



Pastor's Update

Sunday, June 23, 2024

Fellowship with God Tested by Obedience (1 John 2:3-6)

In our post-modern western society, to claim to know God can mean anything, *from* knowing that there is a spirit inside you which you can tap into to find power, *to* knowing that there is some kind of power that resides out there, whatever you choose to call it. And between these two extremes are the many gods and goddesses of our post-modern age.

Notwithstanding this present pluralistic age, what Moses confirmed about the uniqueness of God many years ago, still holds true today: "Therefore know this day, and consider *it*, that the LORD Himself *is* God in heaven above and on earth beneath; *there is* no other" (Deut. 4:39). Deut. 6:4 declares, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one". The prophet Isaiah adds his witness: "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts, 'I *am* the First, and I *am* the Last; Besides Me there is no God'" (44:6; cf. 45:5f). The apostle Paul also blends his voice with the chorus of Old Testament saints: "For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is only one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we live" (1 Cor. 8:5f).

Therefore, since there is no other God besides the God of Israel, it is expedient that we should know *Him*. This God has revealed Himself to us in the person of Jesus Christ (John 14:9). The Bible describes Him as light in whom is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). Consequently, those who have fellowship with Him, first have their sins revealed by His luminous presence; then, upon confession to the One who is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John. 1:9) their sins are removed.

The question, however, which our present text answers is: How can we know that we have come to know this God (1 John. 2:3-6)? What indeed is the test that prove that we have indeed come to know God? What is the evidence that we have indeed confessed our sins and that the Advocacy of Jesus Christ the righteous has been applied to our souls? What is the test that we are truly walking in the light (1 John 1:7)? The apostle tells us that the true test is *obedience*. Obedience to God and consequently, to those whom He has given authority (Heb. 13:17; Rom. 13:1). Christian profession is always tested by Christian conduct

In our text the apostle gives a threefold description of this obedience: 1) Keeping His commandments 2) Keeping His word 3) Walking as He Himself walked (1 John 2:3-6). Obedience to God is indeed the true test of knowledge of God. As Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." This is, indeed, the true test of fellowship with God – nothing more, nothing less.

By God's Grace and for His glory,

Pr. Francis