***Diligently Seeking God***

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***Introduction:*** Every man must choose and then build the foundation for his life.

 A. Jesus urged all to carefully and with much effort build a foundation. **(Lk 6:48-49)**

**Luke 6:48-49 -** "He is like a man building a house, who *dug deep* and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for *it was founded on the rock*. 49 "But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth *without a foundation*, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

 1. A foundation is that *which you begin* and which *all other things are built upon*.

 2. A foundation is strong when it is built upon reality. Begin with God!

 B. The challenge that every man must face is whether God will be their foundation.

 1. Man is made with a desire to seek and find God. **(Acts 17:27-28; Ecc 3:11)**

**Acts 17:27-28**  - "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

**Ecclesiastes 3:11**  - He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

 2. It does not take much thought for man to *realize his need of God*.

 3. Is there a God? Is Jesus the Son of God? This is the start of your foundation.

***I. There is a big difference between knowing there is a God and in knowing God.***

 A. Why is atheism becoming more prevalent in our society?

 1. We can know there is a God. **(Rom 1:20)**

**Romans 1:20 -** For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

 2. Men do not *know the one true God* and therefore choose to live for
 themselves. Men *do not know they can trust and depend upon God*!

 3. The nature of God is a powerful force to draw men to Him. **(Isa 40:28-31)**

**Isaiah 40:28-31**  - Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the weak, And to *those who have* no might He increases strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

 B. Men find God by seeking Him and then keep seeking Him. **(Heb 11:6)**

**Hebrews 11:6**  - But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him,* for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

 1. What is the difference between your knowledge of “who” a coach is and the
 knowledge of the quarterback on the team or of the coach’s wife?

 2. What happens in a relationship when *one stops seeking*?

 C. God’s people by design will show forth praise to God. **(Psa 51:15; 79:13)**

**Psalm 51:15**  - O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

**Psalm 79:13**  - So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, Will give You thanks forever; We will show forth Your praise to all generations.

 1. Praise from the lips is *natural and abundant*.

 2. A life that reflects God’s will is *a greater praise*. **(Phil 1:10-11)**

**Philippians 1:10-11**  - that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

 3. Each of us as Christians must become imitators of God. **(Eph 5:1-4)**

**Ephesians 5:1-4 -** Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

 4. If I wanted to teach others about God’s forgiving nature, His kindness
 and His mercy, *would others see that in me*?

***II. The knowledge of God changes our hearts***

 A. When we see the power, wisdom and holiness of God we should despise
 ourselves. **(Psa 100:3; Mt 5:3)**

**Psalm 100:3**  - Know that the LORD, He *is* God; *It is* He *who* has made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture.

**Matthew 5:3 -** "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

 1. The word used here (ptochos), may be translated "abject poverty." It reflects

 one who is virtually destitute, or in "imminent danger of real starvation."

 2. Jesus is describing poverty of *spirit.* We completely depend on God. **(Jn 15:5)**

**John 15:5 -** "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

 3. Only when *we see our deep poverty* will God be able to guide us. This is the
 first step in pleasing God! **(Psa 51:10-11, 17)**

**Psalm 51:10-11**  - Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

**Psalm 51:17**  - The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart -- These, O God, You will not despise.

 4. When we have this kind of spirit we will realize that we cannot impress God!
 B. Our own sin in the presence of God’s holiness must break us. **(Mt 5:4)**

**Matthew 5:4 -** Blessed *are* those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

1. The word mourn (pentheo) means "to bewail, lament, mourn for."

2. This word described the tears of righteous. **(Lk 6:21)**

**Luke 6:21 -** Blessed *are you* who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed *are you* who weep now, For you shall laugh.

 3. When we mourn over our sins. **(2 Cor 7:10; Joel 2:12-13)**

**2 Corinthians 7:10 -** For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

**Joel 2:12-13 -** " Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." 13 So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He *is* gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

4. When was the last time you grieved over your sins? Sadly pride has caused

 many to become hard hearted. **(Jas 4:8-10)**

**James 4:8-10**  - Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. 9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

 5. This will drastically alter how we treat others who hurt us!

***III. Knowing God leads us to a separation from this world***

 A. Jesus plainly showed His disciples that this world is dominated by Satan.
 **(Jn 12:31; 14:30)**

**John 12:31 -** "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

**John 14:30**  - "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me

 1. Knowing God produces a different way of thinking and desiring. **(1 Jn 2:14-15)**

**1 John 2:14-15**  - I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

 2. Have you ever been in the company of people talking about things that
 you have no interest in or even dislike?

 3. Knowing God will make you a stranger in this world! **(Heb 11:13-16)**

**Hebrews 11:13-16 -** These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and **pilgrims** on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country.* Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

 B. Because we know God we have great confidence in the life to come!

 1. We can take the loss of things that the world says we cannot lose and be
 happy.

 2. We can have a peace and contentment that does not depend upon what
 happens to us! **(Jn 16:32-33)**

**John 16:32-33**  - "Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. 33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

 3. Our simple delight and power is found in *knowing God*. **(Phil 3:7-8)**

**Philippians 3:7-8**  - But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

 4. There is a great peace we find when we surrender the things of this
 world!

***IV. We need a heart that is continually seeking to know more about God***

 A. Look carefully at the prayer of David. **(Ps 63:1-8)**

**Psalm 63:1-8 -** O God, You *are* my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. 2 So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. 3 Because Your lovingkindness *is* better than life, My lips shall praise You. 4 Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. 5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. 6 When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the *night* watches. 7 Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. 8 My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

 1. Consider the expressions: “thirsts,” “longs,” “looked,” and “meditate.”

 2. True knowledge must be pursued and digested. A superficial knowledge of God
 is no stopping place!

 3. Job considered His ordeal and going through a struggle of thinking to result in a
 better understanding of God! **(Job 42:5-6)**

**Job 42:5-6 -** "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. 6 Therefore I abhor *myself,* And repent in dust and ashes."

4. It was in the times of suffering and uncertainty that David sought and gained a
 better understanding of God. **(Psa 42:1-3)**

**Psalm 42:1-3 -** As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? 3 My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, "Where *is* your God?”

 B. Moses wanted more knowledge of the nature of God! **(Ex 33:12-18)**

**Exodus 33:12-18 -** Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' 13 "Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation *is* Your people." 14 And He said, "My Presence will go *with you,* and I will give you rest." 15 Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go *with us,* do not bring us up from here. 16 "For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who *are* upon the face of the earth." 17 So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name." 18 And he said, "Please, show me Your glory."

 1. God was pleased when Moses asked to see His glory!

 2. Over and over Moses reminded the people of the nature of the true God!
 **(Deut 4:39; 7:9)**

**Deuteronomy 4:39**  - "Therefore know this day, and consider *it* in your heart, that the LORD Himself *is* God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; *there is* no other.

**Deuteronomy 7:9 -** "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

 C. Jesus summed up His entire work with the apostles this way. **(Jn 17:1-3)**

**John 17:1-3 -** Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

 1. The apostles had a great advantage in knowing God because they came to know
 Jesus! **(Jn 14:6-9)**

**John 14:6-9 -** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. 7 " If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." 8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

 2. “God is a person, and in the deep of His mighty nature He thinks, wills, enjoys,
 feels, loves, desires and suffers as any other person may.”

 3. If you were to introduce God to another person, what would you say?

 D. What more can we know? Consider **(Eph 3:14-21)**

**Ephesians 3:14-21**  - For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height -- 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

 1. Why does Paul use terms like “width,” “breath,” and “height.”

 2. It is exciting to know that there is so much more to learn!

***Conclusion:*** What is your foundation like?