

Having Communion with God

Scripture Reading: 1 John 1:1 thru 2:11

March 29,2020

Today my thought revolves around the relationship we have with our God. At no point in any of our lives will we fully know the breadth and depth of God, yet at times we can find ourselves content with the level of knowledge and relationship we have with Him. We can become satisfied with the moments of emotion we sense during a song or two at church service, or an interesting point or two heard during a message or sermon, but there is so much more to experience with our Lord! We know of Him, but do we genuinely know Him? We know of what He has done for us, but do we actually know what drove Him to do it? We may spend time thinking about Him, and even devoting time telling Him our wants and cares, but do we truly have communion with Him? Life with its demands can easily burden our lives with so many activities and pressures that we can crowd out the most important person we have ever been invited to commune with, our Lord.

Here is a short word picture. A water kettle on the stove with a little water in it boils quickly but fills very few teacups. It also cools down quickly and needs to be heated frequently or it will get cold. A Believer that gets excited and feels fulfilled with an enthusiastic song or song service or a rousing sermon or message can be quickly cooled off and does not have much to give others. To keep the kettle full and hot so many can benefit from your hot water, you need to fill it up and keep it full, and continually keep the heat on. In your life, we keep our kettle full by a sincere and surrendered life offered to God as we seek to commune with Him and have a deep-rooted relationship with Him.

- Joh 4:13-14 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, (14) but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."
- Joh 6:35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."
- Joh 15:7-12 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. (8) By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (9) "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (10) If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. (11) "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. (12) This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."
- 1Jn 1:2-4 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— (3) that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. (4) And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

Here is how the story goes for many Christians.

They have felt a pulling from God, then had the Gospel shared with them. They believe that Jesus is the Messiah, repent of their sins, and even start going to church. Some even begin reading the Bible. They got religion and found Jesus! People around them notice a difference because they start attending church weekly, start listening to the music on the Christian station, and they may even start wearing a cross or placing Christian ornaments in their home, car, or office. They put effort into living what they feel is a Christian life.

They have heard and read about all the great things they can expect to occur in their life now that they are a Christian. They hear that Jesus is their friend and anything they ask of God in the name of His Son will be given to them. They have also heard that they will be given the desires of their heart. Peace and joy are said to be inexpressible! "If God be for us, who could be against us" rings in their heads and lets them know they are on the right team, and they are special.

But at a point down the road they begin feeling something is missing, even though they are trying their best to be a Christian and living how they are expected to live. Unfortunately, they begin feeling life is now what they expected it to be. They sense something is missing, but what? Have you ever felt this way? Are you feeling this way now?

For a while the demands on life were satisfied with the relationship they had with the Lord. The little amount of water in their kettle to heat up was fine, but now they find they are running low or the water is not hot. Maybe the enthusiasm created by the weekly church service with music and preaching has been interrupted, and they find the water cooling because that was the heat they depended on to keep it warm. It could be a life situation that demands more faith and trust in God but they find they are overwhelmed. It could also be frustrations are building up because the expectations they had about the Christian life seem to be falling short. What is the answer for all of these? The answer is to seek Jesus Christ and communion with Him, sincerely!

- Mat 7:7-11 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (8) For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (9) Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? (10) Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? (11) If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!
- Joh 6:67-68 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" (68) But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

What is it you want and looking for in your Christian faith?

- To understand what life is all about and your purpose?
- To have a life filled with peace and joy?
- To have a helping hand as you go through life?
- To find out how you can serve Him?
- To become part of His army and fight to free the lost from the deception of Satan, who has imprisoned your friends and family?

The above list of expectations are great to have, but will never be fulfilled without having a real and heartfelt relationship and communion with Christ. You must want an intimate relationship with our Lord and Savior. Many fail to have their expectations fulfilled because they never had honest and intimate communion with God. Their view of being part of His kingdom misses the mark. Simply put, they see God as the government and themselves as citizens. Being a citizen, they feel these expectations should just be given to them. Any of us that have ever had this view realize it does not work this way. Having a title as Christian or Believer and being part of an organization called a church will not: 1. Fill your heart with joy and peace 2. Will not power your life to be bursting with purpose, 3. And it will not give you the supernatural love needed to drive your actions and make a difference in the lives of those you love. What will provide you with all these and more? A sincere and surrendered life offered to God as we seek to commune with Him and have a deep relationship with Him.

Here is the greatest thing I believe I have ever heard and believed.

The Creator and Lord of all we see and know wants a relationship with you and me! He has initiated the connection and wants us to want a relationship with Him. Our Lord wants a close-up and intimate relationship where we commune with Him. He is not a theological concept but a real live person who wants a real live relationship with you! Imagine having a relationship with God, the Creator, where we can call Him Abba, Father. Is this the relationship we want with Him? Will He accept anything less?

- When I was eight years old, I was being trained to be a catholic altar boy. I was taught that Jesus was literally present in the locked cabinet at the back of the altar area. One morning after the service the priest was walking off the altar area to head back to his home and I asked him if Jesus was really in that cabinet. He answered, "yes, Jesus was there." I then asked with all seriousness, "why do you want to leave? Why would you not want to stay here in front of Him?"

- The question I asked back then is still valid today. Is this scripture true? John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.
- If it is, how often do we want to spend time with the Lord?
- Envision Adam and Eve in Eden; Gen 3:8-9 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (9) Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"
 - Imagine having a relationship with God that is this real!
 - Unfortunately, sin interrupted and effected that relationship and caused death and judgment, which still is with us today. But God so loves us that He made a way to heal that broken relationship that allows every one of us to commune with Him now, and have eternal life with Him. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be the Christ and pay the price for your sin, my sin, so that the door could be opened once again for a close and intimate relationship with Him through His Son Jesus Christ.

Do you see this relationship as a treasure and personal or merely words and theology?

The Bible tells us the Lord wants to have an intimate relationship with you, is it a treasure, the ultimate treasure? Or do you find yourself having other treasures that have grabbed your heart ahead of Him? Consider the following scriptures.

- Luke 10:25-28 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (26) He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" (27) So he answered and said, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND,' and 'YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'" (28) And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."
- Mat 6:19-21 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; (20) but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. (21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.
- Luk 12:16-21 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. (17) And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' (18) So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. (19) And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" (20) But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' (21) "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

If you were to ask those who know you what they thought your greatest treasure is, would they say it was your relationship with Jesus Christ? If not, what would they say was more important?

A saying Michael Ginn would say was "Christianity is Christ and Christ is Christianity."

It is all about Him! We are allowed to have communion with our Lord Jesus Christ. Another preacher I heard years ago shared a message called, "You gotta have the want to." Do you see the cornerstone of your salvation and relationship with God as being the relationship you have with Jesus Christ? Do you want to make that relationship the greatest treasure of your life? If not, is anything less than this acceptable to God? This is a serious question that all of us need to settle once and for all in our life. The answer is found in His Word.

Do you want your relationship with our Lord to grow deeper? Do you want to experience more profound joy and peace? Do you want to have a clearer understanding of life and purpose? Do you have the "Want to" and place God first, and seek Him as you would pursue the greatest treasure you have ever heard about, and given a map to find it? Here is the map.

- **Read the Bible.** Find out about Him, what He is like, what He wants, and what He has done by reading and spending time reading the Bible, the Word of God. Get to know what the Word truly says, because without it a person can easily be deceived.
 - Read the Old Testament and learn what God's goal was for His chosen people, what they did, and how God reacted to it.
 - Read the Gospels and learn what Jesus said and did. Everything He said and did was from God and nothing of himself.
 - Learn the Christian instructions shared in the epistles, and what is to come in Revelations
- **Pray** – take time to pray, by yourself and with others. Pray with purpose, to share your heart, inquire of Him, lift up the needs of others, and be quiet so you can hear Him. The Lord wants to hear your heart and have you share it with Him; He does not want a bunch of words. He does not want you to merely sacrifice some time to talk to Him, but wants you to surrender your heart and your will to Him in prayer and deeds. It is not your ability to pray for half an hour each day that He is looking for, although this is great if your heart accompanies it. He wants to commune and talk with you throughout each day, through the moments sharing your heart and mind with Him.
 - Psa 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God;
 - 1Th 5:16-18 Rejoice always, (17) pray without ceasing, (18) in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
- **Allow the Spirit to lead you in doing what you have learned and heard.**
 - Jas 1:22-24 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; (24) for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.
 - 1Jn 3:23-24 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. (24) Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

In closing

I am praying we all take time to give Jesus Christ preeminence in your life, sincerely. The preeminence you would give a king as you stand in front of Him in His throne room. What a treasure to have our King call you and I into His presence, not to judge, but to talk, share, and love each of us! Yet, some in fact turn it down, even some that know who He is! (*Luk 14:18-20 But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.'* (19) *And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.'* (20) *Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'*) I pray I am never foolish enough to pass on spending time with my King, my Lord, my Savior, my God.

In this present pandemic, we find ourselves constrained in our ability to gather as a family, but don't let the water in your kettle cool. Take this time to fill it up with time spent with Him in His Word and prayer. Heat it up with the fire of His Spirit. Dig into the Word, pray often and sincerely, and stay in touch with one another, letting them know you love them and care for them. Can you think of anything better and more important to do?

God Bless you all, and I am lifting you all up in prayer for health and happiness. Pastor John