

Sunday Service ~ November 3, 2024

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

"If the LORD had not been on our side— let Israel say— ² if the LORD had not been on our side when people attacked us, ³ they would have swallowed us alive when their anger flared against us; ⁴ the flood would have engulfed us the torrent would have swept over us, ⁵ the raging waters would have swept us away. ⁶ Praise be to the LORD, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. ⁷ We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped. ⁸ Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Let us pray. Dear Lord and Father of mankind thank you that we can come to you for help in our time of need. We come this morning to praise you for your power and for your passion, your sovereignty and your sincerity, your faithfulness and your fellowship, your control and your care.

Where else can we go to for help? Who else is able to save us from our sin? From ourselves? From our world? From all that is around us? But you. You alone are worthy of our worship. You alone are the one we want to live for. You alone are the one whom we can trust.

So we turn away from all other distractions and come to you. We place our sins before you and ask for forgiveness. We offer ourselves to you as living sacrifices, wholly & pleasing to you and you alone. May this be our spiritual act of worship this day & may you again become our God, our father and our friend. Amen.

Song – 10,000 reasons

[Matt Redman - 10,000 Reasons \(Bless The Lord\) \(Lyrics And Chords/Live\) - YouTube](#)

Chorus Bless the Lord O my soul
O my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
O my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name

2. You're rich in love
And You're slow to anger
Your name is great
And Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness
I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

1. The sun comes up
It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes

3. And on that day
When my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will
Sing your praise unending
Ten thousand years
And then for evermore.

Bible Reading – John 14:1-17 (NIV)

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." ⁸ Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be

enough for us.”⁹ Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.”¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it”.¹⁵ “If you love me, keep my commands.¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

Announcements

Focus for Month: Service. Jesus says in Matthew 23 ¹¹ “The greatest among you will be your servant.”¹² For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” So, one of the aims of the Christian life is grow in service. It is part of the example of Jesus who came not to be served but to serve. I wonder what avenues of service do you see around you? And which of them would you be able to help out with if needed?

Stephen Away. Stephen and Kaylene have gone back to their old church at tweed heads for a wedding of one of the young ladies. They should be home this evening so if you have any pastoral concerns please contact Stephen tomorrow.

Gingerbread afternoon, Saturday 30th November, 2 – 4.30pm at the Charlestown Multipurpose Centre. RSVP by 7th Nov to Linda Small 0422 014 250 lindajs@gmail.com (please specify choice of regular, chocolate or gluten free house). All girls year 6 and up are welcome. Payments in cash or into the church account with your name and ‘gingerbread’ BSB 062829 - Account 10194850.

Resource – Bible Teaching Convention. Last week to register. Theme is “What’s God got to do with it?” How do we preach and teach the doctrine of God. The speaker is Mark Adams of Randwick Presbyterian. Dates 13-14th November. <https://www.hgm.org.au/resource>

Mentors for Next Year. Each year our church likes to offer those who have recently graduated high school the chance to have a mentor. Mentors are mature Christians from the church who are willing to meet on a regular basis with these young adults to encourage them in their walks with God and to provide guidance as they enter their next stage of life. If you or someone you know is interested or would like to learn more, please reach out to Luke Wigney or Stephen.

Operation Christmas Child. It was wonderful that our congregation supplied 82 Christmas boxes for children to receive this Christmas. Well done, all involved.

Potential Associate Minister. The Selection Committee have been doing their research on a number of ministerial options and have invited someone to come and visit our parish on Sunday 10th November. At this stage we are not at liberty to share the person’s name as we want to respect the minister’s current church situation. But they and their family will be able to attending all three services, stay around for morning tea and supper and will be formally interviewed by the Selection Committee on the following Monday evening. The Selectin Committee will then make a recommendation to the congregation who will make the final decision about the appropriateness of the appointment. Please continue to pray that God will lead us to the right person.

Pastoral Prayer

Pray for Mexico (Pop 132 million, Christians 129 million). Despite Mexico’s predominantly Christian population, believers live in fear of persecution particularly from **criminal gangs** and **drug cartels**. Christian

leaders who speak out against gang activities or who are involved in youth work, are seen as a threat, making them a target, leaving them and their families are at high risk of **violence, sexual harassment, abduction**, and other forms of abuse. Pray for the protection of Christians vulnerable to hostility from gangs. That leaders of indigenous groups will see value in Christians in their communities. That God will strengthen the Christian communities in Mexico.

Swansea congregation. Thank God for the trickle of kids that have been coming in the last few weeks. Pray that over the coming months there would be a critical mass of children, enough to start and grow a Sunday School.

Pray for our Junior Youth, Year 5 & 6ers that meet together Fortnightly on a Friday night. Pray that our leaders might provide a fun and supportive environment where our pre-teens can learn about Jesus. Pray for those in year 6 will want to join IMPACT next year and take responsibility for their own faith

Pray for Webbs (CMS, Broome), Prayer for those who attended recent First Nations Ministry Training that God will use their new knowledge to strengthen their faith and reach others with the gospel. Praise God for use of CMS house for 6 month home assignment next year. Prayer for children's adjustments to life and schooling in NSW during that time. Thanking God for his provision of a home last 10 years in Broome where family life and ministry has happened.

Bible Reading – Philippians 3:7-11 (NIV)

⁷“But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. “

Song – To God be the glory [To God be the glory - YouTube](#)

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| <p>1. To God be the glory
Great things He has done
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin
And opened the life-gate that all may go in</p> | <p>2. O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood
To every believer the promise of God
The vilest offender who truly believes
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Chorus
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord
Let the earth hear His voice
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord
Let the people rejoice
Come to the Father
Through Jesus the Son
Give Him the glory
Great things He has done

3. Great things He has taught us,
Great things He has done
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our worship, when Jesus we see

Sermon - Knowing Jesus (John H)

Some people are very good at meeting new people. They know what to say and how to engage with people they have just met for the first time, and they can effortlessly keep a conversation going with those people. Other people, like me, are not like that. Have you ever been in the situation where you meet a new person and have no idea how to start a conversation with them? You know, that awkward moment when you say hello, and then - nothing - silence - crickets, as they say.

Wouldn't it be great if someone came up with a list of 'get-to-know-you' questions that you could memorise and then use to start a conversation and keep it going? Well, someone has. I found a website called 'Science of People' that has a list of 425 questions you can use when you meet someone new.

Now the idea is not to use all 425 questions on one person in one conversation, but if you did ask a person you had just met all of the questions on the list and they answered them all, you would know a lot about them, including, obviously, that they were a very patient person, letting you ask them 425 questions. But as much as you would know about them, you probably would still not really know the person.

To really know a person, you need to spend time with them; to go through various seasons of life with them; to experience the high and lows of daily life; to know what pleases them and brings them joy; what annoys them and causes them pain; to exchange your thoughts and ideas, and dreams and plans. When you do this, you don't just know about the person, but you know them as a person. And this is the same with God.

Some famous people have commented on the difference between knowing about God and knowing God. For example, Billy Graham, the famous evangelist, said, "Most of us know about God, but that is quite different from knowing God." J. I. Packer, author of the book 'Knowing God', wrote, "There's a difference between knowing God and knowing about God. When you truly know God, you have the energy to serve Him, boldness to share Him, and contentment in Him."

And Wayne Grudem in his Systematic Theology wrote, "It is God *himself* whom we know [or can know], not simply facts about him or actions he does. The fact that we know God himself is further demonstrated by the realisation that the richness of the Christian life includes a **personal relationship with God**. We speak to God in prayer, and he speaks to us through his Word. We commune with him in his presence, we sing his praise, and we are aware that he personally dwells among us and within us to bless us (John 14:23)."

When I went to Bible College in my early 50s someone from my church said that he thought it was a waste of time, and he said this because he believed that all the knowledge I was learning was just head knowledge and wouldn't necessarily help me know God and be in a relationship with God. In fact, he said that it might even hinder my relationship because I would be more focused on what I knew about God rather than knowing him. And in some ways I agreed with him. I agreed that I needed to be careful not to spend more time and effort knowing facts about God to pass exams and assignments; at the expense of spending time and effort knowing God and growing in a personal relationship with him.

And at the Last Supper, in John chapter 14, Jesus made this very point with his disciples, especially with Thomas and Philip, as we'll see. But just before he did that, in John chapter 13:21-38, Jesus said that three things were going to happen shortly following their dinner:

1. that one of his disciples was going to betray him, and we know this was Judas;
2. that one of them was going to deny him three times, and we know this was Peter; and
3. that he was going to a place and they could not come with him, yet.

Obviously these three things that Jesus said were upsetting for his disciples, so Jesus said to them, in John 14:1, "Let not your hearts be troubled."

John 14:1-3 Jesus said, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I

go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

Jesus moved from telling the disciples about his pending betrayal, denial and departure, which obviously troubled them; to reassuring them that this wasn't the end. He was coming back one day and promised that they would be with him and his Father in a place prepared especially for them and for all those who followed after them. He continued...

John 14:4-11 Jesus said, “And you **know the way** to where I am going.” **Thomas** said to him, “Lord, we do not **know where you are going**. How can we **know the way**?” Jesus said to him, “**I am the way, and the truth, and the life**. No one comes to the Father except through me. **If you had known me**, you would have **known** my Father also. From now on you do **know** him and have seen him.” **Philip** said to him, “Lord, **show us the Father, and it is enough for us**.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and **you still do not know me, Philip**? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.”

Obviously the disciples, including Thomas and Philip knew Jesus; that is, they had met him, they had shared meals with him, they had seen him perform miracles, they had heard his teachings first-hand; so they knew a lot about him. But Jesus told them that they didn't really **know** him, not to the extent that he desired them to, and not to the extent that they needed to. It seems that Jesus was a little frustrated with them; that even though he had been with them for three years, they hadn't taken the time or made the effort to really **know** him.

Let's look at what Jesus said in the passage and how the disciples, particularly Thomas and Philip, responded:

1. In verse 4-5, Jesus said to his disciples that they knew the way to where he was going. Thomas told Jesus that they didn't know where he was going, so how could they possibly know the way.
2. In verse 6-7, Jesus said that he is the way and the truth and the life. We usually think of these as three separate aspects of who Jesus is: he is the way, and he is the truth, and he is the life. But the commentators R.C Sproul and Colin Kruse suggest that they are not distinct aspects of Jesus' character, but that the verse really reads this way: Jesus is the **way** because he is the truth, and because he is the life. Because he is the truth and the life, he is the way; the way to the Father, and the only way to the Father. And when Jesus said they already knew the way, he was saying that they knew the way because they knew him, or should have known him; and therefore, should have also known the Father. But they didn't understand, so ...
3. In verse 8, Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father.
4. In verse 9-10, Jesus responded by saying that because they had seen him, Jesus, then they **had** seen the Father.

And in verse 12 to 17 Jesus continued to teach and reassure them. **John 14:12-17** Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You **know** him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”

Jesus told his disciples that he would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit and that they, the disciples, would also know the Holy Spirit because he would dwell with them and within them (verse 17). So from this passage we can see that Jesus was teaching that his disciples, his true followers, those who truly believed in him, would not only know Jesus and the Father, but also the Holy Spirit.

And this is amazing, that we can know and be in a relationship — a personal relationship with the three persons of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. **But** what about Thomas? Did he come to understand what Jesus was teaching him about knowing and being in relationship with Jesus and the Father and the Holy Spirit?

Well, we know that he had a slow start, including the encounter with Jesus at the Last Supper we have been looking at, plus the one shortly after Jesus' death and resurrection when the other disciples told Thomas that they had seen Jesus alive, and Thomas, known as Doubting Thomas, in his cynical and doubtful way, said, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:25-28).

We don't know much else about Thomas from the Bible, but manuscripts from the early Church indicate "that he took the Christian message" and "established the Church of the East", referring to places in Eastern Turkey (Edessa) and possibly even as far east as India. And the writer of a book about what happened to the disciples after Jesus' ascension into heaven, wrote this about Thomas, "It must have taken a lot of faith to leave the security of home and travel to the [then known] end of the world with a message that might [in fact did] result in death. Perhaps history's most famous doubter [Doubting Thomas] would be better known as Daring Thomas." (Bryan Litfin, *After Acts*)

And it seems doubtful that Thomas would have been so daring if he only possessed knowledge about Jesus. Rather, we can safely assume that Thomas did what he did because he had come to know Jesus; and to know the way, and the truth, and the life as a person; to be in a personal relationship with his Lord and his God.

And likewise, even though he wasn't at the Last Supper, nor even with Jesus during his life, Paul came to understand that it was more important to know God than to simply have knowledge about God. He started as a student of the Jewish religion, filling his head with information about God and the law. In Acts 22:3 he said, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city [Jerusalem], educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day."

But then, following his conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul wrote, in Philippians 3:7-11, "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of **knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found **in him**, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— that I may **know him** and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead."

So far I have stressed the importance of knowing God in a personal relationship. But how do we go about that, how do we enter into and grow in a relationship with God? Well in many ways its similar to how we engage in relationships with people. It starts with meeting and **accepting** a person, and then **wanting** to have a relationship with them. And it continues and grows through active and regular communications.

Of course the means of how we do this with a person, face to face, is a little different to how we do it with God, who we don't see and meet face to face. So let's see three ways we can know God and develop a relationship with him; and we need to note that developing a relationship with God takes time and effort. We will need to make ourselves available and vulnerable to God and to his will for our lives.

1. The first place we should go to meet God and to get to know him is the Bible. The Bible is one of the two ways God has revealed himself to us, the other being Creation. And in some ways the Bible is a better revelation of God because it not only reveals his power and beauty, but also his character and personality. When we read the Bible, God is not only revealing things about himself to us, but he his revealing himself to us. When we engage with the words of the Bible, God speaks to us, to our minds and to our hearts. He invites us into a personal relationship with him through his Word.

This was how I became a Christian. I had been raised a Catholic, going to a Catholic church, Catholic schools, and a Catholic Boy Scout Group. All my friends were Catholic. And then I met a girl who wasn't a Catholic. In order to spend more time with my girlfriend, I occasionally went with her to her Protestant church, and doing this, I was only interested in developing my relationship with her, but God had additional plans. One morning the Pastor of that church said that we all could have, indeed, needed to have, a personal relationship with God, and that we needed to be intentionally reading our Bibles to help our relationship with God grow. I had never heard of a personal relationship with God before, and I thought it was the priest's or pastor's job to tell me what the Bible said. The Pastor asked people to raise their hand if God was moving them to do so, so I raised my hand, and that morning I not only started my journey as a Christian, but began developing a relationship with God. And, of course, my relationship with that girl also developed and Miranda and I been married for over 40 years.

Last week, preaching from Hebrews chapter 4, our Pastor, Stephen Taylor, said the following about the Word of God, "For the word of God is ... alive. It is living because its pages reveal a living person. A living God. Its alive because it is empowered by the Holy Spirit so when we read and encounter God's word, we actually encounter God Himself. For as we read God's word, we actually meet God Himself, we learn from God Himself and we have fellowship with God Himself."

Think about the way you could read the Bible, for example; the Psalms, or the Beatitudes and Parables and Prayers of Jesus, or the Gospel of John. You can either just read them to explore their meaning, or you can allow the words to move your heart, as if God himself is sitting right before you, speaking these words to you in person; telling you that he loves you and wants only good for you. Allow yourself to hear God's voice through his words and allow them to reach deep within you, to penetrate your heart so that you know and love the one speaking to you.

God has revealed himself through the Bible so that we can know him and engage with him as he shares his word, his will, his promises, his faithfulness, his plans, his desires, his love, and his very heart with us. If we want to know God and be in a relationship with God, we need to meet with and listen to him in his Word.

2. The second way we can meet with God and share relationship with him is through Prayer. In the study guide, Your Discipleship Journey, we define prayer this way, "Prayer is simply us talking to God as part of our relationship with him. Prayer is communication and communion with God."

When we pray openly and honestly, we are actually developing a loving, faithful and trustful relationship with God. We pray to engage with God in relationship; to show that we love him, knowing that **he** first loves us. We pray to show him that we have faith in him, knowing that **he** is always faithful to his promises. We pray to show that we trust God, knowing that **he** is the one we can truly trust in all things.

When we pray we open our hearts to God, and he opens his heart to us. When we invite God into our hearts, he invites us into the home of his heart. And this is the way Richard Foster describes it in his book called, "Prayer, Finding the Heart's True Home." Listen to his words, it's a fairly long quote, hopefully it speaks to you.

"God has graciously allowed me to catch a glimpse into his heart, and I want to share with you what I have seen. Today the heart of God is an open wound of love. He aches over our distance and preoccupation. He mourns that we do not draw near to him. He grieves that we have forgotten him. He weeps over our obsession with muchness and manyness. He longs for our presence. And he is inviting you - and me - to come home, to come home to where we belong, to come home to that for which we were created. His arms are stretched out wide to receive us. His heart is enlarged to take us in. For too long we have been in a far country: a country of noise and hurry and crowds, a country of climb and push and shove, a country of frustration and fear and intimidation. And he welcomes us home: home to serenity and peace and joy, home to friendship and fellowship and openness, home to intimacy and acceptance and affirmation. We do not need to be shy. He invites us into the living-room of his heart where we can put on old slippers and share freely. He invites us into the kitchen of his friendship where chatter and batter mix in good fun. He invites us into the dining-room of his strength, where we can feast on our heart's delight. He invites us into the study of his wisdom where we can learn and grow and stretch ... and ask all the questions we want. He invites us into the workshop of his creativity, where we can be co-labourers with him, working together to determine the outcomes of events. He invites us into the bedroom of his rest where new peace is found, and where we can be naked and vulnerable and free. It is also the place of deepest intimacy, where **we know and are known** to the fullest [i.e. where we know God and are known by God to the fullest]. The key to this home, this heart of God, is prayer."

3. Thirdly, we can know God because we have the benefit and privilege of having God dwell with and in us through the Holy Spirit. When we come to Jesus and follow him as our Lord and Saviour, the Holy Spirit comes into us and dwells within us to seal our salvation (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30) and to sanctify our lives, to make us holy.

In John 14:16 Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as another Helper, or another Paraclete. Jesus was saying that **he** was the first Helper and the Holy Spirit is the second. In this way Jesus was passing the baton over to the Holy Spirit to lead, to teach, to defend the Church and the believers, after he returned to the Father. The Holy Spirit picks up where Jesus left off. And just as the disciples could have a personal relationship with Jesus, so his disciples can have a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.

A bit later during the last supper, in John 16:7-14, Jesus explained the role of the Holy Spirit. "I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will **convict** the world concerning sin

and righteousness and judgment ... I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will **guide** you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will **declare** to you the things that are to come. He will **glorify** me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

And later, Paul wrote in Romans 8:26-27, “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself **intercedes** for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”

The Holy Spirit is willing to be active in our lives, doing the work of helping, defending, convicting, guiding, declaring, interceding, prompting, sanctifying; but we need to allow him to do his works within us, and we can only do this when we know him and are in a personal relationship with him. We need to surrender our lives to his leading and guiding, allowing him to reveal truth and the will of God to us as we read the Bible; and then also to allow him to apply it to our lives: as we make decisions, as we face temptations, as we witness for Jesus, as we use our spiritual gifts and serve in the church, as we face trials and go through loss and grief.

As Jesus said, we can know the Holy Spirit; so we can conclude that the Holy Spirit wants to be known, and wants us to know him, and to be in relationship with him.

Jesus was frustrated at the Last Supper because Thomas and Philip, and probably the rest of the disciples there didn't really know him. But Jesus gave them every opportunity to do so; he gave them an invitation and the means to know him, to know the Father, and to know the Holy Spirit; to be in relationship with God — and they responded to his invitation and it changed their lives and the lives of those around them and it has changed the world ever since.

May we not be people who frustrate Jesus by letting our relationship with God be like two people sitting on either end of park bench — disconnected, distracted, and drifting apart. Rather may we be people who respond to his invitation to know him and to have a personal relationship with him, to engage with his Word the Bible, to engage with him through prayer, to engage with the Holy Spirit. May we be people who take the time and make the effort to know God the Father, to know God the Son, and to know God the Holy Spirit. Amen

Song – Good and Gracious King <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BysiNSMhA6g>

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| <p>1. I approach the throne of glory
Nothing in my hands, I bring
But the promise of acceptance
From a good and gracious King</p> | <p>To the King in need of nothing
Empty-handed I rejoice
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome with joy, I sing
By Your love I am accepted
You're a good and gracious King</p> |
| <p>2. I will give to You my burden
As You give to me Your strength
Come and fill me with Your Spirit
As I sing to You this praise</p> <p>Chorus
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome, I lift my voice</p> | <p>3. O what grace that You would see me
As Your child and as Your friend
Safe, secure in You forever
I pour out my praise again</p> <p>Chorus</p> |

Bridge x2

Holy, holy, Lord Almighty

Good and gracious

Good and gracious

Holy, holy, Lord Almighty

Good and gracious King

Chorus

You're a good and gracious King

You're a good and gracious King

Closing. ¹⁰ *"I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,* ¹¹ *and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead."* (Philippians 3:10-11)