

Missing the Point

One of the interesting things about apologetic studies is the frequency in which I come across the attitude that declares in essence: 'There's got to be more than this. It cannot be this simple and this easy to find' with regard to knowing and understanding God, and the things of God. However, I am thankful that the LORD God does not operate the way man operates and has plainly declared that He desires the salvation of all:

Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. (*John 12:30-33*)

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. (*I Timothy 2:1-4*)

Thus, to make it possible for all men to be saved, the LORD would not and did not make it hard for man. Rather, it is man that makes it hard for himself. Those who would declare that knowing God is difficult, and understanding Him is impossible, are ignorant of the true nature of the LORD God, and thus ignorant of how the LORD accomplishes His work among men. Clearly, one cannot get around the following statement the LORD made to Jeremiah in the Old Testament:

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory

in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:23-24*)

Thus, ignorant of what God has actually stated, many go about thinking (and telling others) that God cannot be known or understood at all. How very sad for them. Yet, the problem is not confined to them. Rather, the attitude evinced at the beginning of this article extends well in to what are generally considered to be "Christian" denominations and religions. One of the most prominent advocates of the idea that understanding God is virtually impossible (indeed, they frequently tell their people that the things of God are a "mystery") is the Catholic Church. In this particular regard, they have much in common with Freemasonry.

However, the truth of the word of God, the Scriptures, gives away the lie fostered by these organizations upon their members. To begin with, it does all start with the Lord Jesus Christ, and knowing Him.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (*John 14:6*)

Now, I know that people give short shrift to the above passage. However, it is a severe mistake to do so. The above statement declares that there is one, and only one way, one truth, and one source of life – the Lord Jesus Christ. Without the Lord Jesus Christ, one can forget understanding anything about God. The only hitch to this that one must know the right Jesus, as man has an adversary that desires nothing more than to prevent as many as he can from coming to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation and thus reconciliation to God. This was one of the concerns of the apostle Paul as he expressed it to the church at Corinth:

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve

through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. (*II Corinthians 11:3-4*)

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (*II Corinthians 11:13-15*)

The answer to this dilemma is found in following the Scripture rather than the writings of those who alter Scripture to fit various ideas they have about God, Christ, and the salvation offered through the Lord Jesus. If what is written and spoken is consistent with the Scripture, then one can be assured that they are going the right way.

In returning to the subject at hand, the Scripture also reveals to us that in knowing the Lord Jesus Christ, we have access to an understanding that is only limited by our walk with the Lord and the extent to which we please Him. Moreover, this is available to all who come to Christ and is not confined to a select few. The LORD insured this was made clear and plain through the apostle Paul when he wrote the church at Colosse:

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (*Colossians 2:1-3*)

If we notice how the statement is framed, we can see that the desire of the LORD is that all those who come to Christ be comforted with the knowledge of God and of Christ, and that they need look no further than Christ for the knowledge, wisdom and understanding they need. We can be certain of this by a statement made very shortly after the assurance above:

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (*Colossians 2:8*)

Thus the contrast is drawn between the true knowledge and wisdom given by knowing and walking with Christ, versus what man thinks ought to be. We should understand that man's ideas and philosophies are based upon what man sees and thinks he understands. Moreover, man's pride is such that it is inconceivable that such knowledge would be available to everyone. After all, what would make someone "special" and "worthy of honor" if the knowledge and wisdom they seek to obtain is the same knowledge that is available to everyone? What power would one man have over another if all receive their wisdom from the same source and are all able to come to God directly?

Maybe that is why they "miss the point."