

Today;

We will seek to know God in a way we may have not yet considered.

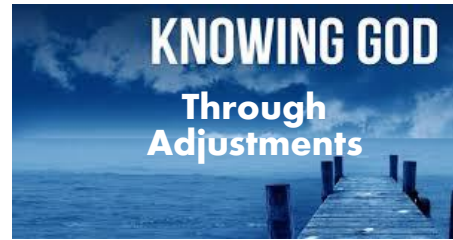
As a matter of fact,

This is a message you will either love or hate.

It will either inspire you or discourage you.

You will either want to return here or never come back again.

You may even curse the day you were born.



We are talking about knowing God. We have been learning that we know God in many ways:

- His will
- His church
- In love
- In the marketplace
- In His kingdom
- When He speaks His word

But today will be the biggest challenge of them all.

Knowing God Through Adjustments.

Did you ever consider that if you are going to follow after God and really get to know Him, you would have to make some adjustments in your life? I mean some real adjustments; lifestyle adjustments.

The interesting thing is, for some people, this is easy and for others it is impossible. And this is why.

If you're going to build a house, you need a good foundation.

If you're going on a trip, you need to know where you are and then plot your destination.

I believe most people that name the name of Christ as Savior failure to do this.

So,

In order to know God through adjustments, this is where we begin.

*Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

And yet,

This is not original with the Apostle Paul, because Jesus proclaimed in:  
**Lu 9:23** *And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.*

**v.24** *"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.*

**v.25** *"For what is a man profited if he gains the whole*

How serious was Jesus about faith?

I would say that you could not be more serious.

He understood the meaning and value of faith in comparison to indifference and compromise.

We will come back to visit what Jesus said shortly.

But first, let's look at a firsthand situation where 3 men did not see the meaning and value of faith in following Christ.

Let's stay with Luke and go to ch. 14;

This is a picture of the heart of God.

**Lu 14:16** *A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many;*

This man was wealthy, hospitable and wanted to share his joy with others.

*He invited* "many" those who were close and dear to him

Originally, this referred to the nation of Israel.

For our purposes, it refers to those who are near and dear to Christ.

**v.17** *and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'*

In the ancient Middle East, a two-fold invitation was sent to those invited:

1. the day of the event

2. the hour the event would take place

Therefore,

If someone responded to the invitation and said "yes" they would be attending, then later on, the second invitation went out for the hour.

**v.17** *and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'*

**v.18** *But they all alike began to make excuses.*

We have 3 types of excuses as to why the men refused to attend, even after they said they would.

*The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land (field, pasture for grazing animals) and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.'*

"excuses" to beg off, decline, shun, reject

*please consider me excused.* rejected

**v.1 9** *Another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.'*

Actually,

He should have "tried them out" before he bought them.

So far.

The man bought a field but it wasn't going anywhere!

The second man bought some oxen which could have been proven anytime.

**v.20** *Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'*

Either he just got married or he is having his own dinner party.

I'm sure his wife was welcome to attend along with his other friends.

This man was more dogmatic than the first two:

He said "I cannot come."

He is saying, his situation makes it impossible to fulfill his promise to attend the dinner that he said he would attend.

What is salvation but an acceptance of God's:

- Forgiveness
- Spiritual gifts
- Purpose for our lives (His will)

When you said Yes to Christ, you said Yes to these things.

As the Apostle Paul said;

*I Cor 6:20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*

Now;

I wonder if any of us are in this story.

1. *'I have bought a piece of land (field)*

*Mt 13:38 Jesus said; the field is the world;*

So here is someone who has taken their interests from Christ and placed them in the world.

He has given himself over to business, pleasure and personal pursuits.

2. *I have bought five yoke of oxen*

I have some new possessions that I must tend to:

- A new house
- A new car
- A new job

I don't have time for my commitment to the king.

He has given himself over to the temporal from the eternal.

3. *I have married a wife*

It is impossible for me to come. She won't let me! She has too many demands.

She is what you call "high maintenance."

Yet,

Jesus also said;

**Lu 14:26** *If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.*

"hate" *miseo* – often it means to detest

But here it means to "love less"

He gave the fifth Commandment which says to "Honor your father and mother."

Here,

Jesus is speaking about choice when someone opposes Christ.

This is very challenging so how do I carry this out?

Remember,

I said you would either love or hate this message.

You will either return or never come back again.

Let's go back where we started.

**Lu 9:23** *And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.*

"deny" disavow, refuse (yourself) not excuse!

When it comes to God's invitation to serve Him, do you refuse your own self or excuse yourself?

You see,

We're talking about Knowing God through Adjustments!

Secondly;

*Take up his cross DAILY!*

So,

Here comes the Apostle Paul, who did just that.

*Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I*

*live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

You cannot follow someone and stay where you are.

You must leave where you are.

This takes denial of self.

That requires loving Christ more than self and all others.

Many people make adjustments:

- Ship's captains
- Football coaches
- Surgeons
- Serious followers of Christ make lifestyle adjustments.