***THE JOY OF KNOWING GOD: 6 MEDITATIONS IN PHILIPPIANS***

**MEDITATION 2: THE JOY OF CERTAINTY**

**REVIEW: GOD IS BOTH THE SOURCE AND THE OBJECT OF OUR JOY**

**JOY IS THE ORIENTATION OF MY HEART, THAT IS,**

**A CONTINUOUS GAZE OF MY SOUL UPON A SAVING GOD.**

**THE JOY OF TRANSFORMATION: PHILIPPIANS 1:3 – 7 NKJV**

*I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,* *always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,* ***being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ****; just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.*

**WHO I WAS: EPHESIANS 4:17 – 19 ESV**

*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.*

**WHO I AM BECOMING: 1 PETER 1:22 – 23 ESV**

*Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,* *since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;*

**THE JOY OF CERTAINTY**

**PHILIPPIANS 1:18b – 30 NKJV**

*Yes, and I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.* ***For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain****. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.* *I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,* *so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.* ***Only let your manner of life be worthyof the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.*** *This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.*

**THE FOUNDATION OF CERTAINTY – OUR KNOWABLE GOD**

**1 KINGS 18:20 - 40**

*So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel.* ***And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.”*** *But the people answered him not a word. Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” So all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.” Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.”**So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us!” But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made. And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.” So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention. Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.” Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.”**Then he said, “Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time; and he said, “Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time.* *So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water. And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.” Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!” And Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.*

**GOD HAS CHOSEN TO MAKE HIMSELF KNOWN**

**KNOWABLE IN CREATION**

**ROMANS 1:19 & 20**

*For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.* *For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*

**PSALM 104:5 – 9 ESV**

*He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved.
You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.
At your rebuke they fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.*

*The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place that you appointed for them.**You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.*

**KNOWABLE IN HIS WORD**

**2 PETER 1:16 – 21 ESV**

*For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.* *For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

**EPHESIANS 1:13 - 14 ESV**

*In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guaranteeof our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

**KNOWABLE IN HIS SON AND THROUGH HIS SPIRIT**

**HEBREWS 1:1 – 3a ESV**

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,**but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.*

**1 CORINTHIANS 2:10 – 13 ESV**

*these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.*

**JOY OF CERTAINTY**

**2 TIMOTHY 1:12 ESV**

*which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.*

**FAITH IS HOW I RESPOND TO THAT WHICH IS KNOWABLE**

**2 TIMOTHY 1:13 & 14 ESV**

*Follow the pattern of the soundwords that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.*

**DOES MY FAITH REFLECT THE CERTAINTY OF A KNOWABLE GOD?**

**PHILIPPIANS 1:27 & 28 NKJV**

*Only let your manner of life be worthyof the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.*

**DISCIPLESHIP GROUP TIME:**

Share with the group something you have learned about God in this last year – be as specific as you can and share a Scripture if you can.

Does your faith (how you live and how you react to circumstances, people, trials) reflect the certainty of a knowable God? If not, what needs to change?

**HOMEWORK: READ through PHILIPPIANS at least THREE TIMES this week. Choose 2 or 3 of the passages above on which to meditate. Take time to thank God for how He has chosen to reveal Himself to you.**