

DIVINE
"Knowing God's Way"
(John 14:1-7)
December 20, 2015

"As Jesus said, "I am he," they all drew back and fell to the ground!"

John 18:6 (NLT)

In His "I AM" statements, Jesus not only tells us who He is,
but He also tells us what He can do for us and what we can become through Him.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." John 14:1-7
(NIV)

1. God wants us to know Him personally.

The father and maker of all this universe is past finding out.

-Plato, "Timaeus Dialogue"

The personalized God is psychologically nothing other than a magnified father.

-Sigmund Freud, "Totem and Taboo"

"Some of these people have missed the most important thing in life-- they don't know God."

1 Timothy 6:21 (TLB)

Jesus: *"This is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth."*

John 17:3 (NLT)

2. Jesus claims to be the only way to know God personally.

*"Most religions teach how you get to God.
Christianity teaches how God gets to you!"*

3. You've got to personally put your faith in Jesus to know God personally.

"On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.'"

Matthew 7:22-23 (NLT)

Leadership Tip!

Now is a good time to reflect and give thanks for the growth that has occurred within your group. This will help you set the course for the group in the coming year.

DIVINE
“Knowing God’s Way”**STARTER QUESTION:**

Have you ever taken a drive, and found yourself not sure of the right way to go? How did that make you feel? How would you overcome that feeling?

MAIN IDEA:

This whole series is about being able to personally know God. Jesus said that He is the way to God, the Father, but like Thomas, many of us are still not sure of the way. Jesus reassures us that the “Map” is not that hard to follow.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” John 14:1-7 (NIV)

The idea behind a map is that it shows you the relationship between where you are and where you want to be. In chapter 13 and 14 of the book of John, Thomas along with the other disciples were confused by Jesus’s actions because they did not yet see the relationship between Jesus’s sacrifice and their salvation.

What could you do to help someone cut through the confusion?

“The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them.” John 15:13 NIV

How does knowing what Jesus did on the cross help you know God better?

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 NIV

How does knowing God better make the relationship between you and Him more personal?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

What we could never do, God has done for us. He has created a way to remove what separates us from Him. That type of love is worth knowing more about.

FAMILY FOCUS:

BEING CLOSE TO GOD

Children will toss popcorn from different distances to see that the closer they are to God, the stronger their relationship can be with Him.

MATERIALS:

Popcorn

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

First, divide the children equally and have them stand in two lines, facing each other, about 10 feet apart. Each child will need to be facing another child. The children will be tossing a piece of popcorn back and forth to the person across from them. If you have an odd number of children, the extra child can count the number of successful catches.

Give all the children in the first row, called "Row A", a piece of popcorn. Instruct the children that on your signal, they will toss the piece of popcorn 10 feet across the aisle to the person directly facing them in "Row B". Instruct the older children to use only one hand to toss or to catch the popcorn. Tell the kids that the popcorn in this activity represents our relationship with God. Give the signal and have the children toss the popcorn. Many of the tosses will fall short since the children are so far apart. Record the number of successful throws on a chalkboard or whiteboard.

Make sure each child in "Row B" has a piece of popcorn. Each child in "Row B" will take one-step towards "Row A." Then on your signal, have the children toss the popcorn again. Once again, record the number of successful throws on a chalkboard or whiteboard. Do this several more times, each time taking one-step closer until the two rows are together. Once together, the children can simply drop the popcorn into the hands of the other child, resulting in no misses.

Explain that our relationship with God is similar to what we just did. The further away from each other, the harder it was to catch the popcorn. Likewise, the further we are from God, the harder it is to have a relationship with God. On the other hand, the closer we are to God, the easier it will be to have a strong relationship with Him. How do we get close to God? We can get closer to God by reading the Bible, praying, and fasting.