ALTHEA MAVIS HARRIS NOVEMBER 2021

In SPIRIT and TRUTH

YOU SAY YOU KNOW HIM... DOES HE KNOW YOU?

True Worshipers Commune With the Father

"I know you. You are mine." That is what the Lord sometimes speaks to me during my times of personal fellowship with Him. Oh, what comfort and peace it gives me to receive such assurance from the Father, especially at those times when I am feeling sorry, because I know that I've "blown it" again. I believe that's just His special way of saying, "don't worry, I'm still here for you".

From the beginning of creation, it has been God's desire to have intimate fellowship with man. Even though we are told that He knew us before He formed us in our mothers' wombs (Jeremiah 1:5), as His disciples, we may not know Him as we ought.

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you FRIENDS; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." John 15:15



We must first understand that we did not choose

God, He chose us. As a matter of fact, Ephesians 1:4-6, clearly states that we were created for God's good pleasure and for His glory... to worship and communion with the Father. God desires to know us through intimate times of fellowship with Him. In John 15:15, Jesus explains how a servant does not know what his lord does, but the lord confides in his friends. Jesus' relationship with His twelve chosen disciples exemplifies the Father's desire for such fellowship with us. He desires that we would no longer just be known as servants, but also friends. I often marvel at the thought that such a holy God, the creator of the whole universe, would desire to have a personal relationship with me! As a matter of fact, it was so important to Him, that even after Adam and Eve sinned, breaking their covenant with God (Genesis 3), He still made a way to restore man for continued fellowship.

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According to the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, the Greek definition of *communion* means to *fellowship*. The Hebrew word defines it as: *to speak, command, or teach*. There is so much that the Father desires to share with us, but in order to do so, we must make ourselves available and understand how to approach Him, according to His terms.

Of course, there are those who claim to know God, and *assume* that they are known of God. But Jesus tells us in Matthew 28:22, that there are many who will discover that He never knew them; because despite their good works and religious deeds, they never did the will of the Father. We must make time for fellowship with God, if we are to hear His voice and know His will for us. In John 10, through the parable of The Good Shepherd, Jesus provides an illustration of how we are to pursue communion with the Father. He teaches about the sheep that know their shepherd's voice and follow Him. Do you know the Father's voice? Can you distinguishes His voice from that of a devil, or even your own heart's desires?



In John 4:23-24, we are told: "The hour cometh, and now it is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. For God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him IN SPIRIT and IN TRUTH".

The first and most important requirement for intimacy with the Father, is that we must be *born again*, according to truth: John 3:3-8 and Acts 2:1-4, 38-39... born of the blood (repentance),

the water (water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ) and born of the spirit (receiving the baptist of the Holy Ghost). Those who have been born again can then establish a Spirit to Spirit relationship with a holy God.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." John 3:6-7

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There are some believers who think that they are *known of God* because they have been faithful to the many activities of their religious organizations. However, what they may not realize is that, if they are not doing what the Lord has ordained for them to do, then their labor is in vain. Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:21-22, that there are many who will one day discover that *He never knew them*.

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done

many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I NEVER KNEW YOU: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:22-23

So how do we know the will of the Father? The easiest way to know the will of God is to know the Word of God. Yes, God's Word is His will for everyone. According to Romans 12:2, the Word of God has the power to transform us... "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God". When we apply God's Word to our lives, we are changed as we "put on the mind of Christ". This is why it is so important to make it our priority to spend quality time alone with God. And according to James 4:8, if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us.

While Jesus was on earth in human form, He provided for us an example of spiritual communion with the Father. This is why He often separated Himself from His disciples to go off alone and pray. He would only do what the Father instructed Him to do; therefore Jesus sought Him often to hear what the He had to say. From reading and studying God's Word, we can learn (in general) His will for all of mankind. However, it is through private times of prayer and worship that we are better able to hear His voice and receive specific instructions for our personal lives.

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." John 10:4

However, the greatest hinderance to communion with God is SIN (disobedience). Isaiah chapters 1-2, explains how sin separates us from God, causing Him to hide His face from us; then He will not hear our prayers or receive our worship. "Now we know that God hears not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he hears" (John 9:31). And if we are willing to *confess* our sins and *repent*, He is faithful to forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, according to 1 John 1:9. Once the slates of our hearts are clean, we can then position ourselves for pure worship and true fellowship with the Father. And because we are no longer strangers, but friends, He will make His abode with us, as a friend who sticks closer than a brother.