

Things That We Know!

Recently I received some correspondence from a young preacher who is doing a phenomenal job in the ministry, but yet he was experiencing some angst, thus the reason for his writing to me. He said, "...there are certainly days that I feel as though I fell off the wrong side of the fence that runs the line between faith and stupidity." In my response to him, I said, "I am often there (in that quandary), however don't be discouraged; I believe that is the essence of the walk of faith. The book of Hebrews said it like this, *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went"* (Hebrews 11:8). So you are in good company with Father Abraham. Walking by faith often means we go out, *"...not knowing..."* Navigating through the "not knowing" can feel rather tenuous at times. What strengthens us and holds us strong during those times is what the Word of God says: "we do know." Although not by any means exhaustive, here are some things we do know.

1. We can definitely know that we are saved.

The Bible says, *"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God"* (I John 5:12,13). It is so good to know it is not my power that's holding me close to Him. It is God alone who holds us in His grace and love. We too may say with the Apostle Paul, *"...For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day"* (II Timothy 1:12). In the matter of your personal salvation, God will keep His Word, *"...For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"* (Hebrews 13:5).

2. We know in God's plans there are no accidents, only purpose.

Even though this is a very well known verse in the Bible, we need the reminder: *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"* (Romans 8:28). This will keep your sanity, keep you calm and keep you trusting in God no matter what. The Bible says, *"Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience"* (James 1:3). So look at set backs as set ups; be patient until God's plans for you are complete!

3. We know that God will reward our faithful work for Him.

Toward the end of one of the greatest chapters in the Bible on resurrection, Paul concludes with these inspired words: *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,*

forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58). It is as though our Lord is wanting us to realize that one day we shall rise to live in eternity with Him forever and ever, therefore, we need to know that what we have done for Him will be rewarded in the afterlife. Only one life, it soon will be past; only what's done for Christ will last.

The British evangelist, Henry Varley said to young Dwight L. Moody, "Moody, the world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to him." In determination, Moody said, "By God's help, I aim to be that man." In the lifetime of Dwight Moody, it is estimated that he was responsible for winning over two million people to a saving knowledge of Christ. Many years ago, I came across an addendum to that conversation. As Moody was dying, he was heard to say shortly before his passing, "It is yet to be seen what God will do with one man totally, wholly committed to God." Let us commit ourselves to that which really matters in life. One of Moody's most penetrating quotes was, "Our greatest fear should not be of failure, but of succeeding at something that doesn't really matter."

4. We know God gave us the personality, the looks and the family in which we were placed.

I have been blessed much of my life to minister to young people. It is not unusual for youth to not like the way they look or to believe they were born in the wrong time in the wrong place and in the wrong environment. Nothing could be further from the truth! God says, "*Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture*" (Psalm 100:3). The Lord warns us, "*Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands*" (Isaiah 45:9). In speaking of His plans for Jacob God said, "*(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*" (Romans 9:11). The Almighty said to Jeremiah, "*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations*" (Jeremiah 1:5). In the New Testament, Paul confessed, "*But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace*" (Galatians 1:15). God had plans for you before you were born and equipped you with what you need. The Lord Jesus said, "*Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*" (Matthew 6:27). He made your height, your personality, your natural giftings and your intelligence. You see, we can take no credit for goodness or greatness in our life. If any good is in us, it is because of Jesus! And He declares it good! Just as surely as God made Adam and Eve, He made you to bring glory to Himself.

5. We know that if we obey the light God has given us, He will give us more light.

“Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth” (Hosea 6:3). What encouragement are these precious words: *“Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD....”* A companion to that thought are these beautiful words: *“For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light”* (Psalm 36:9). As we obey God, we can know the next step is there as He has so directed: *“Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way...”* (Psalm 44:18). *“The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide”* (Psalm 37:31). *“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way”* (Psalm 37:23).

6. We know that God answers prayer.

God answers prayer! What a blessing to know that we know this great truth! *“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him”* (I John 5:14, 15). The Bible says, *“...that men ought always to pray, and not to faint”* (Luke 18:1). God wants us to pray and receive answers to our prayers more than we want to pray and receive answers. When you next go to God in prayer, go with knowing He will stand by you, listen to you and answer! *“O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come”* (Psalm 65:2).

-Pastor Pope-