

BLESSED ASSURANCE
Knowing God
2 Peter 1:2-4

Last week, the sheer number of people that I saw that were struggling with great doubts once again blew me away. I am so blessed by your courage to admit it! I want to continue examining the ways in which we can erase the doubts that plague our minds about God and our relationship with him. Remember, just because you cannot see God does not mean that a relationship with him is entirely different than a relationship with another human being. Both relationships REQUIRE faith!

This morning, I want you to learn the MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION that you will ever ask or answer in your entire life! I know that is a BIG statement, but I believe it with all of my heart. There is a question that you MUST answer, and your answer will determine how you think, whom you love, and what you do. It drives your life!

THE QUESTION:
What are you trusting in?

Everyone trusts in something. Some of you are trusting (PRESENT TENSE) in your own thoughts and experiences. You are building your own reality. How is that working for you? Some of you trust in blind luck; you just take life as it comes (You think! [The Agnostic I talked with had never prayed until he died in an ambulance!](#)) Some of you trust in SCIENCE. Some of you trust in LOVE. But I want to propose that the wisest person is the one who is trusting in GOD! Jesus is the Author of Life and he himself is TRUTH. (Jesus declared this about himself when he walked this earth!) The Children of God are the ones who are TRUSTING in him.

So, how can you learn to trust in God? I am glad that you asked!

EMBRACE WHAT GOD HAS SAID. [Who HE is, what he has DONE, and who YOU are!]

*The first sin of mankind came because of unbelief about what God had already spoken: [“Indeed, HATH God said?”](#) [[Got Eve in trouble!](#)]

*This was where I struggled the most. I knew what he said, but I WRESTLED with doubts more than I RESTED in his Word! I was DOUBTING GOD because I was TRUSTING in myself for growth and peace! ([The sin of the Galatians!](#)) What he told me: Let go! Quit looking for feelings! (I was not the one “holding everything together” in this relationship!) Rehearse my Truth and REST in it! (What did God say? I’m going with that!)

*Paul wrote that the Word creates and imparts faith? [Romans 10:17](#)
[17 So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.](#)

*Embracing the Word then, offers us greater opportunity to KNOW God. This is why EVERY BELIEVER must GROW in their knowledge of God! **You can't GROW if you don't KNOW!** (I submit that MANY of you who doubt are not actively growing in your knowledge of God. You are stuck in your doubts about the validity of God's word.)

Discipleship is **purposeful growth** in the knowledge of God. [Testimony at Easter]

*This requires TIME in God's WORD and regular FELLOWSHIP with God!

*This is NOT a passive knowledge; it is ACTIVE RELATIONSHIP!

*Growth is a **progressive experience**, NOT an **instantaneous event**.

[Grass at my house=Fast/Tree=Slow/Me=???)

*See how our KEY PASSAGE today reveals aspects of what we must know:

2 Peter 1:2-4 AMP

2 Grace and peace [that special sense of spiritual well-being] be multiplied to you in the [true, intimate] knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. **3** For His divine power has bestowed on us [absolutely] everything necessary for [a dynamic spiritual] life and godliness, through true *and* personal knowledge of Him **who called us by His own glory and excellence.** **4** For by these He has bestowed on us His **precious and magnificent promises** [of inexpressible value], so that by them you may **escape from the immoral freedom** that is in the world because of disreputable desire, and become **sharers of the divine nature.**

So, what must you know and embrace? (Based on 2 Peter 1:3-4)

***Know and embrace his WILL:**

He wants you to live a dynamic, spirit-filled, Christ-like life!

-“everything pertaining to . . .” – This means that NOTHING has been left out. If there is anything you need for living a God-honoring, pure, dynamic life; you need only to access it by growing closer to God in fellowship. You will not find it outside of him, but within the context of your growing knowledge of and your experience with him. Do you believe this?

***Know his CHARACTER and NATURE:**

2 Peter 1:3 – “He called us by HIS OWN glory and goodness!”

*These words speak of the consistency of his nature. He is true to himself when he calls and saves you. It was not a MISTAKE!

2 Peter 1:4 – “You may escape . . . and become sharers of the divine nature.”

*These words speak of his HOLINESS. God is NOT immoral. He does not sanction sin!

***Know his PROMISES.**

- His promises are also in accordance with his nature! **(Vs. 4a)**
- Knowing his PROMISES reinforces your IDENTITY in Christ!
 - *"You are a partaker of God's DIVINE NATURE!" "Christ IN you!"
 - *Knowing his promises covers every possibility you may face!

Romans 8:28-32 NIV

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. 31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

- *The knowledge of God can only be internalized by APPLICATION.
 - It is never just HEAD KNOWLEDGE. It is the APPLICATION of TRUTH.
- *It is possible to know ABOUT God without really being in relationship with God!
 - What determines the difference?

STAND ON WHAT GOD HAS SAID.

- *Biblical assurance is always linked to behavior!
 - Practical obedience brings assurance: **1 John 3:18-19 NIV**

18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. 19 This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence:

- ***Bryan's Testimony:** This truth convinced him that he was not saved at 7.
 - His life NEVER reflected the presence of God until he was saved at age 18.
 - He is certain that he was saved at age 18, so he chose to be baptized at camp to reflect that fact. No more holding on to an empty profession.
 - We ALL need to check this in our own life.

- *Assurance comes from a REHEARSAL that PERSUADES! [Peitho]
 - [Jumping out of an airplane! My story.]

VINES DICTIONARY: "*Peitho* and *pisteuo*" 'to trust,' are closely related; the difference in meaning is that the former implies the obedience that is produced by the latter, Faith is of the heart, invisible to men; obedience is of the conduct and may be observed. When a man obeys God he gives the only possible evidence that in his heart he believes God. Of course it is persuasion of the truth that results in faith (we believe because we are persuaded that the thing is true, but *peitho*, in NT suggests an actual and outward result of the inward persuasion and consequent faith."

*Assurance is MORE than just a FEELING; it is CONFIDENCE that comes from experience! [I have faith to jump from a plane now with no problem!]

-Your faith is not a PAST EVENT; it is a PRESENT, ONGOING REALITY!

*It will grow as it experiences each new act of God's faithfulness.

-You must TEST and STRETCH your faith on a daily basis!

*Yet, this is not a test requiring sinless perfection.

1 John 2:1 NLT

1 My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous.

1 John 3:20 NIV

20 If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

*We have an enemy who will ACCUSE us as well! We must not listen to him.

-This is when you stand on what God has said even when you FAIL!

*This is an opportunity to experience God above our own experience!

-God has already declared what is true, no matter what our experience may be!

-This is the way that we overcome STRONGHOLDS in our lives!

Stronghold = A mindset impregnated with hopelessness that causes one to accept as unchangeable something known to be contrary to the will of God. [John Ortberg]

*Will you stand on what God has said and BUILD around that truth even when you do not FEEL it?

Philippians 2:12-13 AMP

12 So then, my dear ones, just as you have always obeyed [my instructions with enthusiasm], not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, **continue to work out your salvation** [that is, cultivate it, bring it to full effect, actively pursue spiritual maturity] with awe-inspired fear and trembling [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ]. 13 For it is [not your strength, but it is] God who is effectively at work in you, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to fulfill your purpose] for His good pleasure

Let me ask you ONE MORE TIME: **What are you trusting in?**

Let's pray.