

Knowing God

The aim of the evangelical faith is the true, personal and experiential knowledge of God. "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" (Psalms 34:8). Without God, life is death, plenty is poverty, and happiness is but an illusion. Whereas the friend of God enjoys life indeed, endures trials patiently, and looks forward in confident hope of everlasting blessedness in his presence.

While the Christian faith includes an intellectual apprehension of certain truths about God and human redemption, it goes well beyond academics. It brings us to a personal love relationship with God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ. "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3).

The study of the Bible humbles us; such an endeavour, rightly undertaken, implants in us a deep sense of adoration. When Moses noticed the burning bush, he thought in himself: "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." God stopped him short in his tracks. "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground" (Exodus 3:3,5). God is not simply a curious vision. Wherever God's glory is manifested, it is holy ground.

We cannot undertake to turn our thoughts towards God with a haughty attitude. He is not a phenomenon or a philosophical concept. Our approach must be guarded by reverence and awe. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. It would be a crippled theology if it doesn't drive us to our knees, confessing as John did, "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead" (Revelation 1:17).

God is incomprehensible and inscrutable; we cannot understand him fully. God is infinite; man is a mere speck. "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable" (Psalms 145:3). No man will ever plumb his wisdom. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it" (Psalms 139:6). A "god" who is thoroughly understood is nothing but an idol invented by man. The true and living God is exalted above the heavens.

All the same we must assert that God may be truly known. Though we never may be able to delve completely into the depths of the Infinite, still we may really know our Creator. Our knowledge of God must always be limited, yet it can be genuine and sufficient to satisfy the thirst of the human soul. "O God, You are my God; early will I seek You ... Your lovingkindness is better than life" (Psalms 63).