

I Believe in God, But I Don't Know Him — Week 4

- Who is the one person that truly knows you best? Describe how your relationship with that person is unlike any other relationship in your life.

We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

1 John 2:3-4 (NIV)

- Describe a time or situation when you knowingly disobeyed God. What were the consequences of your actions? What did you learn from this situation?
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Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. But now that you know God-or rather are known by God-how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

Galatians 4:8-9 (NIV)

- Describe a time when you had an intimate experience with God. How did that experience affect your faith and relationship with Him?
- Discuss some ways you believe we can become more intimate with God.

God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. .

Psalms 9:10 (NIV)

- Some people believe in God, but don't know Him. Some people know Him, but not well. Some know Him intimately and serve Him wholeheartedly. Discuss which of these best describes you right now and why?

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:17-19 (NIV)

The Four typical characteristics of Practical Atheists:

- Believe in God, but don't fear him.
- Believe in God, but don't want to go overboard.
- Believe in God, but trust in money.
- Believe in God, but don't know Him.
- Which message in this series had the most impact on you and why?
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- What do you sense that God is wanting to change in your relationship with Him? Are you ready to go there?

Final thought: With your group and during your personal prayer time this week ask God for a deeper, more intimate relationship with Him. Ask Him to help you grow so your relationship with Him will become intimate beyond anything you could ever imagine.

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For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and Scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

Open

Describe what your life was like before coming to know Christ. How was your life changed when you entered into an intimate relationship with Him?

Explore

Read Matthew 7:15-23. In this passage Jesus compares true disciples as being like trees that bear fruit.

Against whom did Jesus warn us? Why? (7:15)
What do false prophets look like on the outside? (7:15)
What are false prophets like inwardly? (7:15)
How did Christ say we could recognize false prophets? (7:16, 20)
What does nature reveal about a tree and its fruit? (7:16)
What kind of fruit do good trees bear? Why? (7:17-18)
What type of produce grows on bad trees? Why? (7:17-18)
What happens to trees that fail to produce good fruit? (7:18)
Who will enter the kingdom of heaven? (7:21)
How will some people try to talk their way into heaven? (7:22)
What credentials or accomplishments will some people claim? (7:22)

How will Jesus respond to these impostors? (7:23)
What is necessary for entry into heaven? (7:23)

Reflect

Why do you think we continue to sin if we have Christ in our heart and the Holy Spirit in our lives?
What does this passage tell us about the importance of doing good works?
How do good works and salvation fit together?
How can people be "religious" yet not follow Christ?
What kind of good works have you been working to produce lately?
What evidence in your life points others to your relationship with Jesus?

Apply

What are some specific things you can do this week that will help you allow God to cultivate a deeper relationship with you?

In what area of your life right now do you have the greatest opportunity to increase your good works?