

INTRODUCTION

There are a lot of trivial facts floating around in our world. These are sometimes called “useless facts.” While all these statements are fact, they probably won’t change your life. Here’s what I consider to be 10 facts you might not know:

1. Americans eat about 18 acres of pizzas each day
2. It’s physically impossible to lick your elbow.
3. A majority of people who hear that it is physically impossible to lick their elbow will try to lick their elbow.
4. It’s impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.
5. A duck quack doesn’t echo—and nobody knows why.
6. No word in the English language rhymes with “month, orange, silver, or purple.”
7. Each year donkeys kill more people than airplane crashes.
8. Walt Disney was terrified of mice.
9. Grapes explode when heated in a microwave.
10. Within 24 hours several kids in Tyler, Texas will be cleaning grapes from the inside of a microwave.

Some things aren’t worth knowing, but today we’re going to discover the one thing worth knowing. As we study the Book of Job, we’ve learned a lot about God and ourselves. Job’s tale is the most famous riches-to-rags-to-riches story in all of literature. In the middle of his suffering, Job utters many amazing observations about God. He reveals a powerful persistence to trust God throughout his pain.

In Job 19 we get a glimpse of how bad things got, then we hear Job express his undying hope and trust in God. “My breath is offensive to my wife; I am loathsome to my own brothers. Even the little boys scorn me; when I appear, they ridicule me. All my intimate friends detest me; those I love have turned against me. I am nothing but skin and bones; I have escaped with only the skin of my teeth.” (Job 19:17-20) But even as bad things were, Job refused to quit. In the midst of his suffering, he made a profession of faith that is the key to the entire book. “Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:23-27)

In 1991 Billy Crystal starred in a movie called “City Slickers.” He played a character named Mitch who was a hard-driving urban executive whose job and marriage were falling apart. He convinced some of his city friends to take a trip to a ranch in New Mexico to learn how to herd cattle.

Jack Palance won an Oscar for his role as the crusty old cowboy named Curly. In one scene Mitch and Curly are riding alone and Mitch has just poured out his heart about how miserable his life really was. Curly said: Do you know what the secret to life is? (he holds up his index finger) This. One thing. Just one thing. You stick with that and everything else don’t mean

nuthin'. Mitch replied, "That's great, but what's the one thing?" "That's what you gotta' figure out." Curly said.

Our friend Job had come to that understanding. In the midst of his agony and suffering he hung onto the One Thing he knew. He said, "I know that my Redeemer lives!" To cut to the chase, the one thing in life is: Knowing Jesus Christ as your Redeemer. Job used his tears as telescopes to look ahead and believe there would be Someone who would redeem his life from destruction. He didn't know His name was Jesus, but today, we know Jesus is the Redeemer Job saw by faith. Job had a personal relationship with his Redeemer. I want to share seven characteristics of this life-changing relationship.

1. IT IS A POSITIVE KNOWLEDGE

There were a lot of things Job didn't know. He didn't know why he was suffering. He didn't know why his friends were accusing him. In the midst of his uncertainty, he proclaimed there was one thing he *did* know. Job said, "I KNOW that my Redeemer lives." He didn't say "I hope," or "I think" or "Perhaps" my Redeemer lives. He was positive. I KNOW! In the Hebrew language, the first personal pronoun is intensified. It's like Job said, "**I** know" as opposed to anyone else knowing the answer.

The word "know" means to know by experience. It was a word that carried the concept of intimate knowledge. In Genesis 4, the Bible says that Adam "knew" his wife, Eve, and she conceived and bore a child." Knowing God doesn't come from reading a book or hearing a message. It happens when you meet Jesus Christ and you begin to know Him in a personal way. Job knew God by experience—he didn't just take a course called "Experiencing God"—he really WAS experiencing God! Can you say that? Do you have that assurance? Can you say, "I know that I know that I know my Redeemer lives?" Knowing Jesus involves positive knowledge.

2. IT IS PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

Job didn't say "I know *a* Redeemer" or "I know *the* Redeemer." This is a "person knowledge." He said, "I know that MY Redeemer lives."

The word "my" may denote selfish ownership when someone says, "That's MY car, get your hands off of it." But the word "my" can also denote connection, like when I say, "This is my hand." It's one thing to say, "Jesus is Lord" and it's another thing to say, "Jesus is MY Lord." In the first you're simply acknowledging Jesus is ruler over the universe. But when you say Jesus is MY Lord, you're confessing He is ruler over your life.

"My" is such a beautiful word. The Psalmist wrote: "The Lord is MY Shepherd." Imagine a group of young ladies cooing over a bassinet of a newborn baby. One says, "She is such a precious baby!" Another says, "What an adorable baby!" A third says, "What a well-behaved baby!" Finally one of the women speaks up and says, "thank you, that's MY baby!" That little word "MY" made a huge difference. Job said, I know MY Redeemer lives. Jesus is the Redeemer, but can you say today, "Jesus is MY Redeemer?"

One reason so many teenagers and college students go through a time of spiritual crisis is because they have to decide for themselves what they been taught by their parents, pastors, and teachers. Being born in a Christian home doesn't make you a Christian any more than being born in a garage makes you a car. God has no grandchildren. Every single person must come to a place in their lives when they decide to crown Jesus as Lord of their lives. Can you say with a heart full of faith: I know that my Redeemer lives? Jesus is MY Lord! It must be a *personal* knowledge.

3. IT IS PRECISE KNOWLEDGE

Job didn't say, “I know the Lord lives.” He didn't say, “I know God lives.” Instead he gave a very precise and specific title for God. He said, “I know that my *Redeemer* lives.”

Have you ever heard the expression, “It's WHO you know that matters?” Our guest speaker at a recent staff development meeting said something interesting about this. He said, “It's not WHO you know that matters; and it's not WHAT you know that matters...it's WHAT you know about WHO you know that matters!”

That remark earned a good laugh, and as I was chuckling, I was thinking about this message today. It's who you know that matters when it comes to knowing God, but you've got to know who God really is in order to know Him. And the best place to find what God is like is in the Bible.

Job used the word “Redeemer” which is go'el in Hebrew. In the Old Testament a go'el was someone who “bought back” something valuable that had been lost or forfeited. The impact of a redeemer can be seen in the wonderful story of Ruth. When she and Naomi returned home as widows, they had no claim to any property Naomi's husband had owned. They were destitute. The hero of the story was the handsome Boaz who fell in love with Ruth and married her. In that act he became the Kinsman Redeemer and bought back all the property that once belonged to Naomi's family. This is a wonderful picture of what Jesus, our Redeemer has done for us.

Because of our spiritual condition we have no right to claim the blessings God originally intended for His creatures. Jesus is our Champion who came to pay the price for our sins so we can be a part of God's family. He is our blessed Redeemer. Titus 2:14 says, “Jesus Christ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness...” He bought us back.

I read a story about a boy who built a miniature sailboat. He carefully crafted the wood to make it watertight. Then he took a piece of cloth and cut it as a sail. After weeks of work, his toy sailboat was ready. He took it to a small lake in the park and shoved it off. It floated! And then the wind filled the little sail and it quickly sailed away. He ran around the little lake to retrieve it, but when he got to the other side he couldn't find it.

He was saddened because he assumed it had sunk and was lost forever. A few days later he was walking by a toy store and saw his sailboat displayed in the window. He ran inside and said, “That's my boat!” The owner listened to his story and said, “Son, a man came in a few days ago and I paid him \$5 for that boat. If you want it I'll sell it to you for \$5.”

The little boy didn't have that much money, so he worked extra jobs around his neighborhood raking leaves, and running errands until he had earned \$5. He ran into the toy store and laid down a couple of wrinkled dollar bills and a fist full of change. The storekeeper counted the change and handed the sailboat to the proud boy. He walked outside and hugged it to himself and said, "You're MINE now; you're twice mine, because I made you and now I've bought you!" That's what our Redeemer did for us. He made us and then He bought us back from the penalty of sin!

4. IT IS PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

It's interesting that even though Job spoke these words almost 4,000 years ago, he used the correct tense for the verb "to live." He said, "I know that my Redeemer lives." He didn't say, "I know my Redeemer lived" or "I know that my Redeemer will live." The Hebrew verb there is "hay" which literally means "living." It's the same word used to describe "the Living God." Job knew one day he would die, but His Redeemer lives and would live forever.

Jesus isn't just one of several religious leaders who lived and died. He lived, and He died, but He rose from the dead. And He is alive forever more.

Do you have a living relationship with Jesus? Do you know Jesus the same way you know George Washington? Chances are you believe the facts about Jesus' life, but that's not the same thing as knowing Him. You can believe He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and even rose from the dead. Sadly, it's possible to believe all those historical facts about Jesus without actually having a living relationship with Him. In other words, some of you believe in Jesus Christ the same way you believe in George Washington. You believe he lived and fought for America and was even our first president, but you certainly don't know him. There is an eternity of difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus.

You may wonder how a person can know if he has a living relationship with Jesus. The simplest answer I know to that is to ask you, "Have you talked to Him today?" I don't know that I've ever addressed any words to George Washington, but I talked to Jesus just a few minutes ago. I love the song that says, "He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today. He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart!" (Words by Alfred Ackley)

5. IT IS PROPHETIC KNOWLEDGE

As Job looked through his telescopic tears he made a prophetic statement. He said, "In the end he will stand upon the earth." The word "end" means "end of time." Throughout the Bible we read that one day when Jesus returns He will stand in victory upon the earth. In describing what will be the Battle of Armageddon, the prophet Zechariah wrote: "Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south." (Zechariah 14:3-4)

If you are a child of God you can look forward with anticipation to the return of the Lord Jesus. One day He *will* stand upon the earth. The Apostle Paul wrote in II Timothy 4:8 that there is a crown of righteousness laid up for all those who love His appearing. Do you long for His appearing? There's a difference between loving Jesus and loving His appearing.

When I was about six or seven, I did something really bad. I had a neighborhood friend named Forest. One day Forest and I noticed the door to our neighbor's house was open, so we went inside and started stealing everything we could carry. We hadn't thought about where we were going to hide the loot—we hadn't worked out that part of the plan yet. As we were leaving the house, loaded down with loot, the neighbor drove up and caught us red-handed. She took me to my mother and told her what I had done. My mother was so angry she could hardly speak. She did something that, as far as I can remember, she only did once during my childhood. She called my dad at work and told him to come home and punish me. I can remember sitting out on the steps just waiting for my dad to drive up. I loved my dad, but I didn't love his appearing!

That may be the way you feel about the second coming of Jesus. You can know Jesus, and you can know for sure that He will return some day. Do you love His appearing? Can you say, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

6. IT IS PERMANENT KNOWLEDGE

Job knew he was going to die; yet he confessed death wouldn't be end for him. He believed "In my flesh, I will see God." We live in a throwaway world, where there's not much that is permanent. I recall a few years ago, I used to keep gasoline for the lawn mower in a gallon jug. In an identical jug I keep gasoline mixed with oil for the weed trimmer. I wrote "Gas and Oil" on one jug with a permanent marker. Those permanent markers may be good on most surfaces, but I discovered when a little gasoline gets on the writing, it's not permanent at all.

Death will mean a change in every human relationship. But the one relationship that won't be changed by death is our relationship with Jesus—it's the only permanent relationship you can have. For that reason, Job didn't fear death, and neither should we.

William Randolph Hearst (1863-1951) was one of the wealthiest and most powerful men of the 20th century. At the height of his media career he was worth over \$500 million. He built an enormous castle in the hills near San Simeon, California. At more than 90,000 square feet, it took 28 years to build. It is one of the largest, most opulent homes in America, rivaling the Biltmore Estate in North Carolina.

Hearst often invited the Hollywood elite to visit him in his castle. It was a mark of a celebrity's true star status if they were invited Hearst's castle for a weekend. When guests arrived they were informed of one very strict rule. They were warned if they broke this rule, they would be immediately escorted off the property and never invited to return. Whenever the guests were in Hearst's presence, there was one word they could never utter: DEATH. Hearst had a horrible fear of death. He was so afraid of it that when one of the palm trees at San Simeon died unexpectedly, the gardeners painted its leaves green until it could be replaced at a time when Hearst was gone. This wealthy tycoon did everything he could to ignore death. But even with

that amount of wealth and power he couldn't prevent death. On August 14, 1951 he died and then he had to face judgement. Job didn't have that kind of fear of death, and anyone who knows Jesus shouldn't fear death as well.

Do you realize everything we see around us is temporary? All the mansions, all the skyscrapers, all the money, all the fame will soon be gone. But when you know Jesus you are in a *permanent* relationship. The Bible says in II Corinthians 4:18, "So we fix our eyes not on what is seen but what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." While Job was suffering in this world, there was another world that he couldn't see with his physical eyes. But he believed that one day he would see his Redeemer face to face.

7. IT IS PASSIONATE KNOWLEDGE

As Job looked forward to the time when he would see his Redeemer face to face he said, "How my heart yearns within me!" Whenever he thought about it his heart beat a little faster, a smile crept onto his face, and a tear filled his eye. He was passionate about seeing His Redeemer.

Is there anything in this life or the next life you're passionate about? Is there anything that gets your heart beating faster whenever you think about it?

In Philippians 3, the Apostle Paul recounted all the advantages and educational accomplishments he had enjoyed from birth. But then he wrote all of his physical, intellectual, and educational pedigrees were *nothing* compared with knowing Jesus. He was passionate about it. He wrote: "What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ...I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death..." (Philippians 3:8,10)

CONCLUSION

So, what's the ONE THING? It is knowing Jesus. Do you know Him? Do you have a positive knowledge? Can you say, "I KNOW?" Is it a personal knowledge? Can you say, "Jesus is MY Redeemer?" Is it a precise knowledge? Do you understand Jesus paid the price to redeem you? Do you have a present knowledge? Do you know Jesus lives right now? Do you have the prophetic knowledge to realize Jesus is going to return to earth in victory some day? Can you realize your relationship with Jesus is the *only* permanent relationship possible in this life? And finally, are you passionate about knowing Jesus?

In 1940, Canadian geologist John Williamson was working in Tanzania. One rainy day, his truck got stuck up to its axles in the mud. Pulling out his shovel, Williamson started digging into the mud to free his truck. After digging for a few minutes, his shovel struck something solid. He reached down into the muck and brought out a large pink-colored stone. Being a geologist, he was curious, so he had it tested. He soon realized he had uncovered a huge diamond: 54 karats. Today that diamond, called the Williamson Pink, can be seen among the other Crown Jewels belonging to Queen Elizabeth.

Wouldn't you like to find something that valuable? You can. In Matthew 13:44 Jesus said, "The Kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."

Here's the message in a moment: The hidden treasure is knowing Jesus. When you discover what it means to know Jesus as your Savior and Lord you will be willing to sell out every other religious notion you've ever heard and you'll give everything you have to that relationship.

OUTLINE

1. POSITIVE KNOWLEDGE: "I KNOW..."
2. PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE: "I know that MY Redeemer..."
3. PRECISE KNOWLEDGE: "I know that my REDEEMER..."
4. PRESENT KNOWLEDGE: "I know that my Redeemer LIVES..."
5. PROPHETIC KNOWLEDGE: "In the end HE WILL STAND upon the earth..."
6. PERMANENT KNOWLEDGE: "In my flesh, I will SEE GOD..."
7. PASSIONATE KNOWLEDGE: "...how my HEART YEARNS within me!"



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For the Joy...
Pastor David Dykes