

**Introduction**  
*Finding Light in the Darkness, Session 1*  
*Slide Notations – Cere Muscarella*

**Caveat #1** Recognize that this is an experiment in trying to communicate experience! The Jews had scholarship (information). The world needed the Word (incarnation). “He became flesh and dwelt among us!” Must realize can only go so far w/words then it’s between you & the Holy Spirit!

**Caveat #2** Some may be more ready than others... Get it, see it, receive it quicker... But intimacy w/God is something He wants w/everybody! Don’t stop... ever! “KNOCK, SEEK, ASK...” If you can see one other person w/a living, vital, relationship w/God (even if only in the Word) – pursue it because our Dad is no respecter of persons!

**Caveat #3** Since we have not been down this road before... we will give you the best lead we can... But everything from format to weekly subject material is subject to change! Weeks will be combined with practical things to do and spiritual experience!

**Preamble...** Originally thought I was coming to create a sense of hunger in you for the Word! “Shortcut to hunger for God is in seeing what He offers that you don’t have!” Can’t wait long enough for you to starve to feel hunger pains... Feed you oats, keep you full enough to not feel hunger pangs... But once introduced to balanced, tasty, energizing foods... will have a hunger without waiting for pangs!

**Preamble...** Originally thought I was coming to share first two basic disciplines of disciples! Word and prayer! Tools, pathways, of intimacy... Word: read it, write it, study it, listen to it, sing it, talk about it... Prayer: aware of language... “w/a chair...”

**Preamble...** Last week, flicking thru the channels... Saw my pastor, Jack Hayford... Older study... recognized discipleship series... Heard something/took me back 35 yrs... Reminded me of the key to my own success at intimacy with the Lord!

*A willingness to accept everything God said because I knew Him to be my Savior!*

**I knew I was rescued, I knew I was His, I knew He was good... and I presumed that whatever He had to say was “yes” for me!**

What He says... (said to me): Dec 9th: “You need a Savior...” **YES!** December 31st: “You need the Holy Spirit...” **YES!** January 17th: “You need to be baptized in water...” **YES!** Wrong responses: What’s it all about? How does it work? Why? How will...? Right response: Do Christians get baptized? *Ok then... Whatever the Word says about, for, believers is “Yes!”*

**Intimacy...** Begins with trust! “Not going to hurt!” Must deal with your definition of G.O.D., and if He is, then follow Him! Thrives in time committed! “Know you more and more and more!” Expands with understanding! “This is my God and what He does!” *Keeps you safe from heresy!*

**Preamble...** The key to deepening spiritual life experience...

“Having made us accepted in the Beloved, ransomed thru His blood; forgiven of our sins by the richness of His grace which abounds toward us in all wisdom and mental acuity... I pray that the God of our Savior Jesus Christ may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation for the epignosis: full discernment of – Him...”

*The Word of God is more than mere information about Him... it is meant to incarnate and reveal Him!*

**Psalm 119.130** The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple!  
Light reveals what has been hidden! Mind illuminated, simple Psalmist, awakes to a new world!

**3 things to better understanding of passage/promise!**

**1. Vs 98-100 (key to v130)** “by Your commandments I have been made wiser than my crafty enemies who are always present... I have more understanding of life than my secular teachers... I understand more than men of age... all because Your words are ever with me, they are my meditation and I keep them!

**Vs 98-100** “I have vital strategies for the daily battles of life, higher and broader learning than special branches of education and accelerated life skills... all because Your words are in my heart, they are on my mind and I walk their way!

**2. Second look.** “The plowing of Your word releases light and the release gives understanding to the simple!” Agricultural term; “plowing” solid ground

**3. Psalm 119** written by someone exercised by life, in love with God, engaged in a love affair with His words, experienced in His ways... declaring that a like-experience can be had by all people of like mind!  
*Take that truth, add the new covenant we have in Christ that opens the way directly, add in the presence of the Holy Spirit and you have...A real opportunity to know God, intimately!*

**So... with “willingness...”** We open the Word of God... Filled with expectancy that His sheep hear His voice... Knowing that if we have (cleaned) ears to hear, we will hear... And when we hear His voice, especially correctively, we respond, w/o hesitation!

*Open to the Holy Spirit for meanings, impressions, reminders, corrections, directions, composites, applications!*

**Remember that the Jews had the laws and no power and the early church had no Bible but plenty of Holy Spirit application and power!**

**So... with “willingness...”** Time to open the Word for the 1st time! *New desire, new approach, new day!* Get an easy reader, start from the “in the beginning” and end with the “don’t mess with the words of this book!” Get a Bible you will write in... Recommend wide margin bibles...

**So... with “willingness...”** Time to set aside concentrated time to read the Word of God/1st time! May require a plan/cost a vacation. But want to recommend reading the Word “at-one-sitting!” Take highlighters, paper & pens, journal!

**So... with “willingness...”** Time to turn off the tunes and replace it with the spoken Word!  
*The more saturation/the more satisfaction*

**How much do you want to know God?**

**How much do you want to know yourself?**

**How much do you want to know what you don’t know...?**

**So that you can find light in the midst of your darkness!**

**Do you want to know...**

Moses lost the promised land for his personal frustration over people?  
Elijah was fired because he didn't count God as equal to his circumstances?  
Elisha's confidence came from staring into an open heaven?  
Jonah came close to death by self rule?  
Do you want to know...  
Job almost killed himself with fear?  
Joseph made it to "the end" even when he didn't know he was on the way?  
David was still called the friend of God even though he failed miserably?  
Solomon hid his greatest treasure in the Word of God?

**And do you know where to find them?**

**Do you want to know...**

Peace that goes beyond understanding?  
Forgiveness that frees you?  
Purity that allows you to draw near?  
Prosperity that makes you fearless?  
Courage that makes you a hero?  
Character that makes you trustworthy?

**Do you know where to find them?**

**Do you want to know and be able to declare with clarity and accuracy...**

"I am dead w/Christ but still living; but it's no longer "me" but Jesus living in me, and the life I now have I live in the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me!" **Gal 2.20**

*The end of this is a clear connection w/God and the illumination that lights up the darkness!*