

EPIGNOSIS IS ESSENTIAL TO GROWTH

II PETER 1:2

How did you see God working in your life this week? (Romans 1:11, 12)

BACKGROUND: Previously you saw that it is God who gives faith, a faith that is precious and is given when you give up trusting in yourself for a right relationship with Him. Now you will see that grace and peace may be yours in *abundance* through the increasing knowledge (epignosis) of Jesus Christ.

MARY HAD IT. Epignosis is knowledge that can only be gained by personal involvement. Therefore, you obtain this knowledge by having personal fellowship with Jesus Christ. “In the NT, it lays claim to personal involvement...It increases spiritual blessings upon the believer (Eph. 1:17; 2 Peter 1:2, 3) and determines the manifestations of the religious life.” Spiros Zodhiates, The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament, p. 624. You cannot help but notice that for Mary (and for you) to possess this knowledge is a choice. (**II Peter 1:2, fn 1:2, Luke 10:38-42, fn 10:38-42, Philippians 1:9-10, fn 1:9, Colossians 3:8-10, fn 3:8-10, Ephesians 1:16-17, fn 1:16-17**) *How could you daily experience epignosis and how is it essential to your growth in Christ?*

NICODEMUS DIDN'T HAVE IT. But he did have knowledge *about* God that he had gained through his Pharisaical schooling and doctrinal instruction and which had made him gain prominence among his colleagues. But Nicodemus knew something was missing. After meeting with Jesus and understanding that he must be born again, he went from his knowledge about God to a more complete understanding (epignosis) that began to change his life. We see this confirmed later in the Scriptures. (**II Peter 1:2-3, fn 1:3-4, John 3:5-15, fn 3:10-11, John 19:38-42, fn 19:38-42, John 1:11-13, fn 1:12-13, Romans 8:14-17, fn 8:14-17**) *Why wasn't Nicodemus' knowledge about God enough for Him to be saved?*

YOU CAN HAVE IT. When you were born again, you were baptized (a dry and spiritual baptism) by the Holy Spirit into Christ. You began to experience a true knowledge of Jesus. This knowledge is different from just knowing about Him and it increases as you begin to have fellowship with Him, by spending time with the Holy Spirit meditating on His Word in prayer, and obedience to His leading. “When Peter speaks of grace and peace coming through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, he is not intellectualizing religion; he is saying that Christianity means an ever-deepening personal relationship with Jesus Christ.” William Barclay, The Letters of James and Peter, p. 296. (**II Peter 1:2, Mark 1:8, fn 1:8, II Timothy 1:12, fn 1:12[1st], II Corinthians 3:14-18, fn 3:18, Colossians 1:9-14, fn 1:9-14[1st], John 17:3, fn 17:3, Philippians 3:7-14, fn 3:8**) *How could you have an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus?*

Are you taking time to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit with the Living Word teaching you and giving you His joy, His love, and His peace?

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