

Know Part 1, by Rev. Joshua M. Knott, 04/22/07

Getting to know people, by asking questions, is a calling of every xn & we need to ratchet up our level of knowledge to be effective for the gospel

“Know” in the Scriptures is broader than facts

1st - Knowledge can mean both head & heart, both facts & the experience of those facts:

Genesis 3:4-5 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, *knowing* (עָרַף) good and evil."

Genesis 3:6-7 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they *knew* (עָרַף) that they were naked.

2nd Knowledge can mean “an intimate experience with”:

Genesis 4:1 Now Adam *knew* (עָרַף) Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD."

Adam “how are you?” Eve “fine, how are you?” 9 months later - “woah, where’d this kid come from?”

“Know” is only possible through God as creator & to “know” as in understand only through a relationship with God as redeemer

Creator -

Any & all “knowledge” is only possible because of the Creator’s design: in a general “common grace” sense (any knowledge is only possible through the image of God)

Prov. 24:30-34 informal scientific method

Biblical knowledge / “truth” (*understanding, experiencing, making sense of facts*) is only possible through a relationship with the Lord of Knowledge through the Spirit of Knowledge

True “knowledge,” we could say, is seeing things as they truly are through the insight of the One who made them. It is intimately related with Biblical “wisdom” (חָכְמָה) & understanding/insight (בִּינָה) - knowing what to *do* with the facts).

Knowledge is seeing things as they truly are. Truth can be defined as “what is really real.”

this is radical – you are not going to see your wife as Christ sees her without a relationship with Christ,...you are not going to be a God-glorifying scientist without knowing the God who designed these very things,...you are not going to be able to make sense of day-to-day life in a consistent, true [as-in-real] way without Christ.

[science though? Answer the obj.? nouthetic vs. integrationist]

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge (תֵּעָרָה); fools despise wisdom (חֵכְמָה) and instruction.

*[not just saving knowledge, but practical everyday kind of knowledge
Also - radical impact on trying to use reason & logical proofs to impart knowledge!]*

Gerstner / Sproul / McDowell – technique says “the fear of the Lord is the conclusion of knowledge”]

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom (חֵכְמָה); from his mouth come knowledge (תֵּעָרָה) and understanding (בִּינָה);

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom (חֵכְמָה), and the knowledge (תֵּעָרָה) of the Holy One is insight (בִּינָה).

^{ESV} **Isaiah 11:1-2** “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom (חֵכְמָה) and understanding (בִּינָה), the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge (תֵּעָרָה) and the fear of the LORD.”

[it’s all stored up in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit has the monopoly on it!]

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Just the facts? Christ was crucified. Everyone can *know* those facts. But most interpret, see, make sense of, the facts not through God’s eyes, but their own. Until we see the facts through the eyes of the God who made the facts, we will not see things as they truly are, we will not “know” them.

So knowledge is broader than just facts. To know God is not just to know facts about him, but to be in relationship with him. To know one another, is not just to know facts about one another, but to be in relationship with one another.

Knowledge must have its beginning & end in God – Else the best we find is the “wisdom of men” which is “foolishness” in God’s sight. We need Jesus to “know” both Him & one another, as well as the world around us.

???

Segue - But what’s the motivation for knowing one another? Where does it come from?

For many of us it’s a desire to change one another (pragmatism – I’m going to know my wife in order to change her,...),
for many of us it’s a desire to be liked by someone else (narcissism – I want to know someone else so they will think I’m worth knowing) ...but I want to suggest another motivation, a motivation, as you might suspect, grounded in Jesus Christ.

Trinitarian Foundation # 1 – Father, Son, & Spirit need one another & know one another intimately & perfectly.

John 17:20-26 ²⁰ "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. ²⁵ "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

Creation Foundation #2 – We have a built-in need to be known because we were made for meaningful relationships with God & one another. (Great Commandment)

Motivation #1 – Jesus knows you perfectly. Warts & all. For many of us that’s less comforting & more frightening. Because we know ourselves & we ain’t pretty.

And yet, Jesus comes to us like to the woman at the well. Saying, “I know exactly where you are, I know the sins you live in, I know you’ve had 5 husbands and you’re living with your boyfriend but unlike this whole village, unlike your 5 previous husbands, I know all that about you but I’m not going to run away from you.”

And this is not because we earned or deserved it. Jesus doesn’t do what we do, *overlooking* warts. He deals with them in full.

The good news for all of us this morning is that Jesus died for those very warts you try and hide from him and others & he clothes you in righteousness, and he knows you. And he does not leave you or forsake you because you are in Christ & Christ was forsaken & left once for all, *for you*.

God knows you perfectly. Jesus knows you perfectly. The Holy Spirit in you knows you perfectly. And it's only through Christ that you are fully known & at the same time not forsaken.

Psalm 139:1-4 O LORD, you have searched me and known me! ² You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. ³ You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴ Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.

Psalm 139:7-10 ⁷ Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! ⁹ If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

Matthew 6:7-8 ⁷ "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Philippians 4:19 ¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Why is this so important?

Because as we look at pouring ourselves, our time, our energy, into getting to KNOW other people,...the more you do that the greater your desire to be known. For somebody to care enough to ask you questions about who *you* are and how *you* are doing.

KNOWING other people is so often a one way street,...and you'll eventually give up because it's not "Rewarding" by which we mean, they don't care as much about me as I do about them.

And that's probably true. Let's just expect it.

If Jesus waited for a reciprocal relationship with us, he wouldn't approach any of us.

If Jesus relied on anyone other than his heavenly Father he'd be setting himself up for disappointment wouldn't he,...look at how often his disciples failed to listen to Him, how often they didn't "get" what was going on, they didn't "get" who he was,...these guys are falling asleep in prayer while the King of Glory is agonizing nearby.

The more you give, the more you pour yourself into knowing others, loving others, serving other, the more you will have the urge to have your emptiness filled by those around you

...but in that moment what we really need is to **exercise faith in Christ's sufficiency.**

To drink deeply from Jesus Christ, & draw strength & confidence from the fact that even if no one else ever cares to ask you a question, your God knows you & is with you.

Motivation # 2 – Jesus knows what you are going through because he went through far worse, (remember those three categories we referred to last week found in Romans 8 & Heb 2, bondage to decay, suffering under temptation, and persecution)

Jesus as the Wonderful Counselor “gets it” Tripp says.

Hebrews 4:14-16 ¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Even if nobody else understands what you are going through, Jesus does. Even if nobody else knows what it’s like to be you in the situation you are in, Jesus does. In those moments when you feel most alone, we are called to draw near the throne of grace with confidence because Jesus walked that path long before we did.

so here’s the logic as it applies to our relationships with one another – **because Jesus knows you, he knows exactly what you need & where you need to change & works towards that end by provoking you with the Spirit through the Word & other people.**

Segue –. We’re in Spring Training so that we might be more like Christ, right? Here’s where we begin to discuss **how** we can follow in the footsteps of the Wonderful Counselor & point other people to Christ,...we dwell with them, we love them, and then **we can not** heed the great commission to the best of our ability without really getting to know people.

Let me say it in another way.

Our ultimate goal is disciples of King Jesus (Mt 28:19-20) & the growth of his kingdom.

We help others get there by pointing people to Jesus where his fullness intersects with their deficiency, where his grace intersects with their weaknesses.

To do *that*, we need to get to know people lest we jump straight to yak-ing & lob “truth grenades [tripp’s term]” and duck for cover.

We mirror the Wonderful Counselor, when we, in our limited knowledge, seek to know people before we point out where things need to change.

It’s Wise & It’s Helpful

Silly illustration # 1– you go to the doctor’s office and he makes eye contact for a minute & writes you a prescription for Zantac. You’re thinking,...riiiiiiggghhhttt. So you’re not going to check me, put that stick down my throat, bonk my knees, ask me why I’m even here, look

me in the eye without asking me any questions and then you're going to write me a prescription because of some kickback incentive – apologies to any and all medical professionals I'm sure it's not true – & tell me what's on this piece of paper will fix me

That's often how we do discipleship. The kickback incentive could be another soul in heaven, we know enough about this person to know they are a sinner & we apply the Savior solution (potentially effective impersonal ministry). That can lead to new birth – but disciples aren't just born, they are grown.

That's often how we do our Bible studies/ small groups. We talk about God but we never go deeper with one another, we never get to know each other so in terms of the application to people's lives, we just toss-it-up “what do you think?” or lob truth grenades & hope it applies to someone in the room. Everything stays on the surface. Everything is assumed.

But people's souls are at stake.

People live alternate lives, and we accept the ruse because we know we're the same. So we're content to keep our Bible studies at the level of family night supper – the facts, small talk.

Keep the questions light, keep the mood cheerful, or sanctify it by tossing in a few “God is sovereigns” and we call this “ministry”?

[the class then discussed reasons we do not engage people deeper than casual conversation, & that list of objections & impediments is repeated in the 04/29/07 Sunday school class]

Questions Are ministry:

“When I ask you questions you would never ask yourself, I am teaching you to view yourself through biblical lenses...when I do this, I am incarnating the Messiah who came to give sight to blind eyes...perhaps my questions will help you begin to see how Scripture explains your life,...will convict your heart & lead you to new levels of repentance. Asking good questions *is* doing the work of change. Through them, we give sight to blind eyes and understanding to dull minds, we soften hardened hearts, encourage flagging souls, and stir hunger that can only be filled by the truth. This not only builds a platform for the work the Messiah does through us- *it is that work!*”

This frees us up to be creative with our questions, to be Christ-centered with our questions. To not worry so much about having answers before we ask good questions.

All quotes are from Paul Tripp's *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* unless otherwise noted. All Scripture references are taken from the English Standard Version