*“With the Master Before the Mirror of God’s Word”* by Susan Heck

A Ladies Bible Study on First John

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

*“Knowing God is what the Christian life is all about, is it not? Jesus, Himself, in the High Priestly prayer, prayed, “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3) The wonderful thing about being a believer in Jesus Christ, whether we’re babes in Christ or aged saints, is that we know God.” (pg.75)*

**Susan’s Summary** of Chapter 6– “John’s Encouraging Words to the Family of God” – 1 John 2:12-14 (pg. 84-87)

“So what is *The Message to All the Children of God (v 12)*? Your sins are forgiven!

What is *The Message to the Fathers (vv 13a, 14a)*? They have known Him from the beginning!

What is *The Message to the Young Men (vv 13b,14b*)? They have overcome the wicked one, they are strong, and the Word of God abides in them.

What is *The Message to the Little Children (v13c*)? They have known the Father!

As we come to the end of this lesson, it is important to bring out the fact that John is writing to these three groups of individuals; the fathers, the young men, and the children. You might wonder why this is important. **It is important because the Gnostics divided people into three groups, and to them it was only the fathers, the elite group who knew God. But John says no! All Christians know God, whether they are children, young men or fathers.**

Secondly, it is important to say that all of these characteristics should be true of all of God’s children, no matter what stage they are at in the faith. Even though these specific truths are especially true of the ages John mentions, all of these truths should be true of all ages.

All of us should know the Father.

All of us have the joy of having our sins forgiven.

All of us should be strong and be actively overcoming the wicked one.

All of us should be abiding in the Word of God.

In closing, I would ask you, do you know the Father? J.I. Packer says that knowing God does not mean you have a shiver down your back, or a dreamy, off the ground, floating feeling, or tingling thrills and exhilaration, or even an intellectual experience. Knowing God, he says, will manifest itself in four ways.

***1. People who know God will have great energy for God.***

***2. People who know God will have great thoughts of God.***

***3. People who know God will have great boldness for God.***

***4. People who know God will have great contentment in God.***

Do you know God? Do you have a personal *(saving)* relationship with Him? Do you have great energy for God, great thoughts of God, great boldness for God, and great contentment in God? If you do know God, then some questions to consider are these: Where are you in your walk with the Lord? Are you a babe in Christ, a young man (or woman) or a father (or mother)? Another question to consider is this: Should you be further along in your growth than you are? For example, if you have been in the faith 30 years, and are still acting like a babe in Christ, why is that? Why aren’t you growing?

Howard Hendricks made the comment once that many of us are walking around in spiritual diapers when we should not be. The writer to the Hebrews writes in chapter 5, verses 12-14, that some of his readers were dull in hearing and they should be teachers but they needed to be taught all over again. He says, hey you guys, you should be digesting meat, but you are in need of milk. They had not grown as they should have.

If you are not where you should be in your spiritual journey, if you have not grown as you should, and you are truly in the faith, then may I suggest to you that perhaps you have not appropriated the means of grace that God has provided for your growth? You need to grow. I want to challenge you as we close this chapter, and we will do it in the form of an acrostic **GROW**.

***G****et in church:* God did not mean for you and me to go the Christian life alone. You look around at the Christians you know who are mature in the faith, and I could almost guarantee they are the ones that are in the house of the Lord consistently. They are not just Sunday morning pew warmers, but they are an active part of the body of Christ, and they do not forsake the assembly, as Hebrews 10:25 mentions.

***R****ead your Bible:* If you are not in the habit of being in the Word consistently, you are stunting your growth. What does Peter say in 1 Peter2:2? “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may *grow* thereby.” I would encourage you to spend some time in Psalm 119 and see the attitudes that we should have towards the Word of God and the benefits we will gain from knowing the Word of God. I would encourage you to read it, meditate on it, study it and memorize it. Knowing God’s Word is one of the greatest means of your spiritual growth. Without it your spiritual life will wither.

**O**pen communication with God: Ladies, you need to be praying and communicating with your Father, if you are going to grow from a babe to an adult in Christ. How did you get to know your husband before you married him? Not by osmosis, but by spending time with him and lots of it. You were able to know him by being with him, talking to him. Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16 that we are to “Pray without ceasing.”

And lastly, ***W****oman to Woman:* If you do not have accountability in your life from an older woman you are missing out on the most exciting way that I believe God grows us as women. Titus 2:4,5 says, “the older woman likewise, that they be reverent in behaviour, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be blasphemed.” This is a command of God and it will be used by God to grow you into His image.

 My dear sisters, I would ask you, do you know God? Do you have a personal *(saving)* relationship with Him? Are you growing? If not, why not? Everyone who is called a child of God should be growing, whether they are a babe in the faith, a young woman in the faith, or an aged mother in the faith. My prayer for you all is from **2 Peter 3:18: “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”**