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## Knowing God; Personally

What does it take to begin a relationship with God? Wait for lightning to strike? Devote yourself to unselfish religious deeds? Trying to become a better person so God will accept you? Trying to win God's approval through our own works or deeds? No; none of these. God has made it very clear in the Bible how we can know Him.

It's popular these days to think of God as some kind of force-field that exists in all things. But even if all things exist and are sustained moment by moment by God's power there can be more to God than that. For example: wouldn't it be better to have a God who is more like a parent, sibling, or a friend? Someone you could talk to, share your problems with, receive guidance from, experience life within. What's so special about a God that's impersonal, unknowable, and distant?

In spite of His grandeur, the God of the Bible is knowable and wants to be known. Though God is not visible (He is spirit and you can't put flesh on spirit), we can talk with Him, ask Him questions and listen to Him, and He will give us answers and guidance for life. He often gives those answers and guidance through His Word, the Bible, which many have called God's love letter to us.

A person can have the same kind of relationship with God as he or she has with a close family member. In fact, those that know Him, He calls His children, bride, and friends. So the God of the Bible is anything but impersonal. He gets angry and sad, shows mercy, kindness and forgiveness, and is a wholly emotional being. He is highly intellectual, having personality and wit. We can know more than just merely facts about Him; we can actually know Him intimately like a best friend. In John 17:3, we have one of the most important verses in the whole Bible. Jesus said, *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ*

*whom You have sent."*

The Creator could have made us like automations (robots), or like animals to follow Him instinctively. The fact that He didn't; leads us to wonder why one volitional Being would go to the trouble of creating another volitional being, particularly when we can use our wills to defy His will – unless He wants to have a personal relationship with us.

The highest kind of relationship offers parties the ability to reject the relationship. Isn't it reasonable then, that the Highest Being would want to have the highest kind of relationship; LOVE, the relationship in which each person gives himself or herself to the other?

We must keep in mind God's purpose for creating us. God created mankind in His image for fellowship and His good pleasure. God designed human beings to reflect His very character – to be like Him. *"In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God (Genesis 5:1).* God made us in His image to know Him, to love Him, as well as to serve Him. Clearly, it was God's desire and plan, to establish a love relationship between human beings and Himself, when He created us

God is building a family – His own family. He created us so we can have a special father-child relationship with Him. God plans to bestow His immortality on us. As Paul explains, *"this perishable body must be clothed with the imperishable, and what is mortal with immortality (1 Corinthians 15:53).*" As you can see, God wants an eternal relationship with us as His children. What God wants is for us to know Him as our Father, Friend, Comforter, Counselor, and Lord – willingly, not under compulsion.

The Bible tells us how God who is beyond our universe entered His own creation in order to demonstrate His love for us in the most dramatic and personal way possible, *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends (John 15:13).*" God loves you so much that He wants you to know Him

and to spend eternity with Him. That's why He created you. That's why He sent His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus, to earth to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins and to pay our sin debt penalty, and in the process reconciling man back to Him, so that each one of us could know and understand God in a personal way.

The only way to have a personal relationship with God is to receive Jesus Christ. Jesus said, *"I am the way, I am the truth, and I am the life and no one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6)."*

He now asks us to respond to His sacrifice by inviting Him into our lives so that we can begin a personal relationship with Him that is meant to last forever. He wants us to know Him and to experience His love, joy, and peace starting now and for all eternity. If this is the desire of your heart ask Him today to come into your life as your Lord and Savior and to be your very best friend.