

BOOK OF GALATIANS

“Known by God”

Scripture Reading: GALATIANS 4:8-11

-) **SLIDES 1-6.** Bible Jeopardy!
-) **SLIDES 7-8.** Read today’s Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 9.** Today we continue in our expository study of the Book of GALATIANS. This is message #30. I have titled today’s message *“Known by God”* (v9).
-) **SLIDE 10.** Is there a difference in *“knowing God”* and *“being known by God?”* In v9 of today’s text it’s almost as if the apostle Paul is correcting himself and placing things in a more proper order. Why doesn’t he just say, *“you have come to know God”* and leave it at that? Or is there some truth we need to understand about being known by God?
-) One of my favorite preachers is John MacArthur. I could say that I know John MacArthur. I’ve listened to hundreds of his sermons. I know about his past, his family, his church, and his faith. I know where he stands on just about every Biblical issue. I feel like I know this man at a pretty deep level.
-) But does John MacArthur know me? No. The relationship is one way. There is no two-way friendship between him and me.
-) The apostle Paul wants the Galatians (and us) to know that the relationship (this knowledge) between us and God must go both ways also. We may say that we know God (and many people do), but does God know us? Does He know us in a very intimate way?
-) **SLIDE 11.** Many times, when the Bible uses the word *“know”* or *“knew”* it means in a very intimate sense. GEN 4:1. Explain. And the same applies here in GAL 4:9.

-) So, to the Christian, the believer, what happened first? Did we know God, or did God know us?
-) The remainder of this morning's message does not go without controversy. And the controversy is rooted in this question. What came first? Did God know us, or did we know God? Let's go a little deeper. Who chose whom for salvation? Did you choose Jesus as your Savior (free will), or did God choose you to be saved before the foundations of the world (election)?
-) There is quite a bit of religious history behind this difference which I will not be getting into this morning because it will get rather lengthy, and we could be here for weeks. But what we have in church theology today are two sides to this issue.
-) **SLIDE 12.** One side are the free-will advocates who say they heard the gospel message, decided under their own power (their own free will) that accepting Christ was the right decision to make. This view makes good (easy) sense in today's world. An offer is put on the table (Jesus) and a person makes that choice. Here's Jesus. Do want Him as part of your life or not?
-) And, after all, JOHN 3:16 does say that whosoever believes in Him shall never perish but have eternal life. ROMANS 10:13 says that all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. And in MATT 11:28 Jesus gives the invitation, "*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.*"
-) This "*free will*" view is taught in Wesleyan churches such as the UMC, Nazarene church, Assemblies of God, Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, and most Pentecostal churches.
-) **SLIDE 13.** The other side are the election advocates who say they heard the gospel message, and under the power of the Holy Spirit received Christ as a sovereign act of God. Salvation is a total act of God. But for many this view is difficult to swallow because it violates their free will to choose, and it is unfair, unbiblical, demonic, disturbing, and blasphemous.

-) This “*election*” view is taught in churches promoting reformed theology such as the Southern Baptists, most Presbyterians churches, and BGCC.
-) When I first got saved in 1994, I was very much an advocate of the “*free will*” salvation. It was easy to believe this salvation process and it made sense. An offer was on the table and I decided to choose Jesus.
-) But 13 years later, in 2007, I switched. I now believe in and teach the “*election*” salvation process. Why? What made me change? I want to share with you this morning why I changed camps and the five words and related Bible verses that convinced me of this.
-) **SLIDE 14.** The first word is the word “*dead.*” The apostle Paul uses this word to define the human condition. EPH 2:1-2. We must understand that our human condition is not that we are sick or diseased or having a bad day. We are dead.
-) **SLIDE 15.** I like this picture. This is our human condition. What can dead people do? Nothing. Dead people cannot hear, think, or respond. In JOHN 11, a man named Lazarus was dead for 4 days. How did he become alive again? By a command from Jesus and not by his own will.
-) **SLIDE 16.** I now know my human condition. I’m dead.
-) **SLIDE 17.** The second word is “*born again.*” The word “again” is actually the Greek word “*an then*” (ah no thin) which means “*from above*”. In other words, it means we must be born from above. Some Bible translations use that terminology.
-) **SLIDE 18.** JOHN 3:7-8. Why does Jesus use the analogy of birth (born again) to entering the kingdom of God? What did I contribute to my physical birth? Nothing. What can I contribute to my spiritual birth? Nothing.
-) It’s a perfect analogy to depict something that is done that I cannot possibly do for myself. I can’t birth myself.

-) **SLIDE 19.** I now know that something must be done for me that I cannot do for myself. I'm dead.
-) **SLIDE 20.** The third word is "*elect.*" It is used 21x in the NT. It is used 7x by Jesus, 9x by Paul, 3x by Peter, and 2x by John. MATT 24:31. Why not use the word "*believers*" or "*the saved?*"
-) **SLIDE 21.** 1 PETER 1:1-2.
-) One obvious question that always comes up when speaking about the elect is this: "*Why should I evangelize if certain people are going to be chosen by God anyways?*" It was a question I asked in my early Christian walk. Here's the answer. Because I don't know who the elect are. And the elect need to hear the gospel. Right? Faith comes through hearing and hearing by the Word.
-) **SLIDE 22.** I now know that God has chosen some for eternal life. And that's when I must rest in the sovereignty of God.
-) You may say, "*That's unfair.*" Why does God choose some and not others? Years ago, I asked that same question too. Two points to consider about that question. 1) Who is the clay to question the Potter? 2) We're asking the wrong question. The question must be, "*Why does He save anyone?*"
-) **SLIDE 23.** The fourth word is "*adoption.*" Paul uses this word 5x in his writings. EPHESIANS 1:5-7.
-) In today's society we have a process called adoption where a husband and a wife bring on a child to become a part of their family. The child never chooses who will adopt them. If I am adopted, then someone has chosen me to become part of their family.
-) I want you to think of someone in your life who is very special—a wife, a husband, a mom, a dad, a son, a daughter, or a friend. You want to give that special someone the best gift ever. Would you let just anyone pick it out for you? No.

-) **SLIDE 24.** God the Father, in eternity past, promised to give His Son Jesus a gift. That gift would be a bride, and that bride would be the church. JOHN 6:37.
-) Listen. If you are a believer, God the Father has chosen you to be the gift He gives His Son as the bride. Me. You. The Father not only gave us a gift (eternal life), we are the gift. God is giving a gift to His Son and this gift will not be picked out by just anyone. He will choose the gift He wants for His Son. He adopts us.
-) **SLIDE 25.** I now know that those God has chosen for eternal life are the gift He will give His Son.
-) **SLIDE 26.** The final word is “*boast.*” 1 COR 1:27-31.
-) We love taking credit for things. I did this or I made that. Do we say, “*I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior*” and say that with boasting or with pride? Look what I did. I was smart enough to accept Jesus.
-) **SLIDE 27.** The five words and related Scripture verses that changed me from a free-will salvation advocate to an election salvation advocate.
-) **SLIDE 28.** In MATTHEW 7:21-23 Jesus speaks these very disturbing words. He doesn’t say, “*You never knew me.*” He says, “*I never knew you.*” Do you know God or are you known by God? Does God know you in an intimate and loving way that you are born again, elect, and adopted into His family?
-) God does not have an intimate (knowing) relationship with every human being. Only those who are elect and have been adopted into His family. I may love your children, but I promise you I love my own children more.
-) **SLIDE 29.** 1 JOHN 4:19. Which came first? I was known by God before I ever knew Him. I was dead and He made me alive. I once was lost, but now I have been found. I was blind, but now I see. It’s what the Lord has done in me.

) And that's why I switched. Listen, I don't believe in election because I fully understand it. I believe it because that's what it says, and I really love letting God be God and not what I want Him to be.

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