



The Pharisee vs. The Chair-I-See

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Eternally Speaking Now

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name **Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14**

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name **Immanuel," which is translated, "**God with us**."
Matthew 1:23**



Our son, Zachariah, is zooming through age 10. As he dove into double digits, I observed the beginning of the years-long transition from depending on his parents' relationship with Jesus to having his own **personal relationship** with Jesus.

One tool the Lord gave me to help Zach develop his **friendship** with God is what we call, **Pull Up the Chair**. Anytime Zach is frustrated, sad, confused, angry, etc., we **pull up a chair** and **talk with Jesus** about it—as if the Lord Himself is sitting right next to us.

It's a simple, tangible way to actively **include God** in our everyday situations.

Pulling up the chair isn't limited to emotional moments. We do it with any activity throughout the day:
Whether we're doing school,
eating snack,
finishing chores,
playing a game,
watching a movie,
brushing teeth, or
going to bed,
we remind each other to **pull up the chair** and **invite Jesus** to
walk,
run,
work,
rest,
cry,
and laugh with us.

After I shared this approach with my husband, he responded with a chuckle, saying, "*Hey, that's good.*"

Don't be a Pharisee. Pull up the chair you see."

Beyond the clever rhyme,
this play-on-words presents a sobering lesson:

We can **know** a lot *about* God, yet not allow Him to **know us**.

There's a huge difference between the two.

The former is a result of head knowledge,
while the latter comes **from the heart** in **deep friendship**.

The Pharisees **knew** the Scriptures front to back, and they developed an impressive religion in their day. But that's as far as it went. Jesus—the Messiah about Whom they'd read in the Old Testament—stood right in front of them, *and they didn't recognize Him!* They did not **know** Him personally, and they neglected to "let Him **know** them" through **close, personal connection**.

God warns us of this in Matthew 7:21-23.

**“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’
shall enter the kingdom of heaven,
but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.
Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord,
have we not prophesied in Your name,
cast out demons in Your name,
and done many wonders in Your name?’
And then I will declare to them,
‘I never **knew** you; depart from Me,
you who practice lawlessness!’”**

Yikes. That’s scary. I don’t want Jesus to look at me and say, “I never **knew** you. Depart from Me.” This also begs the question: If God is omniscient (all-**knowing**), which He is, then how can He say, “I never **knew** you?” Doesn't He **know** all? I’ve got good news. I found the answer by looking up the Greek root word for "**knew**" in Matthew 7. Strong's Concordance defines it as,

"A knowledge grounded on personal experience."

Further, I discovered that the Greek word for "**knew**" in Matthew 7 is the same Greek word for "**know**" in Matthew 1:24-25.

“Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife (Mary), and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.”

*Yup, that's what you think it is. That's some seriously **intimate, personal, experiential knowledge.***

If I understand all this accurately, the word "**know**" in both verses above, means **inseparable, special, one-ness**. It's an **intimacy** founded on **trust** and **confidentiality** in **close, affectionate relationship**.

If God,
who **knows** everything,
doesn't **know** someone,
it's because that person didn't let Him **know** them
in a **personally experienced relationship**.

They didn't **pull up the chair**
and talk with Him, share their heart with Him,
and let Him know their innermost thoughts,
in **honest, real, transparent friendship**.

CHALLENGE

*Oh, Lord God, may we all do what we need to do,
to not be a Pharisee!*

Pull up the chair you see, and **invite Jesus** to sit with you. All day. Tell Him your **deepest feelings**. Be **real**. Treat Him like the most **trustworthy friend** you've ever had. He yearns for this.

Pull up a chair for Him while you work, play, read, talk, cook, and eat. **Pull up a chair** during the movie, on your phone, and while you're at the computer. This is a visual reminder of what's already true- He is **Immanuel, God With Us!** And He delights in our **sincere friendship**.

While you're at it,
seat an extra chair for Jesus
at the table for the Christmas meal.
After all, it's *His* birthday celebration.



**"Behold, I stand at the door and knock.
If anyone hears My voice and opens the door,
I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."
*The words of Jesus our Savior, in Revelation 3:20***