

Knowing God's Ways - Part 1

by Walter Beuttler

Knowing God's ways is essential for trusting in His sovereignty, especially in difficult times.

Duration: 50:05

Scripture: Exodus 33:13, Job 2:10, Psalm 103:7, Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 55:8-9, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:28

Topics: "Knowing God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story of leaving his home country and facing challenges in America. He describes how his mother held onto his hand as he boarded a train, unwilling to let go. Despite the difficulties he faced in New York City, including being jobless and without friends, he was saved from a desperate situation by hearing a voice that made him reconsider taking his own life. The speaker then transitions to discussing the importance of knowing the ways of the Lord and how it can help us in times of difficulty and uncertainty.

Transcript

I'd like to introduce Brother Walter Buechler to you. He's been here three times before, and God has used this man all around the world many, many, many times. Just recently he was in Bangkok, in Thailand, and he had physical problem, physical need, and we heard about it here just soon after it happened through the Holy Spirit grapevine.

And we've been in much prayer for him. God has used him to father many people into the Spirit. And we're going to be in prayer for Brother Buechler.

Brother Buechler cannot stand and minister to us while he's here, as he's had difficulty physically, so we've set up a makeshift platform. This is the first platform that's ever been in this ballroom, and I'm not going to vouch for its stability, but we hope and pray that it will hold you all right. And in order to have this little platform, we have to get a little table.

So I trust that this will be all right, and if not, we'll try to do something better tomorrow. Brother Walter Buechler and Sister Buechler are here. Sister Buechler, would you please stand up so we can all see you? Praise the Lord.

God bless you. As I've gotten to know this couple, I know that she's a real help, meat for him. And God has used her mightily also.

And so I'm going to ask Brother Buechler just to come. Well, three months ago or so, Mrs. Buechler in the Bangkok Hotel told the Lord she was afraid that our ship was sinking. It looked like it might, but it didn't.

Now then, I'm glad to be in your presence again to share with you some things from the Word of God, truths that should help us, and should help us a very great deal. Now, when I visited you first, I was using a text from the Book of Exodus, and I'm going to use the same text again, and then shall branch off into an area of truth that at that time we had bypassed. Turning to the Book of Exodus, chapter 33, we are coming back to Moses' prayer.

Now there, in verse 13, Moses prayed, Now therefore I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight, and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he, that is Moses, said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

Now I used that two years ago, I guess it was, to lead you into an area of truth that had to do with the presence of God. My presence shall go with thee. But now I have won my heart to lead you into another area, also in response to the prayer of Moses, when Moses said, Show me now thy way.

We are going to start out by talking about the ways of the Lord. Now this area will take us into our everyday life, our difficult experiences, our perplexities, our problems, our frustrations, our defeats. I do not know yet how far I will go in that area, but I could go with that all the way through, if I felt in the Lord to do so.

First I would like to make a few remarks, also based on the Word. God, in Hebrews 3.10, complains about His people. He said, They do always err in their hearts, and they have not known my ways.

The obvious implication is that people erred because they did not know, did not understand the ways of the Lord. Now I can take you into the ways of the Lord in adversity, the ways of the Lord in the wilderness. That is almost a sure one for tomorrow.

The way of the Lord in the storm, the way of the Lord in darkness, the way of the Lord in perplexity, what it is all about, what God is doing. We need to know the ways of the Lord. And as I mentioned from Hebrews, God complains about His people's lack.

They have not known my ways. Let's turn for a moment to Psalm 103. Now these studies, this line of the pursuit of the knowledge of the ways of the Lord, can be a tremendous help to us, to you, when we are going through serious difficulties.

When I had this attack in Bangkok and was gasping for air, and it looked like a genuine heart attack that was going to take me. That's what I was afraid of, gasping for breath in a situation that appeared you were going to suffocate. And then to be able to look up to God and affirm the power of God, and acknowledge the sovereignty of God, and give credit to the glory of God, without ever uttering one question or one complaint, questioning God.

That takes the knowledge of God. It is surprising how things can strike us without any warning. I'm sitting before you tonight in great pain all the time.

Mrs. Buechler can testify, I have not uttered one complaint against God. I haven't raised one question about God. I haven't pointed my finger at God at all.

How come? Because I know He's all right. He's all right. Virginia Beach has said to me, Brother Buehler, so many of us are praying for you so hard, why doesn't the Lord? That's a question I don't ask.

Why not? Because I know better to answer such a foolish question. You remember Job? We are told that Job did not speak foolishly with his lips. God was listening, and Satan was listening to see what's going to come out.

But we are told that Job never sinned with his lips. We are going to look into the power of divine providence. By the help of the Holy Spirit, we are going to get better acquainted with our God.

Show me now thy way, thy way, that I may know thee. Christian life isn't all a merry-go-round, and the parade, and the circus, and the Christian experience. In our walk with God, there are deep waters sometimes, dark clouds, baffling circumstances.

We want to know God when the chips are down. When things happen that appear to be the very negation of His promises, and God doesn't say, Boo, about them. People begin to point their finger.

Show me now thy way, that I may know thee. Notice now Psalm 103.7. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. Now, God, I must change that.

Moses was a personal friend of God. Now, earlier in my first visit, I took a little time with this, more than I would now. I'll just touch on a couple of things.

Moses was a personal friend of God. We are told in Exodus, for instance, 33.11, that the Lord talked with Moses, as a man speaketh unto his friend. Think of it.

Moses was a friend of God. Now, how does a man, or a woman for that matter, speak unto their friend? Wherein may their conversation differ from that with other people? A friend will share with a friend what he does not share with everyone else. Incidentally, just because we are a Christian, or a child of God, does not necessarily mean that we are also a friend of God.

Jesus said, Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I commend you. If. Now, the implication is that friendship with the Lord is predicated upon our recognition of His sovereignty over our lives.

And our subjection to that sovereignty in obedience to do His will. And if we render such total obedience in due recognition of His sovereignty over our lives, we have the quality patience for friendship relationship. And the Lord will share with us, make known to us, reveal to us, disclose to us, what He does not choose to do with the others who recognize their own sovereignty, but not His, over their lives.

And so with Moses. Moses was a friend of God. God communed with him as a man speaks unto his friend.

And in Deuteronomy, the last chapter, around verse 10 or something like that, there is a verse to the effect, that there arose not a prophet since in Israel, whom the Lord knew face to face. God knew Moses face to face. In other words, He knew Moses intimately.

Moses was an intimate of God. That is one reason, besides his meekness, why Moses had such influence with God. Moses had influence with God, as a friend might have influence with a friend.

You heard people say, you are a friend of His. You talk to Him on my behalf. Maybe He will listen to you and do nothing so.

You remember when God said to Moses, get out of my way. I am going to destroy this whole nation. And I will start a new nation with you.

And Moses said, God, just wait a minute. Keep your cool. Just think a little bit.

Have you ever thought what the other nations are going to say about you? And He told them what the other nations would say about Him. And we are told, and He repented the Lord. He changed His mind.

And spared the nation, because of the intercession, the influence of Moses, His friend. And so in Psalm 103, the Lord made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel. Now the revelation, the revelation of God's ways is a greater thing than the demonstration of His acts.

Many of God's people are satisfied with His acts. Oh Lord, let's have miracles. Let's have devils cast out.

Amen. Let's have healings. Amen.

Let's have baptism. Amen. Let's have saved souls.

Amen. Fine. But you know, God wants us to go, wants to take us, not eliminating this, but with Him, take us unto a higher level where we will understand, where we will know His ways.

And thereby do not so readily misinterpret God. God likes to be understood. Do you remember the story of Naomi in the book of Ruth? Now here you can look at that book and find, discover the way of the Lord in adversity or in misfortune, seemingly.

If you prefer. Here is this Naomi in the land of Judah. They were overtaken by a famine.

They were obliged to emigrate out of Judah, emigrate into Moab so they could live. Down there, her husband died, her son died, another son died, and a woman was left alone with two daughters-in-law who were also widows. So here are three widows in a deplorable state in a foreign country.

Two of them, Ruth came from Moab. And in those days a widow had no chance of making a living. They were the poorest of the poor.

They didn't have Social Security. They didn't have welfare. They just had to get along the best they knew how.

Now can you imagine how that Naomi felt? Yet this Naomi was a godly woman. And so was her husband. Her husband's name was Elimelech.

And in Hebrew the name Elimelech means, My God is King. Now if you look at home, I'm avoiding references to save time. You'll find early in the book of Ruth, I think in the first verse in fact, that the romance of Ruth developed during the days when the judges ruled.

You can take, if you want to follow chronology, the book of Ruth and put it right somewhere in the last part of the book of Judges. Now in the book of Judges we have Israel in a most deplorable state. Now there in the last five chapters you'll find five statements repeated.

In those days there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Now we cannot take time with it, but if you like to pursue it, you can get the real truth there. You will find that these statements used five times in the last five chapters are uttered in relation to different aspects of the nation.

One statement is made in regards to the political life. In other words, in the political sphere of the nation, every man did that which was right in his own eyes. God had been, as it were, dethroned, taken off the throne of the political life of the nation.

Personally, I think you could say the same of the United States today, that God no longer has any part in the political life of this nation. Even though the politicians say a prayer and talk about God and the Church, but when it comes right down to it, if God was still having a part in the government of the nation, you would have no Watergate. But everyone is doing that, as stated, which is right in his own eyes.

And the laws of God are utterly ignored, as is God. The book of Judges, every man did that which was right in his own eyes, is given in the context of the moral life of the nation. You get that in the context.

In other words, when it came to the moral standards, standards of right and wrong in the nation, everybody did as they pleased. God no longer had any voice, any influence, in the moral government of the nation in those days, just as he doesn't have a voice today. If he did, you would not have the new morality, which is simply the old immorality, trying to be put in a respectable category.

That's all it is. You wouldn't have these free sex and loose sex and extra-marital relationships condoned, and even more than condoned in universities, colleges, young people, in the stores of the schools the kids can buy the pill, put there by the school authorities to keep them out of trouble. Why, if God had any voice in the moral government of the nation, you wouldn't have such things.

Well, I'll say amen myself then. That is the truth, folks. God's laws have been jumped to the street, and new standards followed.

Standards proclaimed by men with their textbooks that are utterly corrupt themselves, and spread their corruption all over. That's right, folks. It's a case of right to do.

There'll be no king in Israel, in the United States, in the moral life of the nation. Everybody does as he pleases. The same you have injustice doing in the social life of the nation, and the religious life of the nation.

There was no king, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Now then, in this context, and here, if you can see it, is a marvelous, marvelous jewel of the activity of divine providence. When the nation was so corrupt morally, religiously, socially, politically, the major spheres of the nation, there was a couple in Israel.

The wife's name was Naomi. The husband's name was Elimelech. Naomi means pleasant.

Elimelech means my God is king. Now just look at this. Don't miss the name, the meaning of the name of Elimelech in the light of the context.

There were parents. The parents of Elimelech must have been godly parents, because they named their boy, my God is king. Now in case you still don't see it, and your eyes look vacant, many of them, do you see there in these parents, at a time of the ungodliness in the nation, a personal defiance of the conditions, these parents, by naming their boy Elimelech, were saying to the whole nation as it were, even though the nation is without king, even though the nation has deprived God of His throne rights over the nation, as far as we personally are concerned, our God is still king.

And if your eyes are still hazy in some of them, what you have there is that there were individual people, when the nation had turned from God, and deprived Him of His throne rights, who still kept God on the throne of their own hearts, and respected His sovereignty personally and in their family, in spite of what the nation did as a whole. That's a great truth, folks. And the lesson is for you and me, that it is possible to keep God on the throne of our hearts, even though the whole nation, or seemingly the whole, of which we are a part, has long ago dethroned God.

But you can see for yourself that these men in Washington, who had such high positions and such great power, notwithstanding their religious professions, had dethroned God long ago. They would not, they could not have done what they did had they kept God on the throne of their hearts, even though they all have some religious affiliation. And this Naomi and her husband were godly people, yet circumstances developed obliging on emigration.

I used to be an emigrant, or was once an emigrant from Germany. And I know what it is to leave a country for keeps and not know whether you'll ever be back. I never forget it.

My mother took me to the train. I left Germany because there was not enough for my mother to feed the children. And I said, Mother, I'll make one less for a mouth for you to feed.

I'll go to America. And I remember the days when people were eating the bark of the trees. You couldn't find a cat or a rat anywhere.

They were eaten. Our dog was eaten. We didn't, but somebody else took him and ate him.

We had our bread weighed on scales every morning. And what bread there was, was so soggy with water. By the way, the bread was 50% sawdust and 50% flour.

Of what kind, I didn't know. And was so soggy that you could squeeze that bread and squeeze water out of it in front of you on the table. And that bread was weighed every morning on the scale.

And if you ate it too fast, too soon, in the evening, there was nothing left. And sometimes there wasn't anything left. And we'd ask for something to eat and there was nothing.

My sister and I went through garbage heaps to try and find something to eat along with some of the dogs that were still around to look for something. Later on you couldn't find the dog. And Mother would say, Children, just go to bed at Sabbath time.

Go in and make two fists and push those fists hard into your stomach and try to make it believe it's full. Try to go to sleep. That's the truth.

And I went to America. My mother took me to the train. Long train they were.

Many, many people leave in Germany for the same reason. And I sat in the corner. I put my hand out to say goodbye to my mother.

And she took my hand on the outside of the platform. And when the train started to move, she walked along too. She wouldn't let go.

And that train slowly, but more and more, ran faster. And that woman would not let go of my right hand. And she ran in the tracks, the next rails there.

She ran so fast right along until finally the train pulled us two apart. And I called back and said, I'll see you in five years. It was twenty-five.

I lived in New York City without a job, without friends, without a language. My money was giving out. I lived on donuts and coffee for weeks.

And coffee and donuts for a change. On Sunday afternoons I had a plate of bean soup. But that was my meal for weeks.

Ten cents, a plate of bean soup. My money started to go down. I had seventy-five cents left.

And I stood on the Brooklyn Bridge, up the middle, with a loaded gun at my forehead and the side of my head. A German Mauser. Powerful little thing.

And there it was on the finger of the trigger. Because I wasn't going to big. I had looked at the bums at the Bowery in New York lying on the sidewalk front.

And I used to look and say, Feudalist, I said. Feudalists are not figures. Nor are they bums.

Before you're like one of them, you're going to shoot yourself. And I was up there with a gun in my hand. Looked down into the East River, where I would fall down.

It was so precision. And I heard a voice. There was nobody there.

But I heard a voice, an audible voice. And I wasn't saved. What will your mother think when she gets the news? I felt so sorry for my mother that I put a gun back in my pocket, walked across the Brooklyn Bridge, and that afternoon I got a job in a German machine shop.

That was a close one. Some of you have your own stories if you come from the old country. It's no simple thing.

I don't know how Naomi felt, but down they went with what little they had, hoping to find food and a home in a foreign country. That's no easy thing. I haven't told you anything yet.

You land in New York alone, two suitcases and an umbrella under your arm, and no language and no friends and no job and nothing. Now get going. It's up to you.

Hear what these women down there bereaved. Now we're going to take a look at this Naomi a bit. Naomi did not have the Scriptures explained to her like you do and you will.

Naomi did not understand what God was doing, the poor soul. Now look here, folks. This Naomi was a soul in crisis, old, a widow, destitute, two daughters-in-law who were as bad as she was, and yet a mighty, thou unseen hand of divine providence was with this woman all the time just because you or I as who may be have gone through bereavement, some misfortune, husband ran out on you, boy didn't come back from Vietnam, my brother didn't come back from Moscow either, my mother never got over him.

He got shot there in the war. Whatever has befallen us, that in itself is not evidence of divine displeasure. Not necessarily.

Look at Naomi. We'll have to turn the roof here. I hope you understand now our... Here is this Naomi in distress.

Now look at some of the statements she makes. You know, God can tell a great deal by what we say under stress. Under stress.

David said in the Psalms, Thou hast known my soul in adversity. Now, Naomi is speaking out what she feels. The woman is dead wrong, but she is a godly woman, and we can be godly and yet be wrong.

Naomi did not know God. She knew of His existence. She apparently was a worshipper of God, like the other godly Jews, but she never learned to know the character, the nature of the personality of the God she served.

And many Christians today do not know anything about the character of their heavenly Father, except that when we need something, we want Him to be Santa Claus. But God has other things to do besides being our Santa Claus. He has a big job on His hands with us.

So notice what this woman Ruth said in chapter 1, Naomi, and verse 13. The hand of the Lord is gone out against me. Oh, that wasn't true.

The hand of the Lord was working on her behalf. Even the death of her husband, her two sons-in-law, were a part of God's great scheme and plan concerning Naomi to fulfill God's purpose in her life. But she said, the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.

Have you ever said that of yourself or of others? Or have others said it of you? Well, what's the trouble now? Last week your husband had an auto accident. This week your son had one with his motorcycle. And now you're in the hospital.

What's wrong with your family? People begin to point their finger. Something's up. Somebody's hiding in the woodpile.

Somewhere there is a skeleton in the closet. And Naomi herself believed that the misfortunes which befell her were in some way the hand of God working against her. The truth is, the hand of God was working for her, but she didn't know it.

Did you also notice in verse 20 perhaps, in verse 20 the Almighty, last part, hath dealt very bitterly with me. No doubt about that. No doubt about that.

Folks, did you know that God does not only bring into our lives the sweet, but also the bitter?

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