



*For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth... in every place. (1 Thessalonians 1:8)*

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## KNOWING GOD

**W**hat does it mean to know God? Depending on who you ask you may get many different answers. However, many in the religious world would say that it is having a personal relationship with Him. Which, in fact, is a part of it. Yet, a relationship with God is not what many think. Some use this term to promote emotionalism. It is true, Christianity involves emotion but that is not all there is to it. If we really want understand what knowing God means, why not look at how He defines it? Notice Jeremiah 22:13-16, “Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by injustice, who uses his neighbor's service without wages and gives him nothing for his work, who says, 'I will build myself a wide house with spacious chambers, and cut out windows for it, paneling it with cedar and painting it with vermilion.' Shall you reign because you enclose yourself in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink, and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Was not this knowing Me?” says the LORD.”

God tells us exactly what knowing Him means. Here the Lord is condemning Shallum, Josiah's son, for his wickedness. In contrast to Josiah, Shallum was a wicked man who abused the children of Israel for his own prosperity. In verses 15-16 we see that Josiah lived a righteous life before God. Then, God says at the end of verse 16, “was not this knowing Me?” Josiah knew who God was and that was evident in his life. Let's look at the criteria set before us to determine whether we know God or not.

While Josiah was alive he did “justice, and righteousness” (v. 15). The KJV says “judgment and justice”. The idea here is that, unlike Shallum, Josiah

behaved himself properly in his role as a king and in his role as a follower of God. Shallum took advantage of the Jews and oppressed them so that he could live in abundance. Josiah made sure that all had what they needed. This goes hand-in-hand with what is mentioned in verse 16, “he judged the cause of the poor and needy...” Josiah made it a point to help those who were in need. Is that not what we are to do as well? In Galatians 6:10 Paul wrote, “therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” When we get the chance to help someone who is truly in need we ought to help them. I believe that is exactly what Josiah did. If you were to read passages such as Matthew 25:31-46 you will see that it is impossible to enter heaven if we neglect those who are less fortunate than we. Not only did Josiah live properly as a king but likewise as a servant of God's. At only eight years old he became king, then when he was twenty-six they found the Book of the Law and he lead the nation back to God (2 Kings 22). This reminds me of another passage in Micah 6:8, “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?” Yes, we must treat one another with respect, and love but we need to keep the Lord's commandments as well. Jesus said in John 15:14, “you are my friends if you do whatever I command you.”

Knowing God means having a relationship with Him. Having relationship with Him means that we treat one another correctly and follow His commands. Do you know God?

Renn Ferguson