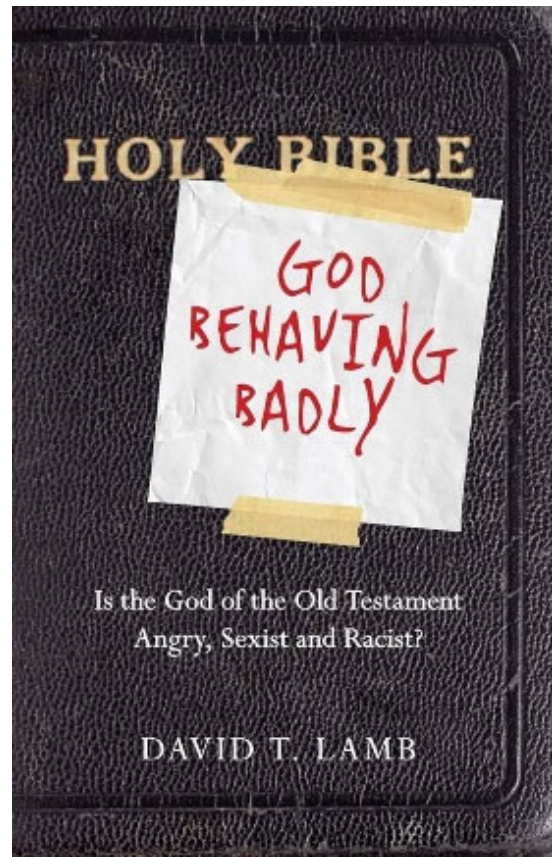


# God Behaving Badly

## Lesson 8: ...



**At the end of last week's class, I asked you what I should do this week**

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First, I owe you all an apology. I didn't allow enough time for genuine feedback, and I didn't strive to understand the suggestions I did receive like I should have.

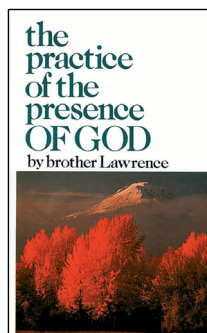
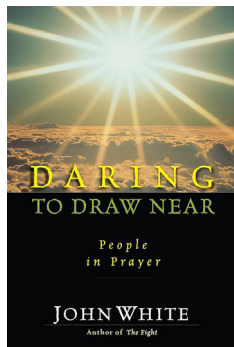
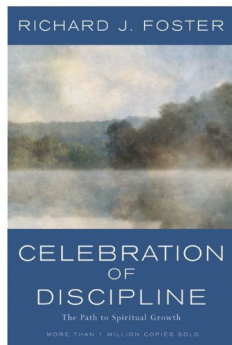
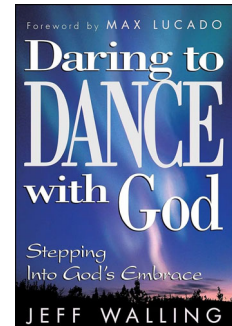
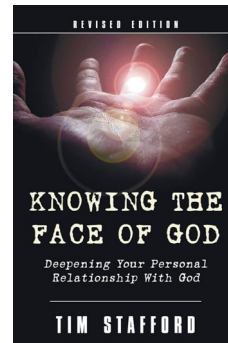
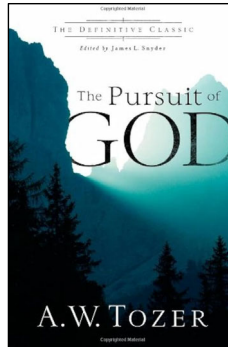
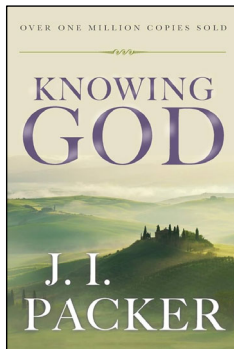
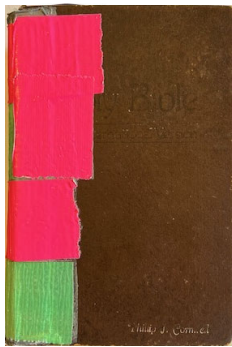
**Suggestions (during class or afterward):**

- 1. Paul and Philosophy in the New Testament**
- 2. Prayer and its efficacy**
- 3. Finances and how to be better stewards (via text).**

**So, what did I decide?**

# Knowing God vs knowing about God

## I looked at my bookshelf for references



What good books  
have you read or  
lessons have you  
heard on this topic?

## Is the concept of having a “personal relationship with Jesus” in the Bible? (From [theologyintheraw.com](http://theologyintheraw.com))

If by “**personal**” you mean **private**, then **no**, having a “private relationship with Jesus” isn’t in the Bible. (Neither is inviting Jesus into your heart.)

Mt 10:32-33 <sup>32</sup> “Whoever acknowledges me **before others**, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever disowns me **before others**, I will disown before my Father in heaven.”

Rom 10:9-10 <sup>9</sup> If you **declare with your mouth**, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with **your mouth** that you profess your faith and are saved.

1 Tim 6:12 <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good **confession in the presence of many witnesses**.

## Is the concept of having a “personal relationship with Jesus” in the Bible? (From [theologyintheraw.com](http://theologyintheraw.com))

If by “**personal**” you mean *individualistic*, then **no**, having an “individualistic relationship with Jesus” isn’t in the Bible either. When we “are saved,” we are saved into a community of faith, not just saved from our personal and private sins.

Acts 2:41, 44, 46, 47 <sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were **added to their number** that day. ... <sup>44</sup> All the believers **were together** and had **everything in common**. ... <sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to **meet together** in the temple courts. ... <sup>47</sup> .... And the Lord **added to their number** daily those who were being saved.

Heb 10:24-25 <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to **meet together**, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

1 Cor 12:12-27 <sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ... <sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

## Is the concept of having a “personal relationship with Jesus” in the Bible? (From [theologyintheraw.com](http://theologyintheraw.com))

If by “**personal**” we simply mean that *a significant aspect of our salvation is coming into communion with our Creator through Jesus*—then yes, I think that’s biblical.

Our faith in Jesus is public, not private; it’s communal, not individualistic, but we do have personal responsibility (you can’t inherit your faith).

## Let's start with a discussion

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What is the difference between *knowing about* God and *knowing* God?

## Let's look at some verses about knowing God

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John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they **know** you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Phil 3:8-10 <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of **knowing** Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. .... <sup>10</sup> I want to **know** Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death ...

1 John 4:6-7 <sup>6</sup> We are from God, and whoever **knows** God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood. <sup>7</sup> Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and **knows** God.

Let's look at human relationships as an analogy to help us understand how to develop a relationship with God.

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How do you develop a close relationship with another person?

1. You need to want a relationship.
2. You need to get to know about them. What are they like? What do you have in common? What differences do you have?
3. You need to spend time with them.
4. You need to be honest and open with them.

Important caveat: God is personal, but he is NOT a person.

There are many verses about longing for God

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Isa 26:9a My soul yearns for you in the night; in the morning **my spirit longs for you.**

Ps 42:1-2a <sup>1</sup> As the deer pants for streams of water, so **my soul pants for you**, my God. **My soul thirsts for you**, my God.

Ps 63:1 <sup>1</sup> You, God, are my God; I **thirst for you**, my whole being desires you, like a parched land where there is no water.

Ps 73:25 Why is my heart in heaven but you? And earth has **nothing I desire besides you.**

Ps 143:6 I spread out my hands to you; **I thirst for you** like a parched land.

**You need to want a deep relationship with God**

Rom 1:18-20 <sup>18</sup> Therefore, God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup> since **what may be known about God is plain to them**, because God has made it plain to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world **God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen**, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.



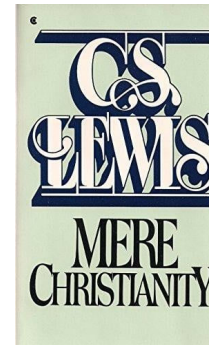
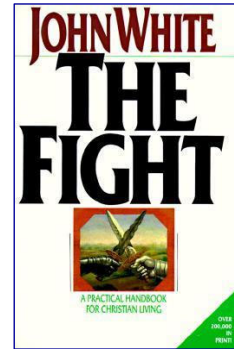
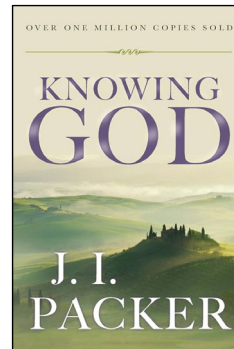
# Here are some suggestions on how to know more about God

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## Inductive Bible study

### Other books

- Bible commentaries
- Books on theology
- Books on apologetics
- Books on hermeneutics
- There are lots of books about God (they all need to be evaluated in the light of scripture)



### Podcasts, movies, Youtube

## We need to spend time with God and to be open and honest with him

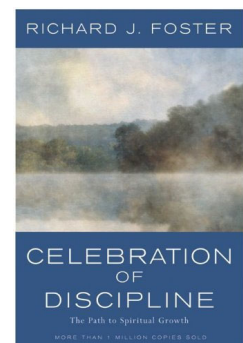
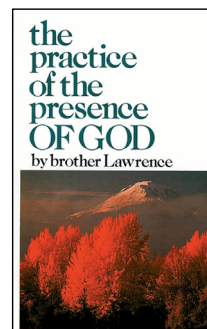
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### How do we do this?

1. Prayer
2. Meditation
3. Practice of the presence of God
4. Contemplation

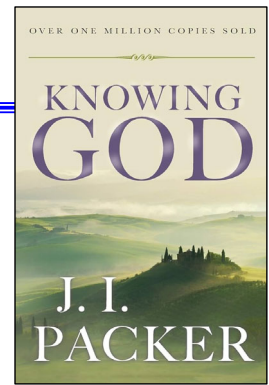
**You need to spend honest and open time with God**

Each one of these could be a class



## Let's look at *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer

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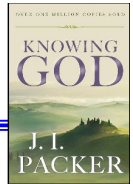
“Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way you can waste your life and lose your soul.”

“There can be no spiritual health without doctrinal knowledge.”

“To be preoccupied with getting theological knowledge as an end in itself, to approach Bible study with no higher a motive than a desire to know all the answers, is the direct route to a state of self-satisfied self-deception.”

### He presents 5 fundamental principles of the knowledge about God:

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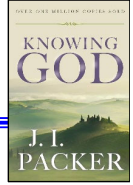


1. God has spoken to man, and the Bible is his Word, given to us to make us wise unto salvation. (**Bible**)
2. God is Lord and King over His world; He rules all things for His own glory, displaying His perfections in all that He does, in order that men and angels may worship and adore Him. (**Creation**)
3. God is Savior, active in sovereign love through the Lord Jesus Christ to rescue believers from the guilt and power of sin, to adopt them as His children, and to bless them accordingly. (**Jesus**)
4. God is triune; there are within the Godhead three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; and the work of salvation is one in which all three act together, the Father purposing redemption, the Son securing it, and the Spirit applying it. (**Spirit**)
5. Godliness means responding to God's revelation in trust and obedience, faith and worship, prayer and praise, submission and service. Life must be seen and lived in the light of God's Word. This and nothing else is true religion. (**Action**)



# How do we turn knowledge *about* God into knowledge *of* God?

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## The book says that knowing God involves:

- 1) Listening to God's word and receiving it as the Holy Spirit interprets it, in application to oneself.
- 2) Noting God's nature and character, as his word and works reveal it.
- 3) Accepting his invitations and doing what he commands.
- 4) Recognizing and rejoicing in the love that he has shown in thus approaching one and drawing one into this divine fellowship.

**“Turn each truth that we learn about God into matter for **meditation** before God, leading to **prayer** and **praise** to God.”**

## We need to be honest. Have you ever felt like this?

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**Ps 10:1 Why, LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?**

**Ps 13:1 How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?**

**Ps 22:1-2 <sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?**

**<sup>2</sup> My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest.**

**Ps 89:46a How long, LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?**

**What do you do when you have feelings like this and what should we do?**

## Here is a quick summary of the main points from today's class

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There is no magic bullet or simple answer to the question, "How do I know God and not just know about God?"

1. You need to want a deep relationship with Him.
2. You need to learn about Him.
3. You need to spend time with Him.
4. You need to be honest and open with Him.
5. You need to be obedient to Him.

So how do you know if you know God?

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### The letter of 1 John talks a lot about knowing God

1 John 2:3-4 <sup>3</sup> We know that we have come to **know him** if we **keep his commands**. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person.

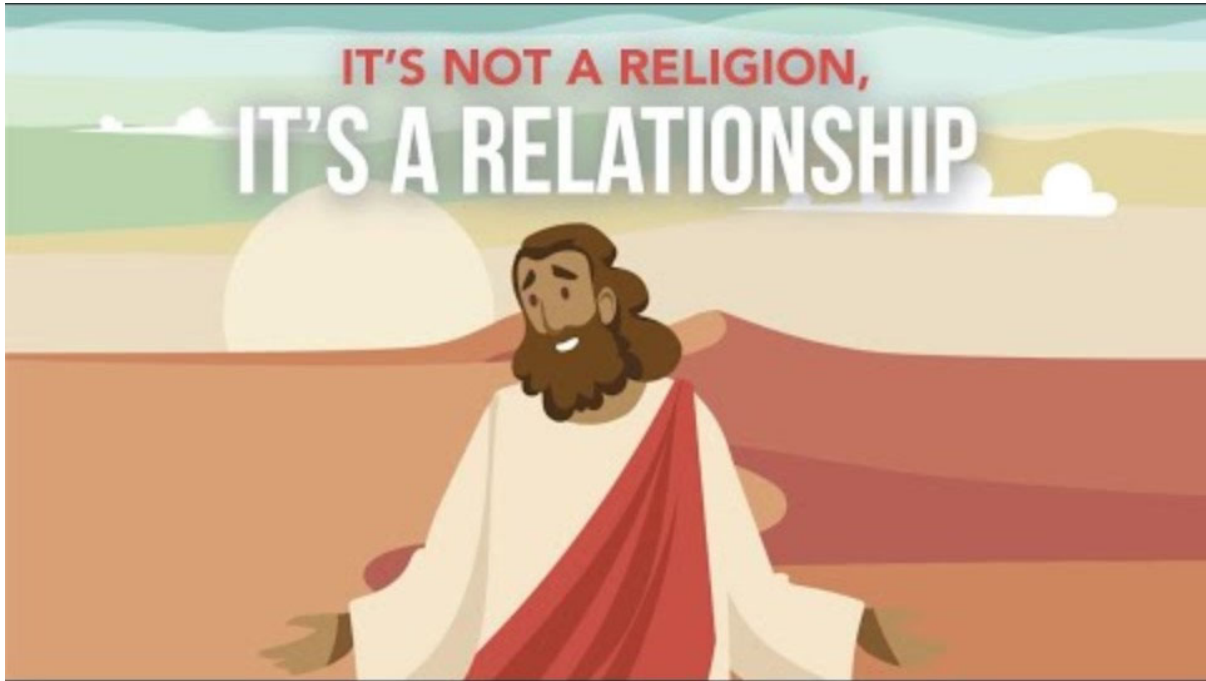
1 John 3:6 <sup>6</sup> No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. **No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.**

1 John 4:6 <sup>6</sup> We are from God, and whoever **knows God listens to us**; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

1 John 4:7-8 <sup>7</sup> Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and **knows God**. <sup>8</sup> **Whoever does not love does not know God**, because God is love.

Let's watch one last "What would you do?" video

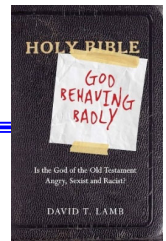
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This concludes our class. Thank you for attending!

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Are there any final comments or questions?



Eph 1:15-23 <sup>15</sup> For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, <sup>16</sup> I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.