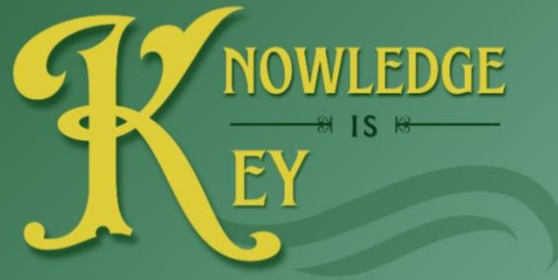


# KNOWLEDGE IS KEY



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In the previous lesson “[The Fear of the Lord Pt. 1](#)” we began with a general overview on the subjects of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding throughout the Bible. We looked at how these three function together and the important roles they play in our walk with God.

In this lesson we will begin in the book of Proverbs, because of its emphasis on these principles. We could probably even do an entire study just in the book of Proverbs. But rather than doing that, we will briefly review a scripture that was part of our last lesson - this time focusing on the subject of knowledge. In Proverbs chapter 2, let's read verses 1 through 11.

### Proverbs 2:1-11

*<sup>1</sup> My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; <sup>2</sup> So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;*

<sup>3</sup> Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; <sup>4</sup> If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; <sup>5</sup> Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

<sup>7</sup> He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

<sup>8</sup> He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. <sup>9</sup> Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path. <sup>10</sup> When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; <sup>11</sup> Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

So, we see Solomon here in the beginning of Proverbs, laying the foundation of how important these three things are (knowledge, wisdom, and understanding).

If we step back and think about the subject of knowledge in particular, it is really something that we often take for granted. We normally don't think about knowledge because we are constantly gaining it. At any given moment there is so much information all around us, which we are continually taking in as new knowledge. Whether you are listening to the radio, watching TV, scrolling through the internet, listening to family and friends, or even just looking around. We are constantly gaining knowledge and information, to the point that we don't really value the role it plays in our everyday lives.

So, in this lesson I want to focus on knowledge itself. Take a moment and think, what is knowledge? And what are some of the things that the Bible tells us about it?

## WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?

Without getting too deep into the original languages, these are some of the words used for "knowledge" in the Bible.

**Noun:** *Knowledge*

- Hebrew: דַּעַת - *da'at*
- Greek: γνῶσις – *gnosis*

**Verb:** *Knowing, known, to know, knew, knoweth*

- Hebrew: יָדָע - *yâda'*
- Greek: γινώσκω – *ginōskō*

Some of the dictionary definitions of knowledge are:

1. The fact or condition of *knowing* something with familiarity gained through experience or association.
2. The fact or condition of being aware of something.
3. The range of one's information or understanding.

Generally speaking, knowledge is basically information. It is the facts about a subject. But if we look a bit deeper into what it actually means to “know” at its core, it is actually the *joining* together of two things in a subjective sense. For example, when you come to know something, the information that is “out there” becomes joined to you... Or you actually join yourself with that information and you become one. So, there is a joining of two things: the information that is out there, which you did not know... and yourself. When you come to know the information, there is a joining together.

So that is just one of the ways that you can look at knowledge and how we take in facts and information. This is from a subjective point of view. **Joining the information to yourself is *how* we gain knowledge.**

*(Side note: We will see the joining of two things together from an objective point of view in one of the upcoming lessons)*

Nevertheless, hopefully we can now see that knowledge is a vast subject which is often overlooked. So where do we go from here? Well... what better place to go than the beginning? So let's go to the book of Genesis. Starting there we will see that knowledge is actually a central topic brought up throughout the entire Bible, and it plays an important role right from the beginning. Going to Genesis chapter 2, which tells about creation. In verse 9 we read:

### **Genesis 2:9**

*<sup>9</sup> And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

So we see right there - we barely made it two chapters into the Bible and there we have 'knowledge'. This whole thing centers around an aspect of knowledge. A lot of times we only focus in on the part about good and evil, but it was actually the tree of *knowledge*... of good and evil. And if we continue a bit further to verse 16, it says:

### **Genesis 2:16-17**

*<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: <sup>17</sup> But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

So, like I said, here it is even from the beginning. Looking at the big picture, this was the beginning of man's predicament – man's problem, the sin problem. It actually centered around an aspect of knowledge, the knowledge of good and evil.

If we continue on to chapter 3, we will see it again when Satan came to Eve tempting her to eat from that tree. The serpent asked 'What did God say about the trees in the garden?' and then the devil gives his spin on things in verse 5 where he says:

### Genesis 3:5

*<sup>5</sup> For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

So, here we see two different types of knowing. And it is easy to miss all of these places where knowledge and knowing are part of the whole account. First, it says "For God doth **know**..." Then the serpent concludes with "ye shall be as gods, **knowing** good and evil." Next in verse 6 we read:

### Genesis 3:6-7

*<sup>6</sup> And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

*<sup>7</sup> And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

So in verses 6 and 7, which tell of Eve's assessment of the tree of knowledge (of good and evil), we also see another principle mentioned. It says that she saw it as "a tree to be desired to make one **wise**". So, there is another one of our three principles (knowledge, wisdom, and understanding). And after it says they did eat... then what happened? They **knew**.

Just in these few verses we can see how important knowledge is, all the way back to the root of man's condition on earth. But I don't want to go too far into the subject of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. That is a study all by itself if you dig into all of its implications. But we will continue on with the general theme of knowledge.

A little bit further, in Genesis chapter 4 verse 1 it says "And Adam *knew* Eve his wife; and she conceived." So, we see that one of the other forms of 'knowledge' is used to describe a man and his wife coming together. As stated earlier, two things coming together is at the root of the meaning of knowledge. This is why the Bible uses the word to 'know' in order to explain a man and his wife coming together.

So those are just a few instances from the beginning, showing that knowledge is an important aspect in the Bible. Now the question is... what do *you* know? Or what is it that you *should* know? More importantly what is it that you *must* know? There are obviously many things that we can know like the score of a sports game, or you can know the weather, etc. **But what are the things that we need to know - and what is it that we must know?**

- Number 1 - We must have the knowledge of God. That's the number one thing.
- Number 2 - We must have the knowledge of His will and His way.

## KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

The first place we will go to is John chapter 17, keeping our focus on what we must know. We have studied these verses in other lessons, but I want us to pay attention to how knowledge fits into this. In John chapter 17 we read the prayer of Jesus to the Father before going to the cross. It says:

### John 17:1-3

*<sup>1</sup> These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: <sup>2</sup> As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*

*<sup>3</sup> And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

Here Jesus is saying that the eternal life that God has provided (which we desire) - is that we *know* the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. So we see the importance of knowledge, and the knowledge of God in particular.

It is interesting when we realize that the original *problem* of sin and death came by eating from the tree of **knowledge** of good and evil and that the *remedy* to that problem which is eternal life, comes when we **know** the only true God through Jesus Christ.

Continuing on, we will look at a few more verses that show the importance of the knowledge of God. In chapter 1 of Paul's letter to the Colossians he writes:

### Colossians 1:9-10

*<sup>9</sup> For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;*

**Note:** So, there we see all three together once again, as we saw back in Proverbs. The knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

<sup>10</sup> That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Here in Paul's communication to the church he emphasized his desire that they walk worthy and be filled with **the knowledge of God's will**. He also desired that they increase in **the knowledge of God**. Continuing to chapter 2 of Colossians, and beginning in verse 1 we read:

### **Colossians 2:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

<sup>2</sup> That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

<sup>3</sup> In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

As Paul wrote concerning the church in Laodicea, we see his desire that their hearts also be comforted in the "full assurance of *understanding*". He goes further to mention the mystery of God the Father and of Christ "In whom are hid all the treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge*." Again, we see all three principles mentioned together.

We will now go over to the book of 2 Peter. We just read a bit from Paul, and now we will see what Peter says regarding knowledge. Right from the beginning of his letter in chapter 1 verses 5 through 10 we read:

### **2 Peter 1:5-10**

<sup>5</sup> And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

<sup>6</sup> And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; <sup>7</sup> And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

<sup>8</sup> For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>9</sup> But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. <sup>10</sup> Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

So, we all know this list of things that Peter here is encouraging the church to grow in. He says to add to your faith virtue (or goodness), and then add to your virtue, *knowledge*. So, we see knowledge itself is actually listed in these things that we are encouraged as Christians to add to our faith. It also says that having all of these things listed, will cause us to be fruitful and keep us from falling. That is right in the beginning of the letter. And if we go to the *end* of chapter 3, we even see it again in the way that he concludes the letter. 2 Peter chapter 3 verse 18 says:

## 2 Peter 3:18

*<sup>18</sup> But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

Those are just a few places where the scriptures talk about the importance of growing in the knowledge of God and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. As we can see, the topic of knowledge is truly throughout the Bible from the beginning to the end.

## LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

We will now look briefly at the flip side of things, where the Bible shows some of the consequences of rejecting knowledge. One example that we also touched on in the previous lesson is found in Hosea 4:6.

## Hosea 4:6

*<sup>6</sup> My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

This shows how important it is to have knowledge. Without it, the people perish. And even once we have the knowledge, what we then do with it is important as well. Do we reject it and turn from it? Or do we embrace it and act on what we know?

By going to 2 Timothy chapter 3, we see Paul's warning to Timothy about how people would be in the last days. Starting in verse 1 it says:

## 2 Timothy 3:1-7

*<sup>1</sup> This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*

**Note:** People often wonder if we are in the last days now, because we see many in the world behaving like this...

*<sup>2</sup>For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup>Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, <sup>4</sup>Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*

*<sup>5</sup>Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. <sup>6</sup>For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,*

**Note:** And then in verse 7...

*<sup>7</sup>Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

So in all those things, he sums up this category of people as ever learning, but never coming to the **knowledge** of the truth. This is similar to what is written back in 2 Peter, where he also warns about false prophets and false teachers. As we read, pay close attention to how he describes them beginning in chapter 2 verse 17.

## **2 Peter 2:17-22**

*<sup>17</sup>These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. <sup>18</sup>For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. <sup>19</sup>While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*

*<sup>20</sup>For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.*

*<sup>21</sup>For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*

*<sup>22</sup>But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

So, there we see Peter admonishing against going astray. He gives warning that there would be false prophets and false teachers who would come into the church. And then verses 20 and 21 are very powerful, particularly where it says that if they had escaped the pollutions of the world **through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ...** and then afterwards are entangled and overcome, the outcome is that **it would have been better for them not to have known** the way of righteousness, rather than know it and then turn from it. These verses highlight the extreme value in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.



## KEY OF KNOWLEDGE

Just as we see Paul and Peter addressing the problem of false prophets and teachers rejecting knowledge, Jesus also admonished a group of people that were “ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” - the scribes and Pharisees. These people spent much of their time talking about and studying scripture, but they never truly came to know the truth. And in Luke 11 we read the words of Jesus to them. Starting in verse 52 it reads:

### Luke 11:52

<sup>52</sup> *Woe unto you, lawyers!*

**Note:** That's another word used for scribes and Pharisees because they studied the law.

<sup>52</sup> *Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge:  
ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.*

It may not be clear what Jesus is speaking about when He says "the key of knowledge". But if we compare it to Matthew's account of this interaction, it will help us to know what He meant by "the key of knowledge". In Matthew 23 verse 13 it reads:

### Matthew 23:13

<sup>13</sup> *But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.*

It is sobering to think that these people who knew God's word and studied the scriptures, were the very ones who weren't entering the Kingdom themselves. And not only that, the scribes and Pharisees were hindering others from finding the way to enter in. By “shutting up the kingdom of heaven” they had “taken away the key of knowledge”. **The Key of Knowledge is to enter into the Kingdom.**

This verse could even apply to those today who teach false ways of 'salvation'. Some even say that there are “*many* paths to God”, but if it is not the true way, then what they are doing in essence is making it harder for people to find the **one true way**. And when it comes to that Way, we can look to God's word to show us. We need to *know* the true way of salvation in order to enter into the Kingdom.

## HIS WAY

We find some information about the way of salvation in the first chapter of Luke. It is a verse that often seems to be overlooked, but it is very helpful in coming to know and understand salvation. Starting in Luke chapter 1 verse 76 we read an important prophecy that was given about John the Baptist shortly after his birth.

### Luke 1:76-77

*<sup>76</sup> And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways: <sup>77</sup> To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,*

So again we see that key word 'knowledge'. And it says here that somehow John the Baptist was going to be the one to **bring the knowledge of salvation to the people**.

We don't normally think of that; we usually think of Jesus when it comes to anything about salvation... so, how is it that John the Baptist is the one who brought the *knowledge of salvation*? Well it says here, '**by the remission of their sins**'. It was also prophesied here that he "shalt go before the face of the Lord **to prepare His ways**". We read about the fulfillment of this prophecy in Mark 1:4 where it says "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

This is the same message that was preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost, with the exception that baptism is now to be done "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38).

In Luke 20 verse 4, we even see Jesus question the scribes and chief priests about what John the Baptist was doing, when He asked them "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" And they could not answer. So if we understand what this all means - John the Baptist fulfilled the prophecy and brought the *knowledge of salvation* by what he was doing, which was preaching repentance and baptism for the remission of sins. That is how he brought the *knowledge of salvation* to the people and prepared **the Way**.

If we continue looking further into the role of knowledge in salvation, there is something interesting in Acts chapter 2 that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. Starting in verse 25, we see him quoting the Psalms...

### Acts 2:25-28

*<sup>25</sup> For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: <sup>26</sup> Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: <sup>27</sup> Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

<sup>28</sup> *Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.*

In this scripture we see deep revelation into the gospel (the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ). But I want to focus in on the blessing spoken of in verse 28: "**thou hast made known to me the ways of life...**"

Can you say that for yourself? Has the Lord made known to you the way of life? If He has, you should appreciate that blessing. Not everyone has that blessing; not everyone has the true knowledge of salvation. But if you *do* know The Way, the right thing to do with that information is act on it - that is wisdom. And Lord willing, we will turn our attention to wisdom in the next lesson.

### ***Exodus 33:13***

<sup>13</sup> *Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.*