

EVER DEEPER

Knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10b, NIV)

TO KNOW CHRIST AND MAKE HIM KNOWN. This mission, dating back at least to Dawson Trotman and the founding of The Navigators, is one you've likely heard many times over. It captures the two great pursuits of a believer's life.

We, however, live in the West, and the emphases of our culture don't always match those found elsewhere. For one, we're more transactional than relational, which simply means that we value getting things done over connecting with others. A curriculum vitae tells me what you've accomplished, not whom you know—even though the people you know might tell me far more about you than your list of experiences.

So when it comes to the two-part mission of knowing Christ and making him known, too many of us bend toward the latter. There is *work* in making him known, in proclamation and evangelism. We count converts or "commitments for Christ," because numbers are easy to assess.

But how do we measure the depth of one's relationship with Jesus? And is there a way to cultivate that depth?

In golf, we have an expression, "The player knows." Especially with the forgiveness of modern equipment, a shot may come off your driver that looks well-flighted and long. A partner will say, "Nice drive," but you respond, "Didn't catch it." Sure enough, it's 25 yards off your usual distance, pretty though it looked. Into this context we say, "The player knows."

The case is similar when it comes to our relationship with Jesus. We can shirk in our disciplines and no one knows so much as we do (and, of course, the Lord!). It's not like there's a number we can pin on it. If we want to fool others that everything is healthy, we probably can. Just stay busy in your ministry endeavors; that will gloss over any inadequacies in your heart for Jesus.

How about we propose a reversing of the order? Not in the way the mission is written, but in the way we've come to implement it. Maybe we're having a harder time getting others to respond to our making Christ known because it has become painfully evident that we don't really know him. Let's scour the Scriptures. Let's bow in prayer. Let's freshly find Jesus and deepen our relationship with him.

Opening questions How do you know you've hit a shot well right as it comes off the club? • How willing are you to allow others to help you examine your heart and reorder your life before Christ?

READING Matthew 7:21-23, Psalm 46:8-11, 1 Corinthians 13:11-12

Known and unknown (Matthew 7)

How do Jesus' words here emphasize the importance of knowing him and being known by him? What does it take to be known by God?

The God we know (Psalm 46)

What do we see of God in this passage? How does being still allow us to know God as he is? And how does knowing that he is God allow us to be still?

Seeing clearly, knowing fully (1 Corinthians 13)

What things keep us from seeing God clearly and knowing him fully? What is something you greatly desire to know of God?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2017 Links Players International. An accompanying video from Desiring God is available at <https://vimeo.com/208846470>.