

# Knowing Jesus Christ



**Jim Raddin**

# Knowing Jesus Christ

© 2022 James H. Raddin, Jr.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Since this book is not intended for commercial sale, permission is granted by the copyright holder for copies to be made electronically or in print, with appropriate attribution to the author, on the condition that they are either for the personal use of those paying for the printing cost or for distribution free of charge to others. The book is not to be sold for profit.

Electronic downloads are available free of charge at **drjimraddin.com**.

Print-on-demand copies can be obtained simply for the cost of printing through the link at **drjimraddin.com**.

First Printing 2022

James H. Raddin, Jr.  
4403 Tapia  
San Antonio, Texas 78261

With great thanksgiving  
To my Lord Jesus Christ  
And to those who have served Him in my life,  
Most notably my dear wife Janie.  
He knows us and we know Him,  
Individually and together,  
All by His Doing.

Jim Raddin

July 2022

San Antonio and Rockport, Texas



## **Foreword**

This is not a “How-To” book. There is really nothing here about what I think you should do in order to get to know Jesus Christ.

This little book is not about what **we** are to do at all. Rather, it is simply about Him. Knowing Jesus Christ is just the process of our experiencing Who He is in us.

I did not set out with my own purpose to write this. The writing came in response to an imperative within my experience in Jesus Christ. It has recently become abundantly clear that my time on this earth is rapidly coming to a close. In my remaining time, however brief or extensive it may be, I find, in Him, that I simply must put this testimony down on paper.

My appreciation is deep for those who took the time to carefully read my drafts of this work. My wife Janie must be mentioned first. The Epilogue, for example, became much more intensely personal at her suggestion. Our dear friend Janie Jones made helpful comments and grammatical corrections. My cousin Reverend David Raddin provided his clear insight.

I can't tell you that all these words came forth directly from the Lord's Dictation. There is mixture here. But I recognize Him, and His Awesome Sufficiency to draw deep within us, not because our words are right, but because He is Truly God.



# Knowing Jesus Christ

## Introduction

Knowing **about** someone is entirely different from **knowing** someone. If you actually get to know someone, everything changes. You find yourself in a relationship.

There are many people in this world who apparently know little or nothing about Jesus Christ. Some have never heard anyone mention His Name. There are others who know a little about Him. They have at least heard His Name. Some may know a lot more about Him than that. Some may even believe that He exists out there somewhere. But I have the strong sense that those who actually **Know Jesus Christ**, intimately and personally, are a fairly small minority, even among those who know **about Him**.

Knowing Jesus Christ is what distinguishes Life from simple, temporary human existence. In the widely familiar John 3:16, Jesus said, *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life”*. Believing **in** Him is clearly very different from just believing that He exists. The less familiar verses that come next (17-21) make that abundantly clear. They conclude with these words: *“...he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”*(John 3:21)

Believing **in** Him changes who we are and what we do. That only happens in the intimate relationship He has designed.

The Greek words translated as “believes in” carry the sense of “entrusts into”. Jesus Christ calls us to a thoroughgoing, intimate and personal relationship. He says it this way in John 15:4: *“Abide in Me, and I in you.”* The Greek words translated as “abide in” are different ones, with the sense of “remain (or stay) inside”. Jesus does not suggest that we maintain intermittent communication from a distance. He does not suggest that He will hover nearby or dispatch angels or flash signals to us. He says we are to be inside Him where He is and He will be inside us where we are, all at the same time. He will Know us in a rich relationship, and we are to Know Him, on the inside.

This book is going to be about this remarkable love relationship with the One who made us and who makes us anew.

In the 1970s a musical stage show became popular entitled “Jesus Christ Superstar”. A movie and lots of recordings followed. The show is still performed in various venues. I never actually saw the show, but it only presents a fictional adaptation from the Gospels. I suspect many people were not likely to be able to distinguish the fiction from the Biblical accounts or from the Person.

One of the best known songs written for the show was entitled, “I Don’t Know How to Love Him”. The song can still be heard out there. As applied to the real Jesus Christ, there are probably many who would agree that they do not know how to love Him. You can’t really love someone you don’t know intimately. Knowing a little about someone, or just having a superficial acquaintance, is simply inadequate.



I love my wife Janie. We have been married for 55 years now. I have known her more closely and more intimately than any other human being on this earth. I could not love her as I do without knowing her as I do. I could not know her as I do without loving her as I do. For me, to know her **is** to love her. I believe similar conditions apply with Jesus Christ. That's why Ephesians 5 compares our Life in Him to a marriage.

---

I will begin this discussion about Knowing Jesus Christ by first defining some of our terms. We will consider some things we could know **about** who He is just by looking at His Name. Then we will move from knowing **about** Him to the experience of **Knowing** Him and how that transition has been accomplished for me.

As we look at what we may know about Him from His Name, we will not be relying on such sources as "Jesus Christ Superstar" as our basis. I will be looking to the Biblical record, from both the New Testament and the Old. In our text, you will see frequent quotations from the Bible. They will be presented in italics and will be taken from the New American Standard Bible (NASB) unless noted otherwise.

I will also refer to longer passages that will not all be quoted directly here, but the fuller references will amplify what is being said in the text. Some of you may decide to read this little book with an open Bible nearby. Others may choose to go back later and delve further into these and other Biblical passages as you are led. Whatever you may choose to do, I pray that Jesus Christ will draw near.

## **Knowing About the Name of Jesus Christ**

Consider first the name “Jesus”. It is from a Greek adaptation of a Hebrew word which combined a name for God, “Jehovah” or “Yahweh”, with a word for “salvation” or “saving”. It can mean things like “The Salvation of God” or “God Who is Our Salvation”. It is the name announced specifically for One described in the New Testament of the Bible who was born of a young virgin woman by the Power of God. You can read about it in Luke 1:26-35 and Matthew 1:18-25. “... *you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*” (Matthew 1:21).

There are others who have shared the name Jesus, in both the New and the Old Testaments. In our English translations of the Old Testament, “Jesus” shows up as “Joshua”, since it is translated directly from the Hebrew instead of the Greek. None of the others named Jesus or Joshua were actually God’s Salvation Personified, but some have particular significance.

Consider the Hebrew Joshua who took over from Moses and led the Children of Israel into the Promised Land. That Joshua’s action does prefigure what Jesus has done for me in leading me into the Promised Land of His Presence. Moreover, my Jesus was the one who enabled Joshua to move into that Old Testament Promised Land. Joshua 5:13-15 tells us about it. Jesus, who was described in the New Testament as Captain of the Lord’s Host (Revelation 19:11-16), also apparently met personally with Joshua as Captain of the Lord’s Host in the Old Testament, and enabled the conquest of the Promised Land.

The name of Jesus has a significance that is utterly unique, as described in Philippians 2:5-11 and partially quoted here:

*...God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. ( verses 9-11).*

Now this brings us to also consider the word “Christ”. The English word comes from the Greek “christos”, which means “anointed one”, as “chrio” means “to anoint”. Anointing was a ceremonial application of a substance, such as precious oil, to an article of worship, like the altar, or to someone chosen to be a king or high priest. It set them apart for their Holy purpose.

Again, there is a parallel word in the Old Testament Hebrew. The word can be translated as “Messiah”. It also means “anointed one” in Hebrew just like “christos” does in Greek. You don’t often see the English word “Messiah” in the Old Testament. You have to look in Daniel 9:25 and 26 for the two relevant uses I find in the NASB. The other uses of forms of that word are not usually translated as “Messiah”, but refer instead to occasions of anointings of specific individuals or items.

The Daniel 9:25 reference speaks of a coming “*Messiah the Prince*”. The coming Anointed One was also to be the coming Ruler. The passage is part of a long list of prophetic references in the Old Testament to the Coming Deliverer who would be the Eternal King. You can look to Isaiah 53 as one of many examples, including references there that are specific to the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Surprisingly, a Greek form of the Hebrew Messiah word is also used twice in the New Testament, right alongside the Greek “Christos”. In English translation, the coming “*Messiah*” is identified as the coming “*Christ*” in both John 1:41 and 4:25. Andrew and the woman at the well were both referring to the rich Old Testament prophecies of the Coming Anointed One. They were among those of that time awaiting His Coming, and they recognized that Jesus was the awaited Anointed One.

Consider another Old Testament parallel of Jesus Christ involving another anointed one. David was a young shepherd boy when Samuel anointed him to be the King to replace Saul while Saul was still the incumbent king. David was basically unknown at that time, but he had a rich knowledge of the Anointed One to come. Just read his Psalms 22 and 23.

Not surprisingly, the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament are full of references to the Coming King as being the Eternal One who would follow after to assume David’s throne forever. Christ was also an initially-unrecognized Anointed One. You can read one of these prophecies in Isaiah 9:1-7, for example. That’s why Jesus was born in Bethlehem where David was born. That’s why Jesus was recognized as being from David’s line (Luke 2:4). That’s why the Old and New Testaments have so many references to the Eternal Anointed One as the “Son of David”, as in Jeremiah 23:5-6, Matthew 1:1 and II Timothy 2:8. Jesus even said it Himself, explicitly: “*I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright and morning star.*” (Revelation 22:10)

But by whom, we might ask, was the Anointed One anointed? There are various scriptures in the Gospels, difficult to reconcile with one another, describing expensive perfume being applied to the head or feet of Jesus, possibly by more than one woman and apparently at more than one time. Notably, these passages do not use the Greek “chrio”. Instead, they use a word for anointing for burial. There is a different Anointer and a different Anointing.

At the very outset of Christ’s ministry on this earth, immediately after His temptation by Satan, Jesus identified His Anointer from the start. He had begun to teach in the synagogues of Galilee and came to the synagogue in Nazareth, the town where He had been raised from childhood. You can read all about it in Luke 4:14-30. He stood up to read, and the book of Isaiah was brought to Him. Jesus, the Anointed One, chose to begin reading from the 61<sup>st</sup> chapter: “*The **Spirit of the Lord** is upon Me, because **He anointed Me** to preach the gospel (good news) to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.*” And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all those in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, “**Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.**” (Luke 4:18-19, emphasis added). (Notably, Isaiah’s Hebrew uses a form of the Messiah word for “anointed” and Luke’s Greek uses a form of “chrio”).

Jesus Christ proclaimed Himself to them, but they ended up driving Him out of Nazareth and tried to kill Him. That “today”, for them, was over two thousand years ago.

That “Today”, for me, was in May of 1954. I was also a poor, oppressed, blind captive, and I did not know it any more than those of Nazareth. But I was given the Inestimable Gift of actually coming to personally Know Jesus The Christ, the Anointed One of God. He personally drew near and proclaimed Himself to me. I could have turned away as the people of Nazareth did, but I chose instead the response He enabled in me. He made that night for me into Today.

Jesus, the Salvation of Jehovah in Person, could not have been anointed as Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, by any mere human hand. Once again, Isaiah prophetically used the Hebrew “Messiah” word and, of course, Luke has the Greek “chrío”, for “anointed”.

That is not the only use of “chrío” in the New Testament. Confirming Luke’s Isaiah reference are two passages from the book of Acts, also penned by the same Luke. Acts 4:27 records a prayer to God from the disciples speaking of ... *Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed...* and Acts 10:38 quotes Peter speaking of *Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power...* . The writer of Hebrews also uses “chrío” in referring to Christ’s anointing. He quotes from Psalm 45:7 to speak of Jesus the Christ as God’s Son: *But of the Son He says, “Your throne O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above your companions.”* (Once again, Psalm 45 uses a form of the Messiah word for “anointed”. The Greek translates as “chrío”.)

Most profoundly for me, “chrío” is also used with reference to those who know Jesus Christ! Look to II Corinthians 1:21: *Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and **anointed us** is God...!* The “chrío” anointing of the “christos” Christ is something He has chosen to share with those who Know Him! By His Grace He has made me to be but one.

---

We have spent time considering the name of Jesus Christ, the Salvation of God and God’s Anointed King. But just knowing something about His name is vastly different from knowing something directly about Him. Neither of those kinds of knowledge is nearly enough. We must really Know Jesus Christ personally if we are to participate in an actual Life Relationship in Him. Sharing His Anointing is not something that we can cause to happen by our own doing.

Even the Old Testament counsels us to know Him. Listen to Hosea 6:1-3, speaking of a Third Day Resurrection: *“Come let us return to the Lord. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, that we may live before Him. So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord. (Literally, “Let us **run after to ascertain by seeing** the Lord.”) His going forth is as certain as the dawn; and He will come to us like the rain, like the spring rain watering the earth.”* (Some literal definitions inserted).

Let’s briefly examine some ways we may often settle for something far less than Knowing Jesus Christ.

## **The Ways We May Avoid Knowing Jesus Christ**

I have found within my old self a tendency to shrink back from intimately Knowing Jesus Christ. That has even happened after He drew near and touched me with His Presence. There seems to be an internal fear of being out of personal control and losing my independence, despite the disappointing results when that selfish control and independence is exercised. And so I have looked away. I can settle for self and avoid the relationship He offers, even while immersing myself in the organized trappings of the things about Him. I can find many companions in these pursuits before He calls me back to Him.

The simplest and perhaps most common avoidance technique in general use is to neglect Jesus Christ altogether. Many simply ignore the things of God and try to ignore God Himself. Others adopt vague philosophical constructs to try to fill the emptiness that human beings seem to have inside them. That void may seem most compelling when we are alone.

A substantial number of people across the world choose instead to participate to some degree in what might be termed religious activities. Some of those activities seek after other gods. A remarkably wide range go by the name of “Christian”. I have found myself mingling within parts of that subgroup. However, it is truly remarkable how many of those activities seem carefully designed to keep Christ Himself at least at arm’s length. We fill our emptiness by joining together, emphasizing what we think we know about Him rather than simply Knowing Him. That way, our personal independence can be preserved.



We meet together in “worship services”. We listen to Bible reading and preaching. We study. We socialize. We watch or participate in rituals. We listen to “worship music”. We sing hymns. We can sometimes feel emotional and sometimes feel better. We can get to know one another better and feel a closeness and acceptance. All this can go on while we remain distant from the Knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The content of the hymns we sing can often be profoundly illustrative of the way we keep our distance from Him. Allow me a few examples from my own experience.

It can start early. You may have heard “Jesus Loves Me”. I am convinced that He does love me. But listen to the song: *Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so...* It does not say that I know because He draws near to Know and be Known. The song says I know because I can read it in the Book or because someone can read it to me. The song would keep Jesus Himself at arm’s length or even farther.

It can get even worse when we graduate out of little children’s songs. In an earlier book, “Beholding Christ Just Now”, I wrote of one of my least favorite hymns: “Count Your Blessings”. The hymn presents the idea that you, all by your lonesome, can get yourself out of any discouragement just by counting your blessings. Christ need not be involved. Towards the end, the hymn admits the possibility that angels may add in a bit of help after you have done your counting. Where is Christ in this?

“The Old Rugged Cross” is another example. You may have heard it. It is yet another hymn that emphasizes that which is associated with Jesus while relegating Him to the background. “I love that old cross”. “I’ll cherish the old rugged cross”. “I will cling to the old rugged cross”. Why the cross instead of Christ Himself? It sounds like we can continue to hold onto our “trophies” while we cherish just the cross. When we finally lay our “trophies” down, it seems the cross can then be used as bartering material to get a crown! Where is Christ in all this? The last verse tells us He will call me “someday”. A rhyming scheme should not be allowed to dictate misinformation about the intimate relationship He calls me into with Him **This Day**.

Despite all this, I do not regret having sung that hymn, because there were times He met me there while I was singing it. He drew me from the **hymn** to **Him** in a much deeper way. It is not the sufficiency of our words, thoughts or understanding that matters. It is the All-Sufficiency of Jesus Christ, the One who is the All and In All. He is fully able to make Himself Known. I can be enabled to sing **to Him** rather than **about Him**. “I Need Thee Every Hour” can become “I Need Thee **Now**”!

Please do not think I am recommending against congregational worship. Hymns, worship music and preaching will all have their deficiencies. Many attendees can simply be going through the motions. But then, I too have deficiencies and have also just sat there at times, going through the motions. But God has continued to call me together with others and has touched me there, as elsewhere, with the Richness of His Presence. The organized churches can be among the most fertile mission grounds. People seeking **something** can come to Know **Him**.

## The Mystery of Knowing Him

Knowing Jesus Christ is not something we can figure out how to do. We cannot Know Him by diligent study. We cannot Know Him by deciding to believe that He exists out there somewhere or by trying hard to do what we think He wants. We cannot Know Him by accepting somebody's belief system about Him or by signing up to a "statement of faith". We simply cannot **Know** Him by knowing **about** Him. I know something **about** a number of famous people, living and dead, whom I do not really **know**.

I have heard a lot of preachers and teachers implore me to always remember this or that, to understand something or other, or to try thinking in some new way, and "That will change everything!". If Jesus Christ is at arm's length, or farther, it never seems to be the "gamechanger" they promise.

The preaching in God's Word is very different. Paul speaks of carrying out ...*the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* (Colossians 1:25-27, emphasis added).

God makes the mystery of "Christ in you the hope of glory" known to us, not by telling us about the concept, but by forming Him in us! Paul tells us of feeling like he was having labor pains for his flock ...*until Christ is formed in you* (Galatians 4:19). Paul's primary desire was simply to Know Jesus Christ.

Paul said it this way in Philippians 3:8-11: *...I count all things to be loss in view of **the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, **that I may know Him** and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

The mystery remains hidden from many. We cannot discover the Lord by our efforts, any more than human hands could anoint Christ as King of Kings. God is the One who makes Himself Known, and He makes Himself Known **in us**, deep inside and intimately. It is not about what we might try to do. It is God!

Jesus warned us Himself about the crucial importance of Knowing Him, and being Known, on the inside. He must be involved! In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘**I never knew you**; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’ ”* (Matthew 7:21-23, emphasis added).

Those who do the will of God are those who Know Him and are Known by Him. We do not do the Christian Life. He does!

We should consider a further word from the Greek here. We have explored the words translated as “Jesus” and “Christ” thus far. It is time for us to complete our title and consider the word translated as “know” or “Knowing”. The Greek word is “gnosis”, or one of its forms. You are more familiar with it than you may realize. We get the word “diagnosis” from it.

The word “gnosis” has to do with knowledge, but it is knowledge of a particular kind. It is not passing acquaintance. It is not knowing something based on hearsay or imagination. It is not “knowing about”. It is **Knowing**, based on firsthand, personal experience. That is why “diagnosis” is an appropriate derivative. For me, it is properly based on firsthand examination. It should require direct, personal contact and involvement.

When Jesus speaks of His declaration, “I never **knew** you”, He used the same form of “gnosis”, namely “ginosko”, that Mary used with the angel who announced her coming pregnancy. She asks, literally, in Luke 1:34, *How will this be since I do not **know** a man?* She used “ginosko” to speak of the intimate physical interaction that could produce life in her womb. Jesus uses the word to speak of the intimate spiritual fellowship that produces His Life in us.

I fear that many today would attempt to keep this knowledge as a secondhand version, dependent upon our own efforts. People can attempt to explore the “deep things of God” by concerted effort, without the intimate experience in Christ Himself. They erect deep philosophical constructs reserved for the initiated. This is not new. The early first century church was also plagued by this. It was called Gnosticism.

Gnosticism borrows the word “gnosis” to describe not a direct firsthand experience with the Living God, but supposed, mystical emanations from a distant, unknowable god that some think of as “knowledge”. It keeps being revived in various versions today, offering knowledge **about** a distant god instead of Knowing Jesus Christ personally and intimately.

I quoted the first few words of John 15:4-5 in the introduction. Consider now some more of His call to us: *“Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”* I believe that He means that. Literally.

A cut-off branch cannot decide on its own to produce fruit. It is the vine that bears the fruit by **working its life** through the branches. The writer of the book of Hebrews was inspired to pen this marvelous benediction in Hebrews 13:20-21: *Now the **God** of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, **working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever.*** (emphasis added)

I can only truly Know Jesus Christ, and Live out His Life in me, if He Lives in me and I Live in Him. If it is only me in here, I do not have eyes to see Him from afar. I cannot even work in myself what is pleasing in my own sight, much less in His.

But how, we might ask, do I come to Know Him in such an intimate way? There are many lined up out there with preprinted outlines of what we need to do to live the Christian life in various conventional and unconventional ways. I have come to conclude, however, that the answer to the specific question is simple. I really have no way to come to Know Him! It is He who comes to Know me, and you, intimately beyond measure!

God in Christ is the Great Initiator. I cannot get to Him from where I start, but He graciously stoops to my weakness and lifts me up. Each time I might think I have initiated the seeking and accomplished the finding, He shows me again that His Great Love has sought me and drawn me to Himself. I have not earned Him. He bought and paid for what I could not, on a Cross designed as payment for my sin.

God in Christ has the ability to make Himself Known and distinguishable from all the simulations with which we are confronted. He does not always blind us on the road to Damascus like He did Paul. Sometimes it is, at first, only the Still, Small Voice, sometimes barely discernable amid the noise, but unmistakably peaceful and attractive if I listen. He is always unmistakably God! The simulators are too much like us. He is the Only One who can draw us into the Holy Intimacy He has designed us to enjoy with Him.

He needs no preacher, yet He calls those, whom He Knows, to touch one another and share His Personal Intimacy together. Jesus Christ abides in the fellowship when He personally abides in each member.

I have for many years delighted in the testimony of a Chinese missionary who was called of God to journey to a small, completely isolated island off the coast of China. A woman who heard him preach to them of Jesus responded with delight by saying something like, “Oh! So that’s His Name!”.

She Knew Jesus Christ before she was given the ability to speak His Name! My experience in Him has been that words and names are often not even required. That happens often for me in my time with Janie too. Gloriously, He has chosen to Know each of us, and for Janie and for me to Know Him together!

Jesus indeed tells us *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says...”* (Revelation 3:20-22).

It is He who draws near to us, that we might invite Him in, for Him to Know and be Known right now. We should not expect to eventually meet Him and come to know Him intimately only after we die. We should not expect to meet Him on our own terms. We should not even expect to know what to expect of Him. He comes to us when we may least expect and He is always surprising to me. He is here on His own terms, because He is the One who loved me first. All I need to do is to *“Behold the Lamb of God!”* (John 1:35).



## **The Enabled Response**

I do not know how or where Jesus Christ will draw near to you. I do not know what He will say or do. I do not know what response He will ask of you. But I can tell you something of His coming to make Himself Known to me.

I was a nine year old boy when I first met my Jesus, the Anointed One. I had already had some years of going to church with my parents, where I semi-listened to preachers talk to the other people. I even remember leafing through the hymnbook sometimes to entertain myself, particularly when someone had written a trail of notes in there. I would find one that would say, “Turn to 104”. When you got to 104 it would say, “Go to 53”, and so on. I think they eventually came around into a circle, but it seemed more interesting to me than the sermon. In Sunday School, I semi-listened to Bible stories.

Finally, sometime in May of 1954, something caught my attention that seemed to be addressed uniquely to me. I do not know if it was something the preacher said or something from a hymn, or if it was Christ Himself, but I knew it was not just for the others. It was for me. I felt as if I needed something, badly. It turned out that I needed Some One even more.

That was during a Sunday evening service. We did not often attend on Sunday evening. It was a bit of a drive to the little country church. Only my mother attended that night and I had gone with her. I rode home with her in the car, up one of those little Tennessee mountains to our small town, and I remember asking her some questions. I wish I could recall what she said.

Someday I will know again.

When we got home, I went to bed alone in my little bedroom. At least it started out seeming that way. That night I had my first experience with prayer.

Sure, I had repeated the little “sing-song” prayers at bedtime, usually, and occasionally at dinnertime. I could say the Lord’s Prayer. But, even for adults, saying prayers and praying are generally two very different things.

That night was very, very different. Jesus Christ drew near that I might Know Him. He already Knew me. He came at the same time I was reaching out for Him. I don’t think I used words, but He enabled my response to Him as I responded. His Presence was more real than any physical presence I had ever known.

I do not recall whether any words were exchanged in our time together that night or how long it lasted before I went to sleep, but it has continued to last. He is always recognizably the same One I first came to Know there in my own bed.

Please do not get me wrong. My awareness of His Presence has not been continuous since that night in 1954. It has been tragically intermittent, because I have often averted my eyes and sought my own selfish way, sometimes for extended periods of time. I have turned my eyes away from Him, but He has not turned from me. He continues to draw me back into a fellowship in which He has enabled my response to become deeper and more consistent as I learn to Know Him.

I can't really describe my interactions with Him. There is no way to formulate how to do it, simply because I don't do it. Sometimes, I am made to be sorrowful, leading me to true turning away from my self-directed wandering. Sometimes I am drawn into creative choices that had never occurred to me. Ultimately, my time with Him results in an inexplicable peace and joy deriving simply from Knowing Him intimately.

I find Him often waking me now in the middle of the night, just to Know and to be Known. I discover that, by His Doing, prayer has already been going on, in both directions. Just for me, He sings an ever-new love song, and He enables me to join in, usually without the need for words.

Clearly He used some people to prepare me for His Touch, but it was no human being who led me to Christ. It was Jesus who came all the way to me, in my own bed, and introduced Himself.

I do not intend to minimize the initial experience of those who have come to Know Him through personal seeking, or in a church service or as someone prayed with them. Even in those experiences, however, I have the sure sense that Knowing Jesus Christ does not result from the effort of mere people, but by the Inestimable Grace and the Personal Presence of Jesus Christ.

Jesus tells us Himself in John 6:44 that successful seekers do not do so on their own or by human assistance: *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..."*. He drew me. He still does.

It would appear that He draws everyone at some level, at least those who may be willing to Know Him. Consider a further passage: *The Lord... is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.* (II Peter 3:9).

Read Isaiah 12 again. You will find the words, *Behold, God is my salvation.* Isaiah was literally telling us to “Behold Jesus”, for “Jesus” is the meaning of the words Isaiah uses! Isaiah 12 reads like the celebration song of one who Knows Him.

For the one who truly Knows Him, there is ultimately only one way for Him to be Known. Surely we can know Him to be Jesus (God’s Salvation) and Christ (God’s Anointed One). But as He draws near, there is no way for me to recognize Him as anything other than my Lord.

We have used the term “Lord” frequently in this discussion without comment, even earlier on this page. The word is common enough that people seem to know what it means, but it is now time to really look. The Greek word translated as “Lord” is “kurios”, coming from “kuros” which means authority. A “kurios” is a master, exercising absolute, supreme ownership rights with complete authority. It appears 722 times in the New Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word translated as “Lord” is the unpronounceable “Yhvh”, the proper name for Almighty God Himself. It appears 6220 times in the Old Testament, but it was too holy to be spoken. It was sometimes paraphrased as “Yahweh” (with Yhwh) or “Jehovah” (with Jhvh), the same Jehovah as we see in the name of Jesus.

In the Gospels, Jesus applies the Lord term of “Kurios” to the Father, the Almighty God, but the disciples, and others across the New Testament, apply the same term to Jesus. Not only that, but in places like John 13:13, Jesus acknowledges that the term is appropriate to Him, just as it is to the Father. He asks them, if you consider Me to be the absolute authority, why are you not behaving in absolute obedience?

He asks me not to just call Him Lord, but to submit to His Lordship ability to work His Will in me. He is Absolute God, stooping to live in me and make me Whole and Holy. There is no other way to truly Know Him. How can I possibly take Almighty God Himself casually, or as anything other than Lord of All, including every part of me? That is where the work of Knowing Jesus Christ is taking place in me in these days!

Jesus is God Himself, made enough like me so that, through the Working of the Cross and the Resurrection, I might be given to Know Him and be remade, not just in His Image, but **in Him**.

I need not seek some other source. Jesus said in Matthew 28:18, *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”* He is fully capable of making Himself Known to me and working in me that which is well pleasing in His sight. Why would I consider trying to figure it out or do it myself? Why would I consider relying on someone else to educate me on what I need to do to please Him? If I Know Jesus Christ, others may be sharers with me in His Fellowship, but I need no intermediary.

## **Epilogue**

Christ continues to fashion, mold and enable my response to Know and be remade in Him. I must relate just a few sharable examples out of the 68 or so years since I met Him in 1954.

In the summer of 1962, I was preparing to enter my senior year in high school in Albuquerque. The Lord had called me to teach the sixth grade boys' Sunday School class in the Air Force Base Chapel program. I was not an adult like most other teachers there, but He had me there anyway. I had heard we were getting a new Base Chaplain that summer, and one day it happened. The most beautiful girl walked into the Sunday School assembly room of Building T-239. We met. I remember it well. She turned out to be the daughter of the new Base Chaplain. She was preparing to enter her senior year in high school too. She was called to teach the sixth grade girls. We had joint class picnics together. We were in the Chapel Choir together. She could sing; I couldn't. Nevertheless, despite all that, we ended up dating other people. Seriously. We went to colleges far distant from one another and lost contact.

But then, I returned home from my sophomore year at MIT for summer break. I was no longer involved with my long-distance girlfriend. That first Sunday, I went to the early service in the chapel annex right next door to Building T-239. I had never gone to the early service there, but my mother had decided to go and I went with her. Mother noticed that Janie was there with her mother and mentioned that Janie was no longer engaged.

Janie and I met again at that service. We married two years later, in June of 1967, 55 years ago. I had to start these examples, in detail, with Janie, my foundational human relationship.

I also had a new realization as I wrote these words. I have now described two church services I attended at odd times with my mother, just the two of us. As I have written this, I looked back and realized those were the only two I can remember attending just with her. My father, sister and/or brother were generally with us, but conspicuously not on those two occasions. She was used by Him to accomplish the prelude to my beginning to Know and love the Lord Jesus Christ in 1954 and also to my beginning to know and love my Janie in 1965. Mother died in 1973 and is with Him now. Thanks be to God for her!

All those early years came before the advent of cell phones. Janie and I wrote daily letters during the last two years of college before we married. We still have them. Each one includes a 3 by 5 notecard with notes from the nightly Bible study we did together. I saved quarters for our weekly, long distance call from the phone booth. We have continued to Know each other in Him ever more intimately in the ensuing years.

Jesus Christ greatly used my time at MIT. I had been involved in Christian groups in high school, but I expected that to end. MIT is not known as a Christian school, but I did find remarkable Christians. The people of God often flourish differently when it is harder than when they are more generally accepted. We had small gatherings for Bible studies. I later participated in a gathering of four of us, simply for prayer together, **every night** at 11:30 for an hour or so, including weekends and finals week!

Later on, as a Captain in the US Air Force in the summer of 1971, I had been using my degree as an engineer, but I had become spiritually restless. We were enjoying a weekly Thursday night home Bible study and also our chapel fellowship, but I could not escape a growing imperative that the Lord wanted me go to medical school. It was not a call to be a doctor; just to go to medical school. One thing at a time...

The idea was eminently impractical. My degree was in Aeronautics and Astronautics. I had not even taken biology in college, or any other life sciences for that matter. I looked into medical school prerequisites. I had none of them. I was in Alamogordo, New Mexico, working full time in the Air Force. The nearest university was over 70 miles away. It seemed absurd to take the required Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) since I had no background in life sciences. But He made it clear. I was to go to medical school.

One afternoon it came to a head. I cleared off my desk at work. My officemate was out of town. I closed the door and determined to pray it through. I “explained” to my Lord Jesus Christ that I had tried, but that all the doors were closed. I could see no way. There must be something else. Was I not hearing Him correctly?

On very rare occasions, I have heard Him speak to me in actual words that seemed to be actually audible in the room. This was one of those occasions. All He said was this: “Are the doors locked?” Clearly, I was to follow Him, not just to follow “open doors”!



I sat up and picked up the phone and asked Janie if she were willing for us to go to medical school. I enrolled in a night course in biology through New Mexico State's extension program in Alamogordo. I signed up for the MCAT. I sent off for an application to the University of New Mexico School of Medicine in Albuquerque. I applied for USAF sponsorship for the program. I enrolled in correspondence courses in human physiology and organic chemistry.

I knew I needed a laboratory course in organic chemistry. A lab can't be done by correspondence, so I called the Department of Chemistry at New Mexico State in Las Cruces. I explained my problem to the Department secretary and asked if there was any way to drive over once a week and take just the lab portion of their course. She said she had never heard of that being done. Then she said that the Department Chairman was standing right there by her desk and that she would hand the phone to him.

One year later, in August of 1972, I entered medical school and graduated 3½ years after. All doors fell open at His Command.

We moved back to Albuquerque for medical school, joined a local church and soon started teaching an adult Sunday school class. We also started a new home Bible Study, expecting to rapidly reproduce our old group of about 25 but, for some time, only Janie, I, and two others came. We were confused at first, but the Lord told us clearly to be content with His Provision. By graduation, we were averaging well over 100, from teenagers to elderly, and had to meet in a hospital conference room. All those things continued despite the rigors of med school.

During those years, we lived very close to my parents' home during the last sixteen months of my Mother's life as she died of cancer. I had much priceless time with her on my way home from class. As a med student, I struggled with the fact that I was studying disciplines that had no answer for her. I struggled more as He prevented me from praying for her healing, but He made it profoundly clear. She was safe in His Arms. She still is!

My Air Force career came to involve difficult episodes, including some odd time in Africa and a hostage experience in South America. The Lord spread His Peace and Provision over all of it for me, for Janie, and, I think, even for our children.

My Bible teaching transitioned. I initially used some 3 by 5 cards for my notes. One day He asked, audibly, "Who are you trusting for your notes?". No more 3 by 5s!

At the 20 year point in the Air Force in 1988, I found myself as a Colonel and the Vice Commander of the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine. One morning, He led me to sign and turn in my retirement papers. I had not written a resume nor had I looked for a job, but He gave me not only a job but a second career. This one utilized all the medical, engineering and management education and experience He had brought me through. Needless to say, the Sunday morning and Thursday night Bible teaching and the rich fellowship continued.

The episodes just described do not imply that He only draws near intermittently at our so-called major turning points. He simply **abides**! The fuller richness of His Presence is found in the quiet moments of our days and deep in the night watches.

He has confronted me with my thought life and changed me. He still does, showing me the need for ever deeper change. When He asks me why I'm choosing unsharable thoughts, it hurts, but the private spiritual turning points He brings about are far more significant than the superficial ones I often seek. They lead me into a surer Knowledge of Jesus Christ that Only He can give.

That walk **In Him** leads us beside the still waters despite all else that may come our way. We face the workings of a world turned away from Him. We have faced the death of some who were closest to us, and we likely will face others. We also mourn disappointing choices made by those we love. We mourn hard outcomes deriving from poor choices we ourselves have made in the past. But He sheds His Peace, His Love and His Redemption lavishly over us. He has carried us and all else to the Cross, that we might Know Him, right now and forever.

That has been the quiet story of the last 34 years since retiring from the Air Force. Two dozen years of a busy second career seemed to have far too many days and nights full of high pressure work, airplane flights and hotel rooms. But the time in His Presence and with Janie continues to grow richer. We have seen our children grow, move out, marry, and produce our grandchildren. Our lives have not been free of stressful events, failures and discouragements, but in their midst, He draws close and demonstrates His Inexhaustible Sufficiency.

In the most recent decade, we have moved progressively into retirement and have found ourselves growing old together. Things change. A lot! But He does not!

Prodded further by the pandemic, face-to-face Bible teaching has been largely replaced by His leading to write a devotional book. Then another. And another. This will be the fifth. He has made it clear that I am not supposed to sell them. They are most assuredly in His Hands and already seem to be touching lives.

Almost a year ago, I noticed a new arrhythmia in my heart. I was found to have had a “silent” heart attack with a total blockage of my main coronary artery and complete loss of function of a significant portion of my heart. That remains true today. Things have changed even more, but my days are rich ones in His Presence. Janie and I treasure each unearned day He gives us together, for the joy set before us in Him.

There is no way to append the words, “The End” to a discussion of Knowing Jesus Christ, even for someone like me as I contemplate the coming end of my days here on this earth. Consider Ephesians 2:4-7: *But **God**, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, **made us alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), **and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

My New Life in Him is as surely in the heavenly places right now as it is here on this earth. Janie is in Him too. That Life in Him has no end. We will not be there for any “ten thousand years bright shining as the sun”. He is far brighter than the sun and there are no years to be counted. There is only One Day, because there is no night there. We live in His Eternal Now.

I surely have not seen, nor do I understand, all that He has prepared for us in the New Heaven and the New Earth. **But I See Him.** He draws me to keenly desire to Know Him more fully, face to Face, now and in the New Creation He prepares.

I no longer struggle about being prevented from praying for my Mother's healing. As I write these words, I find no need to be in prayer for my own. I am safe in His Arms.

Do not mourn for me when my earthly body dies. When I am buried, I will not be asleep or awaiting anything. Just rejoice with me that Jesus Christ has given me the rich privilege of Knowing Him and Being Known by Him, both in this earth and, even now, in the heavenly places. Christ in me has become not only the Hope of Glory. He is more than the Promise of Glory. **He Is the Glory!**

May He enable an eternal response in you to Know Him.

---

---

The cover photo is a picture taken by Janie on a trip we made to Maui. Lately, I have thought more about the words in Daniel 7:13-14, Acts 1:9-11, I Thessalonians 4:15-18, and Revelation 1:7. I have spent a lot of time in these days just looking to the clouds, and waiting, secure in the knowledge that He is already here and I am already There.

---

## **Books by Jim Raddin**

Experiencing the Holy Days (2017)

Recognizing Christ in the Old Testament (2019)

Beholding Christ, Just Now (2020)

Singing the Song of Songs (2021)

Knowing Jesus Christ (2022)

All the books are available for free download or for you to print-your-own at:

**[drjimraddin.com](http://drjimraddin.com)**

I have never sold any of the books, but links are available on the website to the commercial sources I have used for print-on-demand copies to give away. You will only pay for their cost of printing, but some do have minimum order quantities.





Knowing Jesus Christ is what I was fundamentally created for, but it is not something I could do by my own effort. It's very different from just knowing about Him. Life is not what I know and what I do. Life is Who I know. Jesus personally initiates an intimate relationship in Him by drawing near and enabling my eternal response to know Him.

*...I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord... Philippians 3:8 (NASB)*

---



Dr. Jim Raddin is a Christian. He and his wife Janie celebrated their 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June 2022. They have two children, six grandchildren, and one greatgrandchild.

Jim retired from the US Air Force as a Colonel in 1988 after 20 years of active duty, first as an aeronautical engineer and then as a physician and flight surgeon. He did research in impact protection, including participation as a volunteer subject in his own experimental impact tests. His last assignment was as vice commander of the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine at Brooks AFB, Texas.

Jim holds two degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). His Bachelor's was in Aeronautics and Astronautics in 1967 and his Master's was in Management in 1983 as a Sloan Fellow at the MIT Sloan School. In between, he earned his MD degree in 1975 from the University of New Mexico School of Medicine in Albuquerque. He did a straight surgery internship and was later board certified in Aerospace Medicine.

After retiring from the USAF, Jim was a consultant in impact injury causation and impact protection for over 20 years with Biodynamic Research Corporation in San Antonio, Texas. His clients included both aircraft and automotive manufacturers and NASCAR. He retired again in 2010. Jim and Janie make their home in San Antonio with part-time in Rockport, Texas. He was not expecting to be writing books in retirement.

Jim's books derive from years of Bible teaching and a growing experience in knowing Jesus Christ. They are not commercial endeavors. None have ever been sold. Anyone can download them free of charge from [drjimraddin.com](http://drjimraddin.com) and print them for your own use or to give away. You will also find links there to sources for print-on-demand copies available solely for the cost of printing, but not to be sold for profit.