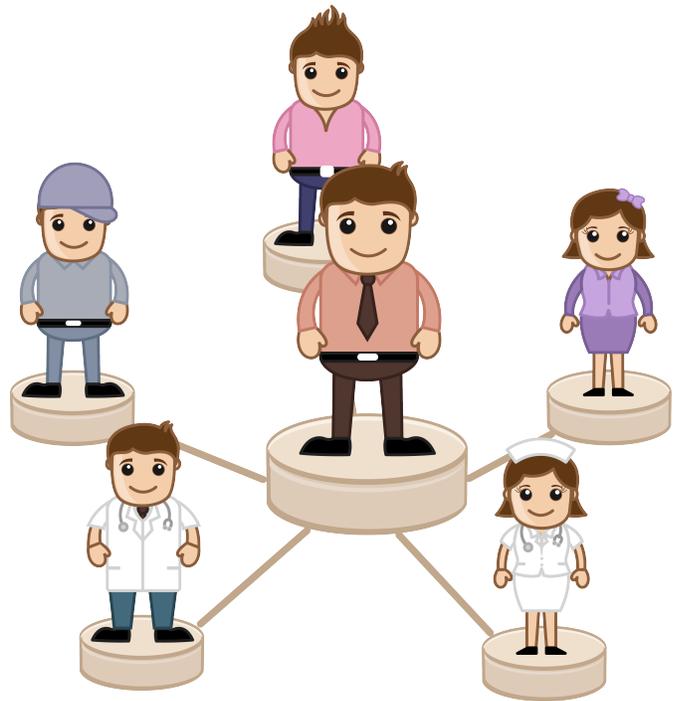


It's All About Who You Know

Paul reminds Titus that he was left in Crete to “set in order” some things yet to be done (**Titus 1:5**). While writing to Titus, Paul quotes a Cretan: “*Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons*” (**Titus 1:12**). Paul agrees with this observation and uses it to make a point about those who are defiled and unbelieving—even the defiled and unbelieving recognize they are such. In **Titus 1:16**, we learn that these defiled and unbelieving professed to know God. This was their claim or their confession. But they were dishonorable people and really denied that they knew God by their actions, irrespective of their high claim.



Still, it is a wonderful thing to know God. Regardless of the cost, the apostle Paul demonstrated the joy of knowing God. “*For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day*” (**2Timothy 1:12**). Paul knew God. We should know God, but what does this mean?

Knowing is Familiarity

Knowing God involves being acquainted with God. There is no way to know God without first being acquainted with him. That is one of the chief differences in being an Israelite and in being a Christian. “*FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, ‘KNOW THE LORD,’ FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM*” (**Hebrews 8:10-11**). Unlike the Israelites, who had to be told who they were because of birth, Christians know the Lord, for all must be taught to know Him and to respond from the heart to become a Christian.

Knowing is a Relationship

Knowing God, not only involves acquaintance but also involves a proper relationship with Him. In Scripture, this term “know” is used to describe the consummated marriage between the husband and the wife. Before Jesus’ birth, Mary was a virgin because Joseph did not “know” her (**Matthew 1:25**). Knowing God involves an intimate relationship also. W.E. Vine, in *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, says: “In the NT, *ginosko* frequently indicates a relation between the person knowing and the object known ... hence the establishment of a relationship ...” Without a doubt, knowing God involves an intimate relationship with Him, without which one does not know God.

Knowing is Doing What He Says

Knowing God also involves doing what he says. John said: *“We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error”* (**1John 4:6**). Doing what God says is the way we know that we know that we know God. *“By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments”* (**1John 2:3**). There must be a close connection here with **2Thessalonians 1:8** where the plight of the condemned is stated like this: *“dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”*

Knowing God also involves keeping on keeping his commandments. Notice what was written to the vacillating Galatians: *“However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?”* (**Galatians 4:8-9**).

Knowing is Maintaining A Good Attitude

While taking note of the several signs by which we can know whether or not we know God, we must not overlook that knowing God also involves having a good attitude. We must love God, love our brethren, and our fellow man. Bitterness, hate, harsh speaking, divisive actions, and such things show that people do not really know God. John said: *“The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love”* (**1John 4:8**).

Knowing is Understanding the Consequences

When people do not know God, they can do bad things to those who do. The Lord told his disciples that they would be mistreated by some because these did not know God. *“If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me”* (**John 15:20-21**). These things may seem strange, coming from people like the Cretans who professed to know God. Those who know God understand trials and tribulations from outside. Christians do not seek to please men for pleasure’s sake. In **1Thessalonians 4:1-5**, Christians are urged to walk to please God and not as the Gentiles walked who know not God.

Knowing is Heeding the Warning!

So, you know God! Wonderful! There is nothing else of more importance. However, we must not assume too much. Others knew and forgot. *“For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened”* (**Romans 1:21**). God gave these up even though they once knew Him. A word to the wise ought to be enough. It’s all about who you know!