***The Spirit of Knowledge  
  
RV78-02***

We are studying the throne room of God, section number 15, on Revelation 4:1-5. We are looking at the significance of the seven flaming torches which John in heaven sees before the throne of God, which represent God the Holy Spirit in a sevenfold ministry to believers in the church age, as once they represented His ministry to the Messiah – to the humanity of Jesus Christ.

**Depression**

It is probably no secret for most people that there is today a great sense of depression in the human race. This attitude is basically expressed by the view that life is stacked against the individual no matter what he tries to do. The belief is that we live in a world which is ruled by fate, and thus we are the helpless pawns in a perverse universe. The consequence of that outlook is a depressing spirit of hopelessness, which possesses people who hold a view of humanism, which is that man's well-being depends entirely on his own abilities, and yet, his own abilities are frustrated by the powers of fate. The universe under humanism is not seen as God-created and God-ruled. Therefore, the humanist sees the world as man-oriented; man-dominated; and, man-controlled. In it, man is seen not as a sinner needing help, but as a victim who is being undermined by merciful fate. Consequently, there has descended upon the human race in general, a great sense of pessimistic depression.

**The Greek Tragedy**

This pessimistic view of life, that man is a helpless pawn in a hostile world, is of course not new in our day. It was the view which was set forth in ancient times. This is at the core of ancient philosophical outlook, and it was expressed in ancient times in a very effective way by the Greek dramatists in the form of the tragedy. This is a type of literature which has come down to us, which we refer to as the Greek tragedy. It is a form of the Greek drama. The tragedy set forth the philosophy that one cannot win in life against his preordained fate. No matter how innocent or sincere the individual is, he could not win. He was doomed to tragedy. Man was thus portrayed, as he is today, as helpless in the hands of the gods, with no means to escape except through death.

Consequently, no one, by the view of ancient philosophy, and as was expressed in the Greek tragedy dramas, could really be blessed and happy in this world. That concept has filtered down to us in our day. It was effectively portrayed through the writings of the ancient philosophers.

**Oedipus Rex**

The Greek dramatists portrayed this most effectively in a drama called Oedipus Rex. Oedipus Rex was written in the fifth century B.C. by perhaps the greatest of the Greek dramatists: Sophocles. The story of Oedipus Rex is an excellent, concise presentation of the problem that the human race faces today, and which you and I, as Christians, are tempted to fall into as well. The tragedy of Oedipus Rex dealt with a king of the city of Thebes in Greece. His name was Laius. Laius and his wife had a son, Oedipus, whom the oracles predicted would kill his father and marry his mother, Jocasta. When King Laius heard this, that this newborn child was destined to kill his own father, and to marry his mother, the king decided to outmaneuver the prediction of the oracle by taking the child; tying his feet together; and, placing him on Mt. Cithaeron to die of exposure. A passing shepherd found the boy; took pity on the child; and, brought him to King Polybus of the city of Corinth. King Polybus and his wife reared Oedipus as their son. The child grew up not knowing any other parents except Polybus and his wife.

**The Oracle at Delphi**

The child, incidentally, was given the name Oedipus, which means "swell foot," from the swollen ankles as the result of his father tying his feet together when he put him on the mountain to die of exposure. The child grew to manhood, and in early manhood, Oedipus visited the Oracle at Delphi. In the ancient world, when people wanted advice from the gods, they went to these oracles, which were found in various places. The Oracle at Delphi was one of the most famous. These, of course, were demonic-dominated places, and the demon world spoke through the priest, and the demon world does have a great deal of information that it could speak, even to a certain degree in predictive terms. That is because the demonic world, under Satan's great power can also execute the things that it predicts.

In any case, Oedipus visited this famous oracle at Delphi, and he learned that he was fated to kill his father and marry his mother. Oedipus, thereon, thinking that this referred to the parents who had in fact adopted him, Polybus and his wife, decided never to return to Corinth in order to forestall the fulfillment of this prophecy concerning himself. Oedipus, therefore, traveled toward Thebes, the kingdom ruled by his real father. Along the way, he met his real father, King Laius. King Laius provoked a fight (a quarrel) with Oedipus, and Oedipus, in self-defense, killed his father, King Laius, his real father, thus innocently fulfilling the oracle in spite of himself.

**The Sphinx**

When he arrived in Thebes, Oedipus found that the city was under a plague by the Sphinx. The Sphinx was another one of the ancient powers. It was a godlike creature that had the body of a lion and the face of a woman. The Sphinx was at a strategic crossroad entering the city of Thebes, and posed a riddle to all who passed. Anyone who could not answer the riddle was killed. The Sphinx posed the riddle to Oedipus, and he solved it. He answered the riddle, so the Sphinx killed herself instead, and thus ended the plague on the city of Thebes.

In reward for this great achievement, Oedipus was given the throne of Thebes, and the hand of the widowed queen Jocasta, his real mother, in marriage. So, again he innocently fulfilled the oracle concerning himself. His fate was inexorable. He had indeed killed his real father. He had indeed married his mother. He and his wife-mother, consequently, had four children.

The Greek tragedy, and this one particularly, by Sophocles, Oedipus Rex, is considered to be a magnificent writing, even in our day, because of the way it uses the qualities of discovery and of counter plots. And suddenly for people, in spite of steps they are taking, an under-plot comes along that counters what they are doing.

So, now the scene is set. Suddenly, the identity of Oedipus becomes known. His wife-mother realizes who it is that she is married to. She commits suicide. Oedipus himself realizes that, in spite of his sincere efforts to avoid the oracle, he has innocently fulfilled the prophecy about himself. Therefore, he blinds himself (gouges out his eyes) and goes into exile.

The furies thus are portrayed in the drama of Oedipus Rex as having wreaked their vengeance upon Oedipus for his evil, which, though innocently committed, had offended the gods. And Oedipus is portrayed here as the helpless victim who, in attempting to flee his fate, instead rushes headlong into it. He was doomed to be victimized because the ancient Greek philosophy was that we live in a perverse universe.

Sophocles sums it up in Oedipus Rex in the spirit of hopelessness, in the words of the Greek chorus. In these Greek tragedies, there was always a group that would step forward, and they would make a pronouncement together: to set the scene; or, to establish the moral. The chorus steps forth, and it sums it all up by declaring in these words: "Alas, ye generations of men, how mere a shadow do I count your life? Where, where is the mortal who winds more of happiness than just the seeming, and, after the semblance, of falling away? Thine is a fate that mourns me – thine, thine, unhappy Oedipus – to call no earthly creature blest."

**Depression**

This is a splendid declaration of the philosophy of the Greek tragedy, which is the heritage of humanism to mankind to this day. We are helpless victims, and it doesn't matter what you do. A man is declared to be the captain of his fate. However, his head is bloodied in spite of his declaration that he is unbowed. Reality demonstrated that he is but a helpless victim when he is left to his own wisdom and abilities. Man does not have a chance to be happy, nor is he at fault in the fact that he cannot find that happiness. This is the view of pagan secular humanism resulting in the depression that controls the human race together. What indeed is it all worth?

King Solomon went through the same thing. Ecclesiastes 1:2 expresses the same outlook when it says, "'Vanity of vanities,' says the preacher. 'Vanity of Vanities. All is vanity. All is air. All is nothing. All is emptiness.'"

I tell you this plot of Oedipus Rex to contrast that with Christianity, which stands in opposition to the world view that man has no chance, no matter what he does. While Solomon was out of temporal fellowship, that's what he thought. The book of Ecclesiastes gives you statement after statement that conveys that idea – that you don't have a chance, no matter what you do. It does not make any difference.

However, the Lord Jesus Christ came along and said, "It does make a difference." He proclaimed the worth of the human being. He proclaimed the great blessings and the rewards which are to be secured in the midst of human sufferings; in the midst of human rejection; and, in the midst of human injustice. This is confirmed by the vision of John, standing in God's throne room, of the sevenfold ministries of the Holy Spirit to each believer in the body of Christ. These ministries enable the believer to escape the sense of being victimized which so depresses the unbeliever today. The concept of existentialism says that it doesn't matter what you do. It all comes out against you.

That concept is condemned by the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is a concept with John here. These very torches that he is describing tell us that you and I, as believers, have a control over where our lives are going. We have a control over our personal happiness, and over our personal destinies. We are not helpless victims. In the midst of a great deal of trouble, we are still more than conquerors through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us.

**The Seven Flaming Torches**

These torches represent, first of all, the Spirit of Jehovah. In that sense, the Holy Spirit provides the personal presence of the Almighty and faithful God. How wonderful, in the ancient Greek world, would have been the thought that the Almighty and personal God indwells me on a 24-hour-a-day basis, and that I walk with Him.

The second torch is the spirit of wisdom. In this, the Holy Spirit provides the standard of divine viewpoint values for meaningful living: "I have a sense of values. I can set up a sense of priorities. I know what is important because I have God's perspective."

The third torch is the spirit of understanding. The Holy Spirit provides discernment to perceive reality in people and circumstances. How much do we need to be able to have understanding? How much do we need to be able to see through the situation, and to be able to analyze people correctly in order to know how to relate ourselves to them?

The fourth torch was the spirit of counsel. The Holy Spirit provides advice to guide our decisions. How much advice, indeed, do we need? The ancient philosophers would have delighted to be able to think that they had advice coming from the living personal Creator: almighty; omnipotent; omniscient God. That would have been exhilarating – to have His advice and His guidance. Most of us have a lot more advice available to us from the Lord than we are willing to pay attention to.

Then the fifth torch was the spirit of might, where the Holy Spirit provides the power to enforce our wills as they are compatible with His will. In Ephesians 1:15, we have the standard of this power declared to us: "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers." He says, "In my prayers." What are you praying for, Paul? "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. And that you may know what is the exceeding greatness of His power" (His might toward us who believe).

This is the power of God that operates in your life daily as a member of the body of Christ. What is that power? "According to the working of His mighty power which he wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places." That is the standard of power by which we function as believers – even the power that it took for Almighty God to take the dead body of Jesus Christ, and to bring it back to life. And of course, on this Easter Sunday, that's exactly what we are rejoicing in. A dead body (a dead human being) has been brought back to life. That is exactly what God says is to be the pattern of all the rest of us.

The Greek tragedy says that it doesn't make any difference: When you die, you're like an animal. You're dead. You're just a dead dog. You're not important. But God says that you are important. My Son died for you, and you're going to be brought back to life. No matter what happens, that resurrection is there. No matter how many mistakes doctors make, doctors can always cover up their mistakes. That's one of the advantages of their profession. But you're going to come back to life. You're going to make it. Why? That power is operating in you now. But it's not just there in the future. It's right now. That is the standard of power by which you have to function. When your will is coordinated with God's will, then this power is designed to enable you to enforce your will. He does not permit us to enforce our wills contrary to His, but when we are in phase with Him, nobody can stop us.

Satan has most of mankind trapped in the old Greek tragedy belief that nothing makes any difference. The conclusion is "Live for the moment." This is the existential outlook. Don't try to make sense out of life. It's all an absurd thing. Take your knocks until you can escape it all in death. How much better to realize that these torches represent ministries of the Holy Spirit that have enabled us to escape that kind of depression? You don't have anything to be blue about. If you understand your relationship to the Spirit of God, you don't have a thing to be blue about.

**The Spirit of Knowledge**

Now let's look at another torch. This is torch number six. We'll begin in Isaiah 11:2 where these torches are identified: "The spirit of 'YHWH' shall rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of council, the spirit of might, (and now) the spirit of knowledge." It looks like this in the Hebrew language: That word "knowledge" is "daath." The Hebrew word "daath" refers to divine viewpoint information which is gained in various ways through one's senses. It refers thus to personal, experiential knowledge.

You have it used in Genesis 2:9: "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, and the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." There we have the use of the word "daath." I think this is the first place it is used in the Hebrew Bible. This was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was the tree which would enable Adam and Eve, if they chose to do so, to know evil by experience – a knowledge that the Bible forbids us to have. We are not to learn evil by experience. We are to understand evil as it is explained to us, and as it is described, and as we learn about it through thought processes. But we are not to enter the experience of learning evil. Adam and Eve were simply told that here was a "daath" that was awaiting them in this tree, but one which would doom them forever to a totally different kind of relationship to God, unless He came along and solved the problem for them, which He did.

This also refers to technical knowledge of some kind. In Exodus 31:3, for example, the Lord says, "I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom and in understanding, and in 'daath' (in knowledge), and in all manner of workmanship." Here the knowledge is associated with technical skills. The passage goes on to describe many crafts and skills (abilities) that are going to be needed in the process of the construction of the tabernacle and so on. But this word in the Hebrew Bible also does have another quality to it, and that is that it does include perception which is gained by contemplation. It is mainly what you learn through your senses, but it does also include understanding that does come through our contemplation (through our meditation upon the Word of God).

Proverbs 1:4 says, "To give prudence to the simple; to the young man, knowledge and discretion." The Proverbs here are to give the young man knowledge and discretion. You gain knowledge by learning the content, for example, of a book like Proverbs.

Proverbs 5:1-2 says "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow your ear to my understanding, that you may regard discretion, and that lips your lips may keep knowledge;" that is, that the thought processes (your meditation) may put knowledge on your lips. You and I know how easy it is for human beings to speak foolishness, and to have on their lips anything else but knowledge; but rather to have stupidity there.

**Knowledge Comes from the Holy Spirit**

Spiritual knowledge or information is given to the Christian by the indwelling Holy Spirit in the church age. In John 16:12-15, we have this taught: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Nevertheless, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak from Himself, but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak. And He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He shall take of Mine and show it unto you."

This passage tells us that God the Holy Spirit indwells the individual believer as the fountainhead of divine viewpoint knowledge. You will not secure knowledge (knowledge that is life-transforming) in any other means except through the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God who indwells you. Divine viewpoint information is received through the grace system of perception which God has designed for our learning.

1 Corinthians 2:9-16 describe that for us: "But as it is written, eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither that which have entered into the heart (the reasoning capacity) of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him." That does not refer to heaven. That refers to knowledge. That refers to divine viewpoint knowledge: "But God has revealed them to us by His spirit." This is how you get knowledge: "For the spirit searches all things; yea, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of man which is in him? Even so, no man knows the things of God but the Spirit of God. Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God."

I have often had members of this congregation come up and tell me that they've had a conversation with somebody at work, and how the outcome of it was that they were simply rejected as being foolish in what they were trying to tell them: "The natural (the unsaved) man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God (the knowledge that He has to give). They are foolishness to him. Neither can he indeed know them because they're spiritually discerned." The people who are unbelievers can't even really grasp divine viewpoint knowledge: "But he that is spiritual judges all things. Yet, he himself is judged of no man."

We have a knowledge that is available to us. God the Holy Spirit is the transmitter of that knowledge. He is the teacher of that information to us, and that's the only way we can secure it.

**All Knowledge Comes from God**

God, of course, is in the ideal position of instructing us, because you have to remember that He has all the information. God possesses the knowledge of omniscience. In Psalm 139, the psalmist says, "Our Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my down-sitting and my uprising. You understand my thoughts afar off. You compass my path, my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue but, lo, O Lord, You know it altogether. You have beset me behind, and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high. I cannot attain unto it." Would that the human race could learn this. God's knowledge is too high. We cannot attain unto it. Yet, the arrogance of the sin nature is so evident in our society today that people think that they can attain unto the answers that they need in their lives and in social relationships. They think that they can come up even with a way to enter heaven itself. God says, "I have the information of omniscience. You will never have the information you need unless you get it from Me." God has the knowledge. He has provided the Holy Spirit as the conduit of that information. There is no other way.

Because He has made this provision, our God also then proceeds to instruct those who are receptive to this truth. In Psalm 94:10, we have this declared. God teaches spiritual knowledge to His people: "He who chastises the nations, shall not He correct? He who teaches man knowledge, shall not He know?" It is God who teaches us knowledge: real knowledge – knowledge that means something.

Psalm 119:66 says, "Teach me good judgment and knowledge. For I have believed Your commandments." Believing the commandments of God which are recorded in Scripture, which is the doctrinal content of Scripture, is the means to knowledge. He teaches us through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches us spiritual phenomena; teaches us spiritual knowledge; and, teaches the spiritual believer. It is God's provision for us.

**The Fear of the Lord**

The beginning of this super understanding (this capacity of divine viewpoint knowledge) comes with the beginning of the fear of the Lord. The book of Proverbs puts it right up front in Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." It says, "The fear of the Lord." Fear of what? "I am afraid not to go to a church service because of the fact that God the Holy Spirit may have something for me in that service that He has designed from eternity past for me to hear, and I'll miss it. I'm just afraid. I'm just cautious. I'm just on guard to miss it. I'm afraid to come to a church service with my mind all cluttered up; with my antagonisms; with my contempt; with my indifference; and, with my being there for the ritual so that I get zero out of what God perhaps has prepared for me. I know that there is a God who is holy, and He judges me by His own personal standard of holiness. Unless I have the knowledge about Him, I don't know what He's like; I don't know how I should be; and, I have no way of making decisions that are going to bring His blessing."

Without this knowledge, you're right back where Oedipus was. You're right back in that helplessness of: "I don't know. I have no information. It doesn't make a Fig Newton's difference what I do. It's all going to turn out bad. I'm going to be cut down. I'm a victim in a perverse universe." The philosophers were smart men, but they were zero when it came to discernment. They missed the boat completely. That's why the apostle Paul says, "Christians, you be very careful that you don't get spoiled by philosophy. Be very careful that when you read the philosophers, you are able to distinguish that which is confirmed by Scripture, and that which is (what he calls) vain philosophy: emptiness; and, somebody just blowing hot air, because it is not confirmed by the Word of God."

The fear of the Lord is the first step to knowledge. When you fear God, you will be careful about attending church services. When you fear God, you will be careful about learning the Word of God. You'll be careful about feeding upon the Word of God on a daily basis. You will recognize that you cannot make it any other way. When you fear God, you will know that someday you are going to stand there. Oh, boy, you are going to stand in front of Him. You are going to find everything exposed, and nothing hidden anymore. That's one of the nice things about looking forward to the rapture. We're going to find out who's right and who's wrong. All the evidence is going to be up front. All the arrogance of man is going to be rubbed right out of the picture.

If you fear God, you're going to be concerned that you understand how to be able to stand before Him, and not to be ashamed of yourself, but to be happy with what He brings out, and that for which He is able to reward you. The fear of the Lord – that's where smarts begin. Our whole educational system is totally decrepit, because at the core is the rotten concept that God is not involved in knowledge, and that God does not have to be brought into the picture of knowledge. But the Bible says that He is the first step. No matter how much learning you have, if you don't know God, you don't know anything.

**Blessing**

The rejection of God's knowledge, consequently, results in the loss of divine blessing. In Hosea 4:6, Hosea says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." How many church congregations can we say that about indeed? "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," because they've got somebody standing up there in the pulpit that's entertaining them, that's giving them platitudes; that's making them feel good; and, that's hiding from the people what they must really face with God, and where they really are. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you, that you shall be no priest to me. Seeing you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children." God says, "You can go ahead and not exercise reverential fear of Me. You go ahead and act that way. You can go ahead and ignore the fact of knowledge. You can go along and say, 'I don't really need to be that much preoccupied with learning what the Bible has to say.'"

God says, "That's alright. When you've rejected My knowledge, you have rejected Me, because I place My Word above My name. When you reject My Word, you reject Me. When you reject My name, My name stands for everything that I am. Therefore, I'll reject you, and I'll reject your children. And you will not be my priest. I will not treat you with dignity. Though you hold a position in the Melchizedek priesthood as members of the Body of Christ, I will not treat you as one of My priests."

**Religious Zeal**

Religious zeal is often detached from divine viewpoint knowledge. When you have that, that leads to a vain pursuit for absolute righteousness by means of human effort. That is the terrible thing that many whole denominations of people today suffer from – religious zeal which is detached from genuine knowledge. Romans 10:1-3 describe this condition. Paul says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." Paul says, "I'd like to see the Jewish people saved. They have a great deal of zeal for God, but it's not according to knowledge." So, those of you who are religious zealots, you may want to take a caution from there. You may consider yourself a very enthusiastic religious person. The world is filled with religious people who are religious in a way that does not have knowledge. They're taking themselves right into hell with their religious zeal.

If you've ever visited the nation of Israel, I'll guarantee you that there's one thing that will come through very clear to you: They have a zeal for religion. The zeal that they think they have is a zeal for righteousness. But it's a righteousness that's taking them straight into hell. It's a righteousness that is not compatible to the knowledge of the Word of God. They think that they can be representatives of God.

I told you how, when I stood out there in that courtyard at the Wailing Wall, the rabbi came up and asked me what my name was. I had the little Jewish skullcap on because you have to be covered. I said, "My name is Johan Van Danish." He placed his hand on my head, then he held his hand up, and he pronounced the benediction and a prayer and a blessing upon me. Those were empty hands placed on an empty head. That's all he had. He had no capacity for conveying any blessing because he did not have the knowledge to be in a position to bless. Those of you who have knowledge of the Word of God, you indeed can bring down blessing upon others, but not one who does not have knowledge.

The lack of God's knowledge not only results in the loss of God's blessing, but it also results in evil practices. That's why we do a lot of sinful things – because we don't have information. In Hosea 4:1-2, Hosea says, "Hear the word of the Lord, you children of Israel, for the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood touches blood." God says, "You don't have a knowledge of Me, and you're nothing but a bunch of barnyard animals when it comes to your morality." The lack of God's knowledge produces evil practices.

God's Holy Spirit will give divine viewpoint knowledge to the believer who seeks it. That is the happy thing to remember. If you want the information, God will give it. Proverbs 2:3-5 says, "Yea, if you cry after knowledge and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you shall understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." These qualities are all interrelated. The last torch that we're going to look at is the torch of the fear of the Lord. Here is the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of God. They go together. How will you fear the integrity of God and the holiness of God unless you know what that God stands for, and the basis upon which He will make judgment? But if you seek knowledge, God has provided a system by which it is available. This knowledge is to be sought as you would seek some valuable, precious thing: the silver; and, the gold.

In Proverbs 8:10, Solomon says, "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold." He's quoting wisdom. Gold is not as valuable as knowledge, and yet, we devote ourselves to those material things so carefully.

The Word of God also tells us that the knowledge of God, as contained in the Word of God, is the basis of our personal freedom. In John 8:32, the Lord Jesus Christ says, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Secular universities sometimes like to take these words, and they like to print them across the archway entering into their campuses: "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." But the truth of which the Lord speaks here is divine viewpoint knowledge – the truth of Bible doctrine. That's what's going to make you free. It's not the fact that you learn chemistry; not the fact that you learn physics; not the fact that you learn mathematics; and, not the fact that you learn history. That's not what's going to make you free. It is when all that learning is viewed in the context and in the perspective of doctrine.

**Love**

Even the quality of love, the quality which is spoken of so much in our day, cannot exist except in the context of divine viewpoint knowledge. In Philippians 1:9, Paul says, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment." Without the knowledge of doctrine, you cannot love. Jesus Christ connected genuine love for Him and positive volition to Bible doctrine knowledge. Those two go together. If you are going to love the Lord Jesus Christ, you must be positive to His Word. And you cannot be positive to His Word unless you have been taught that word.

Therefore, in John 14:15, the Lord says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Verse 21-24: "He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me. He that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and I will manifest Myself to him. Judas said unto Him (not Iscariot), 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world?' Jesus answered and said unto him, 'If a man loves Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that doesn't love Me doesn't keep My sayings and the word which he hears – not mine, but the Father's who sent Me."

I don't know how you could put it more clearly. To say that you love God and do not keep His commandments is inconsistent. It's impossible. It is ridiculous. Anybody who knows the Word of God knows very well that love cannot exist except in the context of doctrine. So, you single girls go out and find yourself some slob to marry that looks like a Mr. America to you, but who doesn't have a thimble full of doctrine in his soul (in his human spirit), and you have entered a life of misery. Have a good time, because all you're going to have is misery. And you men can do the same thing. You men find yourself attracted to the glamorous type of gal, but who is devoid of God's knowledge, and she is a viper waiting to bite you. Love cannot exist like that. You can get a big case of infatuation. We have a lot of that around Berean Church. We have big cases of infatuation. It's like a disease that breaks out periodically, particularly in the lower levels of the age groups. They have infatuation. They think they're having love. They're too ignorant of the Word of God to know how to love.

The book of 1 John is a book about love. It deals with the concept of love. It is all about how to be a loving person. It is interesting to realize that the word "know" is used 30 times in five chapters. A book that explains love uses the word "knowing something" as the capacity to love 30 times, as well as using words like: understand; teach; see; hear; believe; and, truth, all of which have to do with knowledge. All of those words are in a book explaining love.

**Pride**

There is a human viewpoint false knowledge, which the Bible tells us will pervert your mind, and will lead you to evil. You have to realize that the Bible is talking about God's knowledge. In Isaiah 47:10, this evil knowledge is pointed out. Isaiah says, "For you have trusted in your wickedness. You have said. 'None sees me.' Your wisdom and your knowledge – it has perverted you. And you have said in your heart, 'I am, and none else beside me.'" There is an expression of the old sin nature's arrogance: "I am, and there's nobody else, and there's nobody who is going to interfere with me." Isaiah says, "You have pretended that you are an individual – a power unto yourself." Knowledge detached from the filling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian will lead that Christian to pride. The Bible says, "Be careful of getting information and knowledge of God without having the filling of the Spirit."

1 Corinthians 8:1 says, "Now, as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies." The word "love" is a codeword for the filling of the Holy Spirit. Without love, that knowledge will make you arrogant. You can compare that with 1 Corinthians 13:2, which says, "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mystery and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. No matter how much knowledge you have, Christian, we should caution ourselves that, unless you are in the capacity of love, which means in the capacity of temporal fellowship, that knowledge, even of God, is not going to function. You have knowledge which will be mistaken, and which will be misapplied.

The Bible tells us that man's knowledge is partial at best. It's only knowledge that is limited. 1 Corinthians 13:9 says, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." Verse 12: "For now we see in a mirror darkly, but then face-to-face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I also am known." So, you never can get enough of the knowledge of the Word of God. God, however, has knowledge which is complete. He knows the mind of man, as Psalm 139 declares. God never was ignorant, nor did He ever have to learn anything. Therefore, all we need to know, God already possesses.

The knowledge of God is actually more pleasing to God than any sacrifice that you can make unto Him. Again, the Old Testament prophets emphasize this. Hosea 6:6 says, "For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." God says, "I want you to know divine viewpoint truth more than I want your sacrifices." When you know that, your sacrifices will come, and they will be in proper relationship to everything else.

Divine viewpoint knowledge is the means by which our Lord Jesus Christ Himself secured the righteousness for us. Isaiah tells us that it was the knowledge that Jesus had in His humanity that led Jesus Christ to the successful completion of His mission. *If the Savior needed God's knowledge, how much do you and I need that ministry?* Isaiah 53:11 tells us that: "He shall see (speaking of the coming Messiah Savior Jesus Christ) of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. By His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. It was the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ that enabled Him to successfully provide our atonement.

In the millennium, the knowledge of God will cover the earth. Habakkuk 2:14 tells us that, and Isaiah 11:9 says that. So divine viewpoint principles will be the norm for all of life. All of life will be lived in terms of God's knowledge (in terms of doctrine). The areas of change in the millennium, from today's world, are going to be all the areas in our world today that ignore the principle of God's viewpoint.

What a great thing to have the flaming torch of the knowledge of God working in our lives now. The torch of knowledge is going to be the basis of all the earth's finest period of history. When the millennium comes, it's all going to be based upon the knowledge of God, and you and I have a preview of that.

The Bible has several more dramatic things to say about the knowledge of God which is in such contrast to that pessimistic, depressive view of the Greek philosophers – that you're a helpless pawn in a perverse world. You are if you don't have the knowledge of God. But if you have the knowledge of God, then everything is different. Then you get a handle on your life. Then you come into a position where you can exercise direction that indeed brings you happiness now.

Yes, Sophocles was wrong when he told the world, through Oedipus Rex, that there is no man that can be called blessed. He was dead wrong, because you and I can be called blessed as have no group of human beings in the history of the world. We have been blessed because we have the ministries of God the Holy Spirit that give us the edge over all the humanity that has ever lived in past ages. You don't have to be a loser. You don't have to be a pawn. You can be one whose life is lived under the control and guidance of the Spirit of God so that you know what's going on; you know where you're going; and, you've got it all together. We have several more exciting things to add to this subject of the knowledge ministry of the Spirit of God, and we'll look at those next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

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