

© Copyright 2009 – Larry Krider

All rights reserved. This book is protected by the copyright laws of the United States of America. This book may not be copied or reprinted for commercial gain or profit. The use of short quotations or occasional page copying for personal or group study is permitted and encouraged. Permission will be granted upon request. All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked TLB are taken from The Living Bible; Tyndale House, 1997, © 1971 by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Please note that Destiny Image's publishing style capitalizes certain pronouns in Scripture that refer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and may differ from some publishers' styles. Take note that the name Satan and related names are not capitalized. We choose not to acknowledge him, even to the point of violating grammatical rules.

DESTINY IMAGE® PUBLISHERS, INC.
P.O. Box 310, Shippensburg, PA 17257-0310

"Speaking to the Purposes of God for this Generation and for the Generations to Come."

This book and all other Destiny Image, Revival Press, Mercy Place, Fresh Bread, Destiny Image Fiction, and Treasure House books are available at Christian bookstores and distributors worldwide.

For a U.S. bookstore nearest you, call 1-800-723-6774.

For more information on foreign distributors, call 717-532-3040.

Or reach us on the Internet: www.destinyimage.com

ISBN 10: 0-7684-2749-5

ISBN 13: 978-0-7684-2749-3

For Worldwide Distribution, Printed in the U.S.A.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 / 13 12 11 10 09

DEDICATION

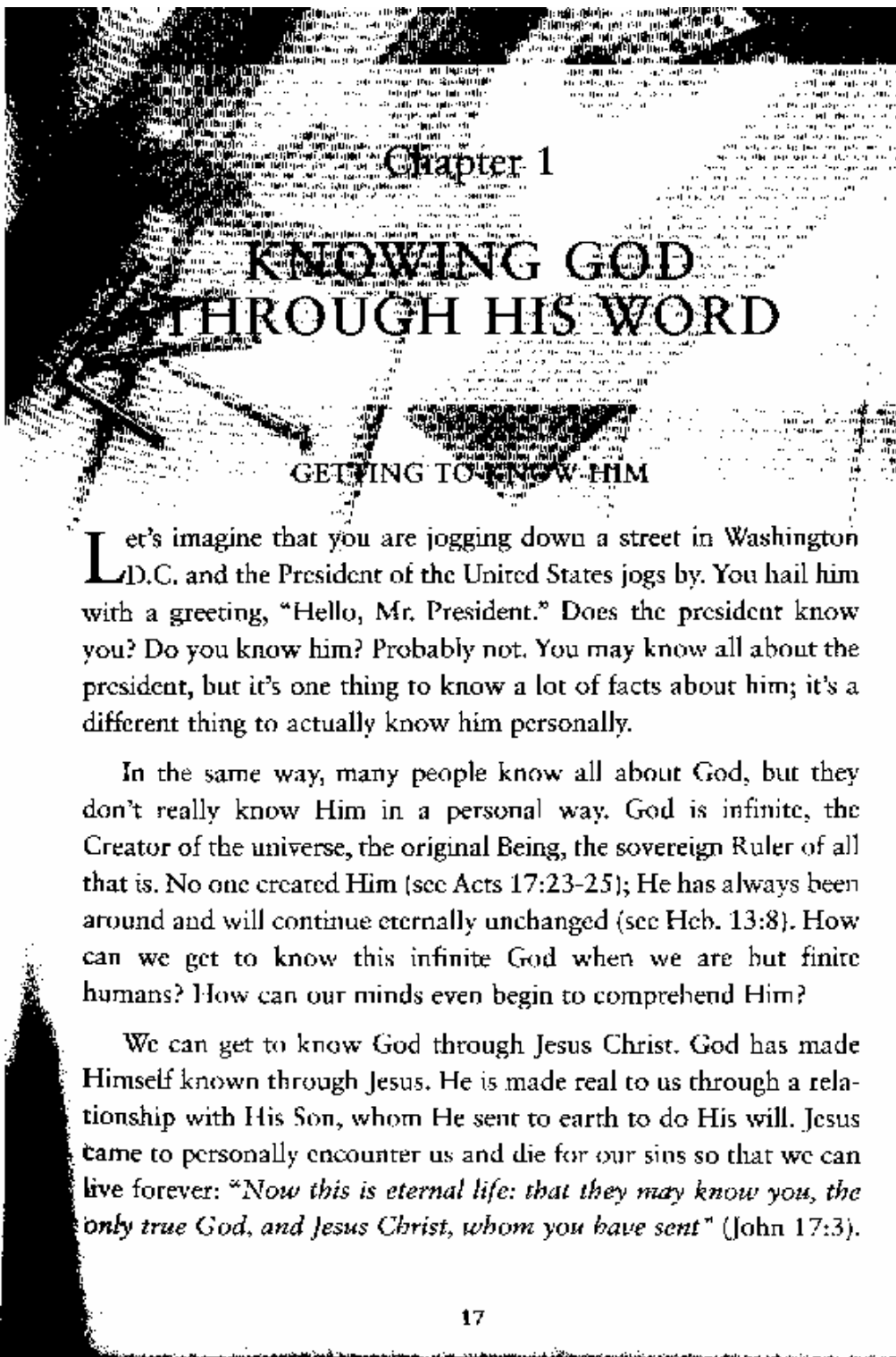
I dedicate this book to my wife LaVerne, to my family, and to the DCFI family worldwide, with whom we have had the privilege of serving the Lord for nearly 30 years. This book is also dedicated to every person who reads this book seeking to lay a strong spiritual foundation in his or her life. And most importantly of all, this book is dedicated to the One who has promised us that He will build His life in us...our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom I am eternally grateful.

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11 NKJV).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Introduction	13
Part I	Learning to Fellowship With God	15
Chapter 1	Knowing God Through His Word	17
Chapter 2	Knowing God Through Prayer and Worship	31
Chapter 3	How Can We Hear God's Voice?	43
Chapter 4	Hearing His Voice Clearly	55
Part II	What Is the Church?	67
Chapter 5	The Importance of the Local Church	69
Chapter 6	Spiritual Family Relationships	81
Chapter 7	Who Is Watching Out for You?	93
Chapter 8	Our Commitment to the Local Church	105
Part III	Authority and Accountability	117
Chapter 9	Understanding the Fear of the Lord and Authority ..	119
Chapter 10	Delegated Authority in Government, Workplace, Family, and Church	131
Chapter 11	The Blessing of Authority	143
Chapter 12	The Blessing of Accountability	153

Part IV	God's Perspective on Finances	163
Chapter 13	We are Managers of God's Money	165
Chapter 14	The Tithe	177
Chapter 15	Give Both Tithes and Offerings	189
Chapter 16	Managing Your God-Given Finances	199
Part V	Called to Minister	211
Chapter 17	Everyone Can Minister	213
Chapter 18	We Are Called to Serve	225
Chapter 19	Ministering With Compassion	235
Chapter 20	We Are on Jesus' Team	245
Part VI	The Great Commission	255
Chapter 21	What Is the Great Commission?	257
Chapter 22	Get Ready for Spiritual Warfare	269
Chapter 23	Reaching the Lost and Making Disciples	281
Chapter 24	Being a Spiritual Father or Mother	295



Chapter 1

KNOWING GOD
THROUGH HIS WORD

GETTING TO KNOW HIM

Let's imagine that you are jogging down a street in Washington D.C. and the President of the United States jogs by. You hail him with a greeting, "Hello, Mr. President." Does the president know you? Do you know him? Probably not. You may know all about the president, but it's one thing to know a lot of facts about him; it's a different thing to actually know him personally.

In the same way, many people know all about God, but they don't really know Him in a personal way. God is infinite, the Creator of the universe, the original Being, the sovereign Ruler of all that is. No one created Him (see Acts 17:23-25); He has always been around and will continue eternally unchanged (see Heb. 13:8). How can we get to know this infinite God when we are but finite humans? How can our minds even begin to comprehend Him?

We can get to know God through Jesus Christ. God has made Himself known through Jesus. He is made real to us through a relationship with His Son, whom He sent to earth to do His will. Jesus came to personally encounter us and die for our sins so that we can live forever: "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3).

According to the Bible, eternal life involves getting to know, commune with, and fellowship with our God who is made known through His Son Jesus Christ, whom He sent. God wants to know us personally! In this book, we're going to learn how to fellowship with God through meditating on God's Word and praying and worshipping Him. We will discover how to develop an intimate relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Beforehand, however, it is important to understand who God is. We believe in and worship one God. When God spoke to Moses in the ancient days, He revealed Himself as One. Centuries later, when Jesus was asked to choose the greatest commandment, Jesus quoted those same words of long ago: "...Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Mark 12:29).

The Bible clearly teaches that there is only one God. Yet we know from Scripture that God is Father, God is Jesus, and God is Spirit. That does not mean that God is three. There is only one God whom we love and worship. So how can He be one and yet three?

WHEN THREE EQUALS ONE

According to the Bible, God is one God who is three persons. The term *Trinity* is used to describe this concept. When Jesus said that we should go into all nations, making disciples, the three persons of the Trinity are linked together: "...in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

The Bible also tells us, in the book of Genesis, that God said, "Let Us make man in Our image" (Gen. 1:26). When the world was created, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit worked together to create the earth and all that is on it.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit always were in existence.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are coequal, coeternal members. Although this concept is not easy for us to understand, our God is one essence existing in three distinct persons who share a divine nature—God our Father who is in Heaven, God the Son whom He sent to earth, and God the Holy Spirit who dwells in every believer who has been born again through faith in Jesus Christ.

The three are not three gods or three parts or expressions of God, but are three persons so completely united that they form the one true and eternal God.¹ To fathom this, our minds and hearts must be stretched to hold a greater God than we can even imagine! God is so great—our finite minds cannot easily understand. It sometimes helps to look at the things that He has created. In nature, we find things that take different forms and have different effects on our senses, yet are still one.

For example, water takes on three different forms. Water is converted into an invisible vapor or gas (steam) by being heated. Ice is the crystalline form of water made solid by cold temperatures. No matter what its form (water, steam, or ice), it is still water.

Another example from nature is the sun. According to scientists, no one has actually seen the sun because it is so powerful. When we look at the sun, we do not see the star itself, but we can clearly see the rays of sun that shine on the earth. From the sun itself, through its rays, we have light and heat, and something mysterious makes plants grow (through the process of photosynthesis). We can conclude that the sun is the sun—one entity. Yet, the sun is light; the sun is heat; the sun is growth-life. All of this is true without contradiction. It is still the sun.

Although these illustrations from creation may help us to understand the idea of God being One—Father, Jesus, Spirit—they are not enough. We cannot decide who God is and what He is like based on what our eyes see, our ears hear, or our hands touch. We must put our faith in God Himself. We must choose what to believe about Him based on His Word.

We must spend our lives seeking Him and getting to know Him better. We must read the Bible and do what it says. How can we understand Him without knowing and loving Him? How can we see Him without believing and obeying Him? No one person can fully explain God to another. We must each seek Him and know Him: *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him”* (Heb. 11:6).

JESUS IS GOD

When we earnestly seek God, we find Him through Jesus Christ. Before getting into the remainder of the chapter, let's look briefly at the claims of Jesus. As Christians, we must believe that He is who He said He is because it persuades us of His deity.

Very few people will say that a man called Jesus of Nazareth never existed. There are many ancient writings, both religious and secular, that confirm His place in history. There are many, however, who will say that He was just a good man or a prophet. Many believe that He was just a man, flesh and blood, like the rest of us. The religious leaders of Jesus' generation thought the same, and they wanted to stone Him. The things that Jesus said made them furious (see John 10:24-38) because Jesus boldly claimed that He was God.

They accused Him of blasphemy because only God has the right to say that He is God.

How can we know that Jesus is who He claimed to be? Jesus' answers to the stone-throwers pointed to four reasons that we can be certain Jesus is who He said He is:

Scripture: Jesus continually pointed to and affirmed the Scripture. He knew the Scriptures and obeyed them. He fulfilled all of the prophecies about the Messiah.

Sonship: According to prophecies, Jesus was born of a virgin in Bethlehem. Jesus called God “Father” and stressed His unique relationship as His only begotten Son.

Actions: Jesus told His accusers not to believe Him unless He did what His Father does. Jesus' whole life was characterized by a constant awareness of the Father's will. He said and did what the Father said and did. Though many tried to accuse Him, they never were able to because He had done no wrong.

Miracles: If none of that will persuade us to believe, the miracles should. He restored sight to the eyes of a man born blind. He made the deaf hear and speak. He made the lame walk, cured lepers, and made many other sick people well. Demons obeyed Him without hesitation, knowing who He was. He had authority over nature, calming a storm with a word. He changed water to wine and multiplied one boy's lunch to feed thousands. He walked on water. He made accurate predictions about what people would do and what events would take place. Greatest of all, Christ rose from the dead. Death could not rule over Him! Jesus' resurrection is the real proof and demonstration of His deity.

It is interesting to see that, with all of Jesus' claims and with all of His power, He never denied that God is One. He simply said that