an actual man, and when they see somebody saying it's not, then they wonder about it, like the Bishop Barnes, and all these men that used to be here, wasn't it, the Bishop of Durham that we had recently in England, people, even men of the world, they knew what Christianity was supposed to say and do, and when men like the Bishop of Durham stood up and questioned it, they say, well, this isn't right, is it, and now we've got a man who's not a bishop in a certain country, and he's raising these questions, and you see, he's been doing that sort of style all along, and now when he's challenged, he says, well, he won't really admit that he's a believer, and you see, it's his cunning, cunning way, profane vain babblings, and the way, the [00:21:06] way it's done, not coming straight forward, if he came straight forward, I could know, but that's the trouble, you see, today, they're twisting themselves, twisting their words, they won't come out clearly with what they really mean, they're all things to all men, they're like that character in Pilgrim's Progress, Mr. Facing Both Ways, and there's another character in Pilgrim's Progress, isn't there, the Reverend Two Tongues, and we've got them around today, yes, they're still there, what's his name, he wrote that, didn't he, John Bunyan in the 17th century, and it's still there, here we are, we're into the 21st century, aren't we, four centuries on, and we've still got Mr. Facing Both Ways, and the Reverend Two Tongues, and they're not outside, you know, in system, I'll leave [00:22:06] you to say where they are, you know where they are, hmm, yes, now, would to God that we speak with one tongue, used to say, you know, so and so speaks with fock tongue, didn't they, the Red Indians, used to say, so and so, let dear, speak with a true tongue, and face God's way, dear brethren, so there they are, you see there, and it says, their word will spread as cancer or gangrene, now I was helped recently on this matter, when it came up in a reading, by a dear brother, whose a practice was in medical sphere, and he hadn't witnessed this, but he was told, of course, when he was at the university, studying about a certain kind of gangrene, that came in during the First World War, when the soldiers on the front in the First World War, they got this, I think it was gas, gas gangrene, and you see it wasn't [00:23:07] very evident, wasn't evident to outside, these men were discharged and mobbed in 1919, and they went around, and they could play a round of golf, and they could play their football at first, and they could swim, and all the rest of it, but you see it was working away, it was working away, gradually seeping away into their inside, getting at them, and they went, they went, and that's what these things do, dear saint of God, and I would warn you young brethren, don't have anything to do with untruth, go solidly for the truth of the scripture, the faith once delivered to the saints, get hold of it, and get it into you, get it into you, and get you into it, and you can never learn it quick enough, yes, you can never learn it quick enough, the things I learned when I was seventeen, I understand much better than things I'm learning now when I'm sixty odd, [00:24:03] get into it now,

understand these things, I know you've got schools and universities and all the rest of it, well, some of us had universities as well, but we managed to get it into the word of God, and understand it, so get it into you, well anyway, these men, these two men, Hymenaeus and Philetus, they were such men, and they've gone astray us of the truth, and what did they say, what did they say, did they say that the Lord Jesus Christ is not the son of God, did they say that he's not the eternal son, did they say that the Holy Spirit is not a real person, did they say that there is no hell, and things like that, no, they said the resurrection is past already, and that overthrew the faith of some, and all people might wonder about that, oh dear, things are getting so bad, we're just at the end, let's just cling on, you know, [00:25:01] but the apostle says, the firm foundation of God stands, the firm foundation of God stands, having a seal, it's on it, seal on it, what is it, the Lord knows then that it is, saint of God, it's wonderful if we can know those that are the Lord's, precious and blessed it is, and let us do everything we can to encourage and help where we are, you know, when I used to get on the train going up to work, and in fact, even once when I was on the airplane, you'd see a dear saint reading a Bible, I didn't go up to him and say, now, what letter have you got on, no, no, no, dear brother, you'd sit down and you'd say, praise the Lord, oh, you're joying in the Savior, and where were you reading, oh, and I'm reading in Genesis 22, I said, isn't that wonderful, you know, and things like that, and about the gate, and we'd talk about that sort of thing, and talk about the Savior, precious it is, give them something, you know, the Lord gives us, he gives us things to give out, we want to keep it to ourselves, you know, we've given things to give out, mind you, we're not just giving them, we've to dig them up, isn't it, the preacher, he dug things up, dug it up, he read it, you see, he dug it up, and then he prayed it in, prayed it in, and then tell it out, no, no, no, before you tell it out, live it out, live it out, [00:26:26] and then tell it forth, live it out, and then tell it forth, that's it, you see, that's the way it's done, isn't it, dig it up, pray it in, live it out, and then tell it forth, that's the way, dear saint of God, the precious word of God, and so the Lord knows those that are his, that's one side, the other side is let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity, complete and total separation from it, not dilly-dallying with it, push-a-footing with it, and things like that, complete withdrawing from it, very forceful word this, very forceful word of actually withdrawing them from it, withdraw from iniquity, in a great house, vessels of gold and silver, wood and earthen, some to honour, some to dishonour, [00:27:17] and that is the situation, the house of God that we read about in 1st Timothy chapter 3 has become a great house today, a broken down situation, but in the midst of it, there are vessels of gold and silver, there's that which is true, that which is going through, vessels to honour, some to dishonour, useful in a way, and now it says here, you see the nub in verse 21, if therefore one shall have purified himself from these, and the Greek verb says, expurgated himself from these, it's a physical getting out of, you see this has been challenged today, been challenged today, seen it on the internet, brothers writing from America to Germany to Holland, this sort of thing, great and wonderful men, challenging this statement here, but it, there's no getting away from it, it means a physical getting out of, [00:28:13] expurgating yourself from these things, these, and then you'll be a vessel to honour, sanctified, vessel unto honour, sanctified, in a right fit condition, and then it says serviceable to the master, and then notice this is sometimes what we forget, you know, we stop there often, it says prepare for every good work, don't let us fall down in that, you know, there's a lot of good works to be done, a good work, every good work, there's a good work for you to do, good work for me to do, and we've got to be prepared for it, fitted for it, prepared for every good work, and so there's a challenge in that, now of course, it doesn't really say that as soon as something pops up, you've got to run away, no, no, no, you stand, not your ground, you stand God's ground, God's ground, not your ground, if you stand your ground, it's no good, stand God's ground, hold up the word of God, [00:29:11] the truth of scripture, and maintain it, and labour with those who are in error, it says here, you see, the servant of the Lord, ought not to contend, but be gentle toward all, apt to teach, forbearing in weakness, setting right those that oppose, you go on, do that as long as you can, I

mean clearly, of course, some people you can labour with for a long time, you can go on, others, of course, almost immediately, stick their heels in, and say, look, we're not wanting anything at all to do with that, and turn your back on you, and out, you're forced out, so, you see, you need guidance from God on these matters, in weakness, setting right those who oppose, but in the end, when they've shown their total unwillingness, total, complete unwillingness, to bow to the truth of God, then the call is to expurgate yourself from them, [00:30:10] it's not me that's saying it, dear saint of God, it's the word of God there, and this follows on from being known by God, the Lord knows them that are his, so, that's our responsibility here, the privilege of being known by the Lord Jesus Christ, and then these matters of responsibility in these three contexts, and then one precious blessing to finish off with, dear saint of God, how wonderful it is, you know, if this is what lifts us up, as a dear sister in this room, and, you know, often we can commune together as families and different ones, and, you know, she feels the burden of these matters, as I'm sure most of you do, but she says it's wonderful to know that the Lord is coming very soon, it's wonderful, you know, that she can get your heart in tune with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, [00:31:04] and there we have it in 1 Corinthians chapter 13, we see now through a dim window obscurity, through darkness, we don't quite see, you know, things there, we often say, the poet says, doesn't it, not till the moon is silent and the shuttles cease to fly, will God unveil the canvas and explain the reason why, the dark threads are as needful as the threads of silver and gold in the pattern he has woven in the story he has told, and we can't, you know, we're just seeing the other side at the moment, we can't really see things, the Lord Jesus said, didn't he, to Peter, what I do thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter, but we're seeing that dark, but then how precious it is, now I know this is, but then face to face, oh saint of God, face to face with Christ my saviour, dear brother Mr Darby must have been in the good of that one day when he says, and shall we see thy face, and hear thy heavenly voice, well known to us in present grace, well may our hearts rejoice, close to thy pierced side, in fellowship divine, no cloud, no distance ever shall hide, glorious that then shall shine, [00:32:27] oh to see his blessed face, to see his blessed face, and he wants to see our face even now, he says let me hear thy voice, let me see thy face, but we're going to see his blessed voice, we can respond to him, oh my haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a young heart upon the mountains of spices, oh we're longing to see his blessed face, face to face with Christ our saviour, face to face what shall it be, and now I know in part, yes, we know it partially, but then he says I shall know according as I have been known, there it is, there no stranger God shall meet thee, stranger thou in courts above, he who to his rest shall greet thee, greets thee with a well known love, oh saint of God, that's what we're going on to, we're treading this desert scene, but we're known of God, he knows us, and we're going into that blessed eternal scene, [00:33:22] where we shall be forever with our beloved Lord and Saviour in the Father's house and high, how precious it is, the bridegroom and the bride, seen in glory ever, all hearts then satisfied, the bride eyes not of garment, but her dear bridegroom's face, we will not gaze on glory, but on his pierced hand, the Lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's Lamb, what a blessed prospect lies before a saint of God, Satan is coming in, buffeting us, attacking us in every way, but we're hyped up with that which is going through, that which is going through, you know the challenge we always used to say in the gospel, what have you got that death cannot touch, saint of God, we've got loads, we've got that much laid up that death cannot touch, we're going through into it, and we can by the power of the spirit, enjoy it now to the full, may we know more of this in the days that remain till we see his blessed face, [00:34:18] John Bonnyman for his namesake, Amen.