Things We Know

Back to School:
Summer vacation.

- Wonderful images spring to mind when you think about summer vacation.
  - When I was a kid I couldn't wait for the summer break.
- In my mind it was this giant season of time
  - when everything about life was put on hold
  - and I got to run and roam and be a kid again.
    - No more school.
    - No more teachers.
    - No more homework.
    - No more worrying over my grades.
  - Life was grand.
    - We played baseball in the sand lot.
    - We climbed trees,
    - terrorized the birds with our BB Guns
    - and chased down the ice cream truck.
  - I could stay up as late as I wanted
    - and I could sleep until noon.
  - There was no structure,
    - there were no schedules,
    - there was only the vast expanse of summer.
  - It was awesome.

The worst part about summer vacation was the fact that, sooner or later, it had to come to an end.

- It always seemed to come sooner than later,
  - much too soon.
- As much as I loved summer vacation,
  - I hated going back to school.
- Now don’t get me wrong, I did well in school.
  - I even liked school to a certain degree.
- But no one likes surrendering the fun and freedom
  - that goes along with summer vacation.
- No one likes to go back to the routine,
  - the homework and the tests.
- It just isn’t anywhere near as fun as summer vacation.

I remember as a kid asking the question that every kid asks:

- But why?
  - Why do we have to go back to school?
  - What do I need algebra for anyway?
  - Why do I need to learn about history?
• I know enough English to get by,
  o why do I need another year of English class?
• Why?

The answer was always short and simple:
• You go to school to learn.
• We go to school because,
  o as much as we think that we already know
  o everything that we need to know,
  o there are a lot of things that we don’t know.
• And, if we are going to be successful in life,
  o we need to learn some of those things
  o that we haven’t yet learned.
• That’s what school is all about,
  o its about what you don’t know yet,
  o the things that you need to know
  o that you haven’t yet learned.

Tonight, I would like to speak to our school kids.
• I want to encourage you to do well in school,
  o to apply yourselves,
  o to learn well the things that are taught to you.
• But I also want to make a very important point tonight:
  o Some of the most important things that you will ever know will not be taught to you at school.
• You will learn a lot of very needful things.
  o You will learn a lot of very important things.
• But there are some things that you simply must know
  o that you will not learn at school.
• I want to talk to you for a few moments tonight
  o about some things that you should already know.
• There are certain, very important things,
  o that you will not learn in school
  o but they are things that you should settle in your heart
  ▪ that you know are true!

All Things For Good:
First of all, Romans 8:28 tells us that “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.”
• This is a very important truth
  o and you need to settle it in your heart before you go back to school.
• Before you ever walk into the hallways of the school tomorrow
  o you need to know that God works all things together for good
  ▪ to them that love him.
• There will, undoubtedly, be some bad things
Things We Know

- that will happen to you this year.
  - I have no doubt that this school year will be just like any other
    - and at some point somebody is going to hurt you,
    - at some point something is going to happen
      - that makes you feel insignificant,
    - at some point some circumstance is going to arise
      - that seems to overshadow everything in your life
    - and, in that moment, at that time,
      - I want you to remember what I’m telling you tonight:
        - WE KNOW that God causes all these things to work together for good.

We know it.
  - It is a settled fact!
    - I may not see how,
    - I may not understand at the time,
      - it may seem as if my world has ended
    - but if I can hang on, if I can hang in there,
      - before its all said and done,
    - God will work all things together for good!
  - That’s just something that I know.
    - I know it just as surely as I know
      - that the sun rises in the east
      - and sets in the west.
    - God will work all things together for good.

The delightful part of that verse is that the apostle Paul doesn’t spell out what “all things” is.
  - There’s no limit to “all things.”
    - It includes everything in my life!
      - He work ALL THINGS together for good.
  - Sometimes my troubles are of my own making.
    - Sometimes I mess up.
    - Some times I put myself in an awkward place.
    - Sometimes I by my own neglect
      - or by my own foolishness
      - bring the disaster on myself.
  - He didn’t say God makes only those things
    - that we didn’t cause to work together for good.
  - It says WE KNOW that God causes ALL THINGS
    - to work together for good!
  - Oh, my! What a wonderful promise.

So, as you start this school year off, I want you to settle this in your heart:
  - WE KNOW that God will cause everything that happens to me this year to work out for good!
Things We Know

• Everything. For good.
  • That, right there, sets me free from a whole lot of worry.
    o It’s in his hands.
    • He causes everything to work out for good!
    o That’s his job, not mine!
      • All I’ve got to do is trust him.
      • All I’ve got to do is love him.
      • All I’ve got to do is walk according to his calling for my life.
• I can leave everything else in his hands!
  o He will work it out according to his good plan!

He Is Able:
The apostle Paul said, in Romans 4:21 that he was "fully persuaded that what God had promised he was well able to do!"

• You need to know this!
  o You need to be fully persuaded.
• If God promised that he would work all things together for good
  o then He is well able to do just that.
• If God promised that nothing could separate you from the love of God,
  o then nothing can separate you from him.
• If God promised that He would meet your every need
  o out of the abundance of his grace and power
  o then he is well able to do
  o exactly what he said that he would do!
• I am fully persuaded that what God has promised,
  o he is well able to do!

When you kids get a little older you are going to want to buy your first car.
• When you get ready to buy a car you are, most likely, going to have to borrow the money to pay for the car.
• Before a bank loans you the money to buy a car
  o they first run a credit check on you.
• The purpose behind the credit check
  o is to establish your ability
  o and willingness to repay the loan.
• Hopefully, after they review your credit history
  o they will decide to give you the loan.
• When they send that loan contract to the car lot
  o what they are saying, in effect,
    • is that we believe
    • that you are able
    • to do what you are promising to do.
• We are going to loan you this money
  o and you are going to promise
    • to pay us a certain amount of money each month
Things We Know

- until we have been paid back.
- And we believe, from your track record,
  - that you are able to keep that promise!
- That’s what Paul was saying!
  - I am fully persuaded,
  - I know that I know that I know,
  - that God is able to do
    - whatever he said that he would do.

A promise is only as good as the person making the promise.
- The validity of the promise
  - rests upon the faithfulness of the promisor.
- In this case the giver of the promises is almighty God.
  - His resources are infinite,
    - his ability knows no boundaries,
    - his faithfulness has been tried and proven,
    - he is the maker of everything that is
    - and the ruler of all that exists.
  - His promise is good.
- A friend of mine once owned a business
  - and, in the course of doing business
  - an individual wrote him a rather large check
    - in payment for a job.
- In an effort to validate the check before he accepted it,
  - my friend called the bank upon which the check was drawn
    - and asked them to verify that it was good.
- The teller laughed and told him, Oh, yeah... It’s good.
  - As a matter of fact, if he writes you a check for a million dollars,
    - there’s no need to call me back,
    - that one will be good too.

God’s word is good.
- His promises are yea and amen!
  - That’s something that you need to know!
    - He that has promised is faithful!
  - He that has promised will deliver on his word.
    - You can take it to the bank.
- WE KNOW that he is well able to do what he said that he would do!

He Keeps Me:
Let me tell you another thing that you should know.
- Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:12:
  - “For I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him.”
- What he is saying is this,
Things We Know

- not only is God able to keep his promises,
  - He is able to keep whatever I commit into his hand.

- The language of the verse draws on the metaphor
  - of one person giving something
  - to another for safekeeping.

- If I give something to you for safekeeping,
  - I expect that you will be able to give it back to me,
    - undamaged, un tarnished and wholly complete.

- If you open up a safety deposit box at a bank somewhere
  - what you are doing is securing a safe place
  - to deposit your valuables.

- The promise that the bank makes to you
  - is that they will keep your goods
  - locked away in their vault
  - where nothing can get to them
  - and, when you need the back,
  - they will deliver them to you
  - in perfect condition.

- That's what Paul is talking about.
  - Whatever I put in God's hands for safe keeping,
    - He is able to keep.

That means that if I have given my life to him,

- if I have surrendered myself into his hands,
  - He is able to keep me.
  - He is able to watch over me.
  - He is able to take care of me.

- He is my shield,
  - he is my salvation,
  - and he is my strong tower.

- I can trust in him.
  - Not just to keep his promises,
    - I can trust him to keep me!

- I can trust him to watch over me!
  - I can trust him with my very life!

- Whatever I put in his hands,
  - I can rest assured that it is as safe
    - as if I had deposited it in some vault somewhere.

- He is able to keep it!
- Young folks, there is no greater source of confidence
  - than the confidence of knowing
  - that you have surrendered your life into his hands!

- **Because WE KNOW that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him!**
He Lives In Me:
The next thing that you need to know is something that John said in 1 John 3:24:

- "We know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."
  - We know that he lives in us.
- Not only have we committed our lives into his hands,
  - not only are we living in him
    - but we also need to know that he lives in us!
- How do we know it?
  - By the spirit which he has give us!

Whatever you do, don’t let this school year rob you of this simple, yet powerful knowledge:

- Christ lives in you!
  - And you know he does
    - because he filled you with his spirit.
- There’s no doubt that Jesus lives in you.
  - There’s no doubt that you have
    - the spirit of God inside of you.
- Because when he came into your life,
  - there was a very powerful evidence
  - that made it known beyond a shadow of a doubt
  - that God had entered into your life:
    - You spoke with tongues
    - just like they did on the day of Pentecost.

One thing this old world will try to do is to rob you of the confidence of your salvation.

- I went to public school, just like many of you
  - and I know how it is to be the only apostolic young person in my grade.
- I know how it is to be in a graduating class of 300 kids
  - and be the only one that knows what it is
  - to be filled with the baptism of the Holy Ghost!
- I also know, because I’ve been there,
  - that it is easy when you are surrounded by worldliness
    - to begin to doubt the importance of your salvation.
- Young people hear me tonight:
  - We know that he lives in us
    - and we know it by the power of the Holy Ghost!
- This isn’t some fantasy.
  - This isn’t some fairy tale.
  - This isn’t a made up religion.
  - This isn’t a crutch for the feeble hearted.
- WE KNOW that this thing is real,
  - WE KNOW that the power of God resides with in us
and WE KNOW it because he filled us with the Holy Ghost!

- Some of you need to shake your fist in the devil’s face, this school year,
  - and tell him, you’ve come too late
  - to tell me this thing isn’t real!
- I KNOW that my redeemer lives
  - because He lives in me!
- I know that my God is real
  - because I feel him on the inside!

Paul said that Christ in me is the hope of glory!

- I can overcome this world,
  - because He lives in me.
- I can put the things of this world under my feet
  - because He lives in me.
- I don’t have to bow down to this world’s idols,
  - because He lives in me!
- If you want finish this school year as on fire for God
  - as you are when you start it
  - then you need to settle this in your heart tonight:
    - WE KNOW that he lives in us!
    - WE KNOW it because he filled us with the Holy Ghost!

He Hears Me:
Let me tell you another thing that you need to know.

- John said, in 1 John 5:15:
  - “We know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask.”
- He said we have this confidence in God
  - that, if we ask anything according to his will,
  - He will hear us!

- You need to know
  - that you live within speaking distance of heaven.
    - You need to know that God hears you when you pray.
- You need to know that
  - no matter if you shout your prayer from the rooftop
  - or whisper it under your breath,
    - God hears you when you pray!
- When you are walking through the chaos
  - of a crowded school hall
  - and you silently lift your heart to God in prayer,
    - he hears your cry!
    - He hears your prayer!
- And, not only does he hear you,
  - but he who hears you is faithful!

This is what you need to know:
• You may not immediately see an answer to your prayers.
  o You may not immediately be greeted
    ▪ with a flash of lightening
    ▪ or the crash of thunder.
• But you need to settle in your heart the confidence
  o that, regardless of what you see going on around you,
    ▪ God has heard your prayers!
• It may be weeks, or months, or even years
  o before you see the evidence that your prayer has been answered
    ▪ but, in the meanwhile, you need to know
    ▪ that God has not ignored your prayer!
• **WE KNOW that he hears us when we pray!**
  o Don’t let the world convince you that prayer isn’t real.
    ▪ Don’t get so educated that you move beyond simple faith.
• There is a God and we know he is real
  o because we know that he lives within us.
    ▪ And just as certainly as he is real,
      ▪ he hears your voice when you pray!
  o His ear is tuned to the sound of your cry!
    ▪ He hears you.
    ▪ He will not forsake you.
    ▪ He will not abandon you.
      ▪ You can trust him.
      ▪ Your answer will come, right on time!

**We Are In Truth:**
In 1 John 3:19 John said:
• **"We know that we are of the truth."**
  o Don’t let this world rob you of truth!
    ▪ Don’t let this world sell you
    ▪ a watered down version of truth.
• Whatever you do,
  o don’t compromise the biblical truth
    ▪ that you know is right.
• I understand that there are moments in each school year
  o where your faith is challenged,
  o where truth is under assault
    ▪ but I’ve come to this pulpit tonight to admonish you,
    ▪ don’t let the world undermine the truth
    ▪ that God has placed in your heart.
      o Romans 3:4 says, “Let God be true, but every man a liar…”
• Truth doesn’t change.
  o It isn’t relative.
    ▪ It doesn’t depend on the understanding of man.
  o It comes from God and is clearly expressed in his word.
You need to settle truth in your heart!
- The truth isn’t open for debate.
  - This is settled.
    - This doesn’t change.
- I have a revelation of the mighty God in Christ,
  - and I won’t ever let that go!
- I have embraced the full gospel of Jesus Christ
  - and that’s not open for debate.
- He died for my sins,
  - He was buried in a borrowed tomb
    - and He arose on the third day.
- And I died with him at an altar of repentance.
  - I was buried with him in water baptism, in His name.
    - And when He filled me with His spirit,
    - just like on the day of Pentecost,
    - that spirit is the resurrection and the life!
- This is truth!
  - I will not debate it.
  - I will not diminish it.
    - And I will not trade it for anything in this world.
- **WE KNOW that we are in the truth!**

**Heaven Is My Home:**
Finally, let me remind you what you are living for.
- Paul said, in 2 Corinthians 5:1:
  - *We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved,*
  - *we have a building of God,*
  - *an house not made with hands,*
  - *eternal in the heavens.*
- We know that we are living for heaven.
  - We know that this world is not our home.
  - We know that nothing in this world
    - is worth missing heaven for.
- You need to settle it in your heart,
  - this is something that you have to know:
    - This world is not your home!

This may be where we live, but this isn’t what we are living for!
- There is a heaven to gain!
  - There is an eternal reward worth striving for.
- Nothing in this world,
  - no momentary pleasure,
  - could ever compare
Things We Know

- to the unspeakable riches of glory!
  - Young people, don’t sell yourself short,
    - Heaven is your home!
  - Young people, don’t settle for anything less
    - than the home that God has prepared for you.

This is important because if you let yourself become convinced
- that this world is all there is,
  - then you lose the very motivation
    - that compels us to deny this present world
    - as we strive for promise of God.
- This world will appeal to your flesh,
  - it will try to entice you to settle
    - for a momentary, temporary pleasure
      - at the expense of heaven
  - but whatever you do,
    - don’t lose sight of the fact
      - that this world is not your home!
  - You’re just a stranger here.
    - You aren’t like everyone else.
    - You’re not going to walk the same,
      - you aren’t going to talk the same,
      - you don’t have the same hopes,
      - you don’t have the same dreams
  - – because this world is not your home!
    - Don’t forget it!

Remember it when you walk into that school building tomorrow:
- I am a stranger and a pilgrim here.
  - I’m just passing through.
    - My home is not in this world.
      - My treasure is stored somewhere beyond the blue!
- Don’t’ let it slip from your mind this year:
  - WE KNOW that heaven is our home!
    - WE KNOW that we are living
      - for something greater than this world!
    - We know it!

Altar Call
When I went to school our solar system consisted nine planets.
- We used to have to memorize the list:
  - Mercury, Venus, Earth,
  - Mars, Jupiter, Saturn,
  - Uranus, Neptune and Pluto.
- It was a science test question
Things We Know

- that you simply had to know the answer to.
  - There are nine planets in our solar system.
    - Or, at least, there were...

- But then in 2005, Mike Brown discovered Eris,
  - an icy object thought to be about the same size as Pluto,
    - out beyond its orbit.
  - That brought the number of planets to ten.
    - For a while...

- Then in 2006 the International Astronomical Union met
  - and changed the definition
    - of what makes a planet a planet,
      - and sadly, Pluto didn't make the cut.
  - So, in the last few years we've gone from 9 planets,
    - to 10 planets,
      - then back down to 8 planets,
    - only now we have an unspecified number
      - of additional dwarf planets,
    - which is the new classification for Pluto, Eris
      - and possibly other planet-like bodies
      - in the outer reaches of our solar system.

That is what is funny about what you learn in school.
- We think we know something, because we've learned it,
  - but then some previously unknown piece of evidence surfaces
    - and everything we thought we knew changes.
- But let me tell you something about the truths
  - that we have discussed here tonight:
    - They won't ever change!
- Those things that we know from the word of God
  - will always be the same
    - because God's word doesn't change.
- Heaven and earth will pass away
  - but His word is forever settled!
- So I want to encourage you tonight to settle in your heart,
  - at the beginning of a new school year,
    - these things that you know:

**WE KNOW** that God will cause everything that happens to me this year to work out for good!

**WE KNOW** that He is well able to do what he said that he would do!

**WE KNOW** that He is able to keep that which I have committed to him!
WE KNOW that He lives in us!

WE KNOW that He hears us when we pray!

WE KNOW that we are in the truth!

WE KNOW that heaven is our home!

• I want to ask all of the school aged children to gather around the front tonight.
  o Behind them I want all of the young people.
    ▪ Behind them I want anyone who is attending school in any form or fashion.
      • If you are going to college, trade school, Vo-tech, whatever it is...
  • I want to pray over you!