



Scripture nugget – We know God by keeping His commandments

The way we may be sure that we know Him is to keep His commandments. Whoever says, “I know Him,” but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His Word, the love of God is truly perfected in him. This is the way we may know that we are in union with Him: whoever claims to abide in Him ought to live [just] as He lived (1 John 2:3-6).

A deep, personal encounter with the Lord is key to a personal relationship with Him. Our faith will remain on the dry, cerebral level if we have never in our life experienced a personal encounter with the Lord. In such a situation, the commandments of God will appear to be burdensome and judgmental. The soul’s faith will be, at best, lukewarm, with apathy and complacency stifling his spiritual life. However, our God is a living God. As a human father yearns to have a loving relationship with each of his children, even more so God the Father desires not only to have a loving relationship with every one of us but more importantly, our salvation. St John tells us that when we faithfully keep God’s Commandments, His love is perfected in us (cf. 1 John 2:5). God is love (cf. 1 John 4:8), and the way to have a personal encounter with Him is to experience first-hand His personal love for us. A personal encounter with the Lord changes our lives beyond humanly possible. Our faith ascends to a new level: we don’t only believe God exists but we have a truly personal, deep relationship with Him! And we can say with conviction with St Augustine of Hippo: *“To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek Him the greatest adventure; to find Him, the greatest human achievement.” (St Augustine of Hippo).*

Abide in Me and I will abide in you (cf. John 15:4). This is yet another wondrous promise that only Almighty God can make. God gives us His commandments and precepts: the blueprint to follow to reach our glorious eternal inheritance. When we make a deep commitment to live our faith, to abide by God’s commandments, to make God’s will our own, His love is perfected in us and we put on God’s mind and heart, so to speak. God helps our open hearts mightily with His graces. God enlightens us to understand His laws and precepts (cf. Psalm 19:7). He opens our eyes to understand His ways and, thus, to see His Hand working in our lives. *He guides the humble in righteousness, and teaches the humble His way (Psalm 25:9).* He reveals to us the mysteries of His Kingdom such that not even the person of the highest intellect can ever know or fathom! (cf. Matthew 11:25). Every day can become a cause for celebration if we have a deep personal relationship with Christ.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, You said: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My Voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with Me (Revelation 3:20).* Open my heart to Your love and Your loving, providential will for my life. Fill my mind with Your wisdom and discernment. Help me discern Your Hand in my daily life: how You have been with me every moment of my life especially when I need Your help and support the most. When I was overcome with sorrow and sadness, it was You Who brought new hope and strength. When I was overcome with tiredness and lacked motivation to continue, it was You Who refreshed me like a wilting plant that was given water. Though You work quietly and unseen, help me recognize Your loving Presence in my life, and set my poor heart on fire with love for You. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.