

john 15:4  
**A** **b** **i** **d** **e** **i**n **M** **E**



Bible studies for disciples who make disciples

Loudonville Community Church

Volume 4 - Number 4  
The week of November 4, 2018

Sermon Series: *The Real Thing*  
Walking as Jesus Walked  
1 John 2:3-6

**THIS WEEK'S CORE STATEMENT**

**Constant Abiding** *John 15:1-11*

Abiding in Christ in order to be faithful and bear fruit.

**Knowing God<sup>1</sup>**

An Excerpt from J.I. Packer's classic work,  
*Knowing God*

In the case of human beings, the position is further complicated by the fact that, unlike horses, people keep secrets. They do not show everybody all that is in their hearts. A few days are enough to get to know a horse as well as you will ever know it, but you may spend months and years doing things in company with another person and still have to say at the end of that time, "I don't really know him at all." We recognize degrees in our knowledge of our fellow men. We know them, we say, well, not very well, just to shake hands with, intimately, or perhaps inside out, according to how much, or how little, they have opened up to us.

Thus, the quality and extent of our knowledge of other people depends more on them than on us. Our knowing them is more directly the result of their allowing us to know them than of our attempting to get to know them. When we meet, our part is to give them our attention and interest, to show them good will and to open up in a friendly way from our side. From that point, however, it is they, not we, who decide whether we are going to know them or not.

Imagine, now, that we are going to be introduced to someone whom we feel to be "above" us - whether in rank, or intellectual distinction, or professional skill, or personal sanctity, or in some other respect. The more conscious we are of our own inferiority, the more we shall feel that our part is simply to attend to this person respectfully and let him take the initiative in the conversation. (Think of meeting the queen of England or the president of the United States.) We would like to get to know this exalted person, but we fully realize that this is a matter for him to decide, not us. If he confines himself to courteous formalities with us, we may be disappointed, but we do not feel able to complain; after all, we had no claim on his friendship.

But if instead he starts at once to take us into his confidence, and tells us frankly what is in his mind on matters of common concern, and if he goes on to invite us to join him in particular undertakings he has planned, and asks us to make ourselves permanently available for this kind of collaboration whenever he needs us, then we shall feel enormously privileged, and it will make a world of difference to our general outlook. If life seemed unimportant and dreary hitherto, it will not seem so anymore, now that the great man has enrolled us among his personal assistants. Here is something to write home about - and something to live up to!

Now this, so far as it goes, is an illustration of what it means to know God. Well might God say through Jeremiah, "Let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me"—for knowing God is a relationship calculated to thrill a person's heart.

What happens is that the almighty Creator, the Lord of hosts, the great God before whom the nations are as a drop in a bucket, comes to you and begins to talk to you through the words and truths of Holy Scripture. Perhaps you have been acquainted with the Bible and Christian truth for many years, and it has meant little to you; but one day you wake up to the fact that God is actually speaking to you—you!—through the biblical message. As you listen to what God is saying, you find yourself brought very low; for God talks to you about your sin, and guilt, and weakness, and blindness, and folly, and compels you to judge yourself hopeless and helpless, and to cry out for forgiveness.

But this is not all. You come to realize as you listen that God is actually opening his heart to you, making friends with you and enlisting you as a colleague - in Barth's phrase, *a covenant partner*. It is a staggering thing, but it is true – the relationship in which sinful human beings know God is one in which God, so to speak, takes them onto his staff, to be henceforth his fellow workers (see 1 Cor 3:9) and personal friends. The action of God in taking Joseph from prison to become Pharaoh's prime minister is a picture of what he does to every Christian: from being Satan's prisoner, you find yourself transferred to a position of trust in the service of God. At once life is transformed.

Whether being a servant is a matter for shame or for pride depends on whose servant one is. Many have said what pride they felt in rendering personal service to Sir Winston Churchill during World War II. How much more should it be a matter of pride and glorying to know and serve the Lord of heaven and earth!

What, then, does the activity of knowing God involve? Holding together the various elements involved in this relationship, as we have sketched it out, we must say that knowing God involves, first, listening to God's Word and receiving it as the Holy Spirit interprets it, in application to oneself; second, noting God's nature and character, as his Word and works reveal it; third, accepting his invitations and doing what he commands; fourth, recognizing and rejoicing in the love that he has shown in thus approaching you and drawing you into this divine fellowship.

<sup>1</sup> J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, InterVarsity Press, 1973, pp. 35-37.

## STEP ONE . . .

### OBSERVATION

*What does the text say?*

#### 1 John 2:3-6

<sup>3</sup>And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.

<sup>4</sup>Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, <sup>5</sup>but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: <sup>6</sup>whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

- Double underline the word "*this*" (v. 3a) and draw an arrow to the phrase "*keep his commandments*" (v. 3b).
- Circle every time the words "*know*" and "*truth*" appear in the passage.
- Underline the phrase "*whoever says*" in verses 4 and 6. Below the statement in quotation marks in verse 4, write the word, "Gnostics."
- Write in the margin to the right of v. 4, "their claim."
- Place brackets around the word "*keep*" in verses 3, 4 and "*keeps*" in verse 5.
- Draw a double ended arrow connecting "*his commandments*" (vs. 3 & 4) to "*his word*" (v. 5).
- Place a (1) over the word "*liar*" (v. 4) and a (2) over "*the truth is not in him.*" In the margin to the right, write the word "consequences."

## STEP TWO . . .

### INTERPRETATION

*What does the text mean?*

#### Commentary

**3 And by this we know that we have come to know him.** **By this** is a key phrase in 1 John, occurring 12 times. It can be translated, “we can be sure.” **We know** [*ginosko*]: knowing something to be the case or to know fully. John wants us to know that we can have assurance with a continual awareness. **Know Him** [*ginosko*]; knowing God the Father through His Son, Jesus.

**if we keep his commandments.** We cannot claim to know Jesus if we do not do what He says. **Commandments.** Used no less than 14 times in 1 John. Most likely, John was not thinking of the Mosaic Law as summarized in the Ten Commandments. When John used the singular form of the word, he was referring to the command to love one another. When used in the plural, it means that we believe in Christ *and* do what He commands, which includes the command to love one another. Obedience is a sign and not the condition for knowing God in a settled sense.

**4 Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments. Whoever says.** A warning. John refutes the claim of the Others that they could know God without keeping His commandments. “I know Him” [*egnoka*]: The Others claimed to know God. **But does not keep.** Literally, “but does not do.” The word **keep** or **do** is in the present tense and conveys the idea of guarding. The life of a true Christian will be characterized by keeping Jesus’ commandments.

**Is a liar, and the truth is not in him. Liar ... truth not in him:** These two statements are meant to be understood as synonymous. God’s truth is not at work in those whose lives are characterized by disobedience.

**5 but whoever keeps his word.** The verb is in the present tense, depicting ongoing obedience or a pattern of life.

**In him truly the love of God is perfected.** The first mention of the word **love** in 1 John. Views: This may refer to (1) our love for God, or (2) God’s love for us. While either sense is acceptable, in the message Paul took it to mean *our love for God*. Those who obey God, His love is **perfected** in them, i.e. brought to completion or reached its goal. **The love of God:** the believers love for God. Love for God completes its purpose in us when demonstrated by our obedience.

**By this we may know that we are in him.** Parallels verse 3. Foreshadows the concept of remaining in Him. It is best to read v. 5b with what follows than what preceded it.

**6 whoever says he abides in him.** Literally, “whoever claims to live in Him.” The concept of abiding occurs ten times in 1 John. It refers to the very real spiritual reality that all true believers enjoy.

**Ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.** Literally, “ought also himself be walking as that One walked.” Answers how we know whether we are in Him.







**STEP FOUR . . .**

**APPLYING** the passage to my life  
*Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the Word but doers ~ James 1:22*

You're encouraged to journal your answers to the following questions in order to apply what you've learned this week.

1. How is God making Himself known to you?
2. What is going on beneath the surface of your life that Jesus is trying to change?
3. How is God calling you to serve your family, community, and world?

**THE MISSION OF LOUDONVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH**

We are committed to reaching and teaching people to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ, connecting them to one another and sending them to serve their families, communities and world.

**10 CORE PRACTICES OF A DISCIPLE**

**Undiluted Worship** *Matthew 22:37-40*

Loving the Lord God with all of our physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual vigor and, my neighbor as myself.

**Constant Abiding** *John 15:1-11*

Abiding in Christ in order to be faithful and bear fruit.

**Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

Reading the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for daily life.

**Desperate Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

Praying to God to know Him, laying requests before Him and finding direction for daily life.

**Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

Fellowshipping with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, other people's lives and, in the world.

**Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

Using my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

**Total Forgiveness** *Ephesians 4:30*

Practicing forgiving others as God has forgiven me in Christ.

**Tangible Compassion** *Matthew 25:31-46*

Showing compassion to those in need and so minister to Jesus Himself.

**Generous Giving** *2 Corinthians 8:7*

Giving away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

**God Space** *Ephesians 6:19-20*

Increasing the quantity and quality of our gospel conversations.

**2018: BOOK-AT-A-TIME ONE YEAR BIBLE READING PLAN**  
(on LCC website)

**Sunday, November 4 thru Saturday, November 10, 2018**  
**Ezekiel 31-34, Psalm 128-129; Ezekiel 35-38, Psalm 130-131;**  
**Ezekiel 39-42, Psalm 132; Ezekiel 43-45, Psalm 133-134;**  
**Ezekiel 46-48, Psalm 135; John 1-3, Psalm 136**

**Verse for Memorization**

**6** Whoever says he abides in him  
ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

**1 John 2:6**