

# Known By Jesus

## Introduction

- Jesus said, *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.”* (Matt 7:21-23)
- Throughout the Bible we see the idea of “knowing” God constantly being highlighted. It’s more than just a mental acknowledgement or a basic belief in God, but an obedient and faithful relationship we enjoy (1 Cor 8:2-3; James 2:19-20). The definition of the Greek word translated as “know” highlights the great relationship we must have with God: γινώσκω | ginōskō - to learn to know a person through direct personal experience, implying a continuity of relationship. Similarly, the Hebrew word for “know” also carries with it the same idea: יָדָע | yada` - to associate with one another, normally involving spacial proximity.
- Does Jesus know you? Do you know Jesus? Specifically, do you have an intimate and obedient relationship with the King? Let’s look together at two stories where men were using the name of Jesus to cast out demons, as Jesus mentions in Matthew 7, and see that only those who know Jesus can be successful in their work.
- Consider Mark 9:38-41 and Acts 19:13-17, and then let’s make some application for our own lives.

## Tolerance For The Known

- **Unnecessary Dividing Lines** - Mark 9:38-40
  - John is not happy about a certain man using the name of Jesus to cast out demons, especially someone who wasn’t among the small band of disciples with Jesus. While John wants to stop him, Jesus has a very different message. *“Do not stop him ...”* Jesus replies, indicating that John is totally off track here. He goes on to say, *“for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. For the one who is not against us is for us.”* Jesus then goes on to condemn John’s attitude by saying, *“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.”* (Mark 9:42) I’m certain John didn’t know what he was getting himself into when he jumped to conclusions in the way that he did.
  - Too often today we want to draw lines of distinction between ourselves on petty and insignificant matters. This ought not be the case! Sure, there will be plenty of times where we have disagreements with people about how to do things, but that’s something we

need to be mature enough to deal with in love (James 2, 1 Cor 8, Rom 14). The ultimate goal should be to pursue peace with those who are known by Christ, and to do everything in our power to help them on their journey and in their work (Mark 9:50).

- **Necessary Dividing Lines** - Acts 19:15-16
  - Turning our attention to the Jewish exorcists, we see a very different picture. Here are men who are not known by Christ and who superficially use His name in their pursuit of fame and notoriety. On the surface of things, their goal seems noble enough, but even the demon is able to see their hypocrisy. If they were honest and sincere, I have no doubt that the demons would have seen with the same power as Paul, who they respected, but instead they asked, "*but who are you?*"
  - We have a responsibility to call out evil, to expose it, and to not allow those who practice such things to be a part of the church (Eph 5:11). That said, we need to be very clear on what we're willing to use as a line of distinction, knowing that if we call something evil which is actually good, Jesus stands against us. If we use our own prejudices, biases, or some other standard of judgment than what defines an obedient child of God's, one who knows Jesus, then we are judges with evil motives (James 2:4).

### **Knowing Leads To Service**

- **Hospitality in Jesus' Name** - Mark 9:40-41
  - The comparison Jesus makes to someone casting out demons and someone giving a cup of water is an important one. Both activities involve the selfless support of another, and both are equally as powerful in Jesus' mind. While we don't have the ability to cast out demons today, we certainly can provide for the needs of others. It's only when we have an intimate relationship with Jesus that we will be willing to serve each other in selfless and meaningful ways, out of reverence for Him. (Eph 5:21)
  - Looking to your Lord who went to His knees to wash the feet of His disciples, what can you be doing to positively impact the lives of others? Intercessory prayer, showing hospitality, giving of your time, your resources, and your attention are all good activities we should be doing for our brothers when we realize how much God in Christ is blessing us today!
- **Superficial Self-Service** - Acts 19:13
  - On the other hand, we see the self-serving nature of the Jewish exorcists. They did not have sincere motives behind their desire to cast out demons. Likely they only wanted fame and notoriety like Paul had, and figured they'd employ the same tactics as Paul did to achieve their goals. Their own words give their lack of relationship with Christ away when they said, "*... I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.*" (Acts 19:13)
  - Even if on the surface it looks like your deeds are good, are you really doing them for the right reasons? Are you sincerely serving others because you respect the King and want

what's best for others, or are you merely looking for earthly praise and notoriety? It's only when we are known by Jesus that our work will succeed, and when people will truly be helped in the process!

## **The Result of Being Known**

- **Known: Reward** - Mark 9:41
  - Jesus speaks of those who He knows, who are serving others and doing their work by His authority, as eligible for receiving a great reward. This echoes the other side of the discussion from Matthew 7 regarding those were told to depart from Him.
  - Our reward for a relationship with Jesus is not a physical one. We could live our whole lives in trial, torment by others, and utter poverty and still look forward to an eternal home. We are pilgrims, travelers, and truly this world is not our home. When we can see that we're just a vapor, passing through this life on our way to an eternal kingdom not made with hands, then we will have our perspectives set properly to handle the difficulty of this life. And our obedient relationship with Jesus serves as our guarantee of our final destination. (1 John 2:3)
- **Not Known: Utter Failure** - Acts 19:16
  - The sons of Sceva have nothing positive to look forward to as their outcome. They are overpowered, sent away naked and wounded after their encounter with the demon-possessed man. Going through the motions, using the name of Jesus in vain, they fail with humiliating consequences despite their pretense of doing something good for others.
  - Our result will be so much worse than those Jewish exorcists if we are not known by Jesus on the final day. Would that we could only suffer the humiliation of being naked and wounded as a result of the judgment. Rather we will hear the words, "depart from Me" from our King if we haven't loved and followed Him while on this earth. Eternal punishment is a great motivator to develop a meaningful relationship with Jesus while we still have time!

## **Conclusion**

- So, does Christ know you? Are you living in an obedient relationship with Him?
- A point to consider, as we close, from Ephesians 5:22-23. If you're wondering what is involved in developing a relationship with Christ, look no further than your own marriage. God has given us these relationships as a model for His relationship with us. Do you love your spouse enough to serve them, communicate with them, respect and sacrifice for them? If you can understand the challenges and blessings of a marriage, you can understand what it means to develop a deep and meaningful relationship with Christ.