

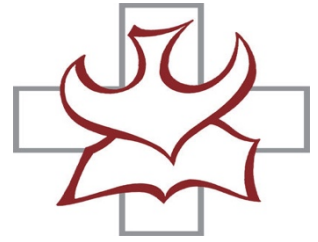
Know God Better!

The Book Of Ephesians Summer Sermon Series

Isaiah 11:1-10 Eph 1:15-23 Luke 11:9-13

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God's will for you is that you know Him better. The Lord wants to be in a close relationship with you. The triune God wants you to **know and understand** His Word, His will, and *all the gifts* that He so freely pours into your life.

*Our God is a personal God
and His will is that you know Him better!*

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**. Ephesians 1:17

Notice that this prayer is *Trinitarian* – all three Persons of the Godhead are mentioned: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The prayer is that you **KNOW GOD BETTER!** The idea is that you are *ever-growing* and *ever-increasing* in your **knowledge and understanding** of Who God is and what He has done for you.

The prayer is that *God the Father*, through *Christ the Lord*, will send the *Holy Spirit* to you so that you can **KNOW GOD BETTER!**

The work of the Holy Spirit is to *bring you to faith* through the **Word of God and Holy Baptism**; and then to *sustain, grow, and strengthen that faith* for the rest of your life through the **Word of God and Holy Communion**. This prayer is nothing other than a prayer to the Holy

Trinity that you would be *ever-more* **Biblically Literate** and **Doctrinally Sound!**

So the obvious question is how well do you *know* God?

Are you *close* to God?

Are you *growing* in faith, knowledge, and understanding of Who God is and what He is done for you?

*Although God wants you to know Him better,
Satan wants you to know Him less!*

The last thing the devil wants is for you to know God's Word, to understand His will, and to draw close to the Lord. So Satan keeps you **busy and distracted**: you don't have time to study God's Word; you cannot commit to weekly worship; memorizing God's Word is too hard for you --- the excuses go on and on and on. It's so easy to keep God at an arm's length -- just a few "*bits and pieces*" about God every once in a while is enough. "*Whatever I now about God is plenty --- I don't need to know that much.*" Or "*I learned everything I need to know confirmation.*" Or "*God is just one part of my busy life.*" ***If this sounds familiar, then Satan has the upper hand in your life!***

This is really an **attitude** that needs to be dealt with as sin. As with all sin, you repent of it, turn away from it, recognize that it is not right, confess it to God, and know that you are forgiven in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ's death and resurrection clears your sin away; you are refreshed and renewed in Christ; the old is gone and the new is here. ***In Christ's love and forgiveness you are given the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit works in you so that you *eagerly desire* to KNOW GOD BETTER!***

In Christ, and by the power the Holy Spirit, *the last thing you want* is to keep God at an arm's length; *the last thing you want* is just "*bits and pieces*" of God every once in a while. The Holy Spirit works in you and creates an eager

desire to learn more about God; He creates a *burning zeal* for God, His Word, and His will. The Holy Spirit opens the eyes of your heart so the light of Christ and His Kingdom shines on you! The Holy Spirit makes you Biblically literate and doctrinally sound!

In the Gospel lesson for today Jesus teaches us to pray specifically for the Holy Spirit.

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ask Him!" Luke 11:15

Jesus teaches us to pray specifically for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is **both** a gift of salvation that has already been given to you in Holy Baptism; **and** a gift that we are to continually pray for.

The work of the Holy Spirit is to “sanctify” you. “Sanctification” is the theological word for *your holy life in Christ*. It has the idea that you have been “*set apart*” for a special purpose. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to sanctify you, to make you holy, to set you apart.

The Holy Spirit works to give Christians an ever clearer and sharper understanding of God so they can **know God better!**

Because of the Holy Spirit, you do “good works” according to the 10 Commandments; you love and serve your neighbor, and you remain faithful and loyal to God throughout your life. Without the Holy Spirit you would have no faith nor would you even be a Christian.

In the Book of Ephesians, the Apostle is praying that the Holy Spirit will help you to **KNOW GOD BETTER**. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to reveal who God is and what He has done for us. ***That is why Scripture is so important to us as conservative Lutherans!***

We learn about Creation and Salvation; we learn about Christ and His death burial and resurrection that leads us to repentance and the forgiveness of sins; we learn about God’s watchfulness over our lives and how He provides our daily bread. The Holy Spirit works in us so that we can learn

everything that Christ has taught us. We learn the values of the Ten Commandments. **The Holy Spirit works through the Bible to make you a biblically literate and doctrinally sound disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.** And if you are *biblically literate* and *doctrinally sound*, then you will be *passionately engaged* in the Kingdom of God and understand the importance and urgency of being *mission minded*.

*Jesus teaches us to pray specifically for the Holy Spirit.
The work of the Holy Spirit is to "sanctify" you
So that you can know God better!*

One interesting note --- if you were confirmed in the Lutheran Church, then a part of this prayer from Ephesians was said over you in the Confirmation Blessing:

**God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
give you His Holy Spirit, That's from Ephesians 1:17!
the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge,
of grace and prayer, of power and strength,
of sanctification and the fear of God. That's from Isaiah 11:2!**

This Confirmation prayer combines a New Testament Ephesians passage with an Old Testament Isaiah passage and it's another way of asking God to bless you so that you can **KNOW HIM BETTER!** This prayer wasn't meant just for your Confirmation day; it was meant for every day of your life as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ!

*We worship a personal God
who wants you to know Him better!*

**May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the glorious Father,
give you the Holy Spirit,
so that you can KNOW GOD BETTER!**

Amen!