

God, the Christian's Desire

My dear Christian friend, my heart carries a burden that you may come to know God in a more joyous and intimate way than you ever dreamed possible.

It was the Apostle Paul's overwhelming desire that he should know Christ in this loving, personal way. And for that intimate personal knowledge of Christ, he gladly counted everything else loss. To know Christ intimately and joyously, he laid aside the things of the past, and stretched himself toward this one goal as the only thing in life of real value, (Phil. 3:7-14).

But how?

HERE IS THE KEY

Paul gave us the key to knowing Christ in this way in the opening words of the same chapter: *"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord ...for we are the circumcision (the chosen people) which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."*

Oh, my dear friend, this just makes me want to shout, *"Hallelujah!"*

And why not?

Paul lets us in on his secret for knowing Christ intimately and joyously:

- 1) Rejoice in Christ Jesus the Lord. Let Him be the one objective of your life, your love, your one overriding desire, your joy!
- 2) Worship God in the spirit. Spend so much time alone with Him, worshipping Him and setting Him out as your one desire, that ultimately His worship and His loving, glorious Self will be the constant concern of your every moment; and you will come to know Him more and more personally and intimately.

But, you object, this is an *unattainable* goal.

THIS IS FOR YOU!

No, my friend, it is not. Brother Lawrence, a seventeenth century monk, experienced this and wrote a book which has ever since been a constant

challenge to Christians everywhere. Its name: --*The Practice of the Presence of God*. You can still buy it in your bookstore.

Oh, you say, that's fine but he was a monk living a sheltered life without the distractions I experience. --Only partially true! He had responsibilities, too, even outside the monastery, including "buying t rips." And he was a c ripple!

Besides if it was so especially easy for a monk, why was he virtually the only monk of whom we have retained such a story?

No, my friend, this is God's goal for every child of His.

JUST SUPPOSE

And suppose that you start out to achieve this goal of making God your desire, and experiencing His Presence in your spirit as you worship Him first in the quiet time, then moment by moment all the day long. Suppose you only get a little way toward that goal, and not all the way you would wish.

To know Him better and love Him more, is that not the goal of every child of God?

Is it not *your* goal?

Then set out to pursue it today, my friend. Start now. Tomorrow morning get up earlier -- say a half hour or an hour earlier. Get alone with God. Set aside your personal needs and fears and just worship and rejoice in God in your spirit, making Him alone your goal -- your Love.

Make this as much as you can the pattern of your life.

WHERE IS YOUR CONFIDENCE?

In conclusion let me ask, Did you notice that I skipped the third part of Paul's instruction? --*"Have no confidence in the flesh?"*

Yes, my friend, the only thing that will stop you from making God your goal is your confidence in your self. That is the same self of which Jeremiah warned us in 17:9, *"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (incurably sick), who can know it."*

Where will you place your confidence, my friend? In your perfect, omnipotent God? Or in your treacherous and incurably sick self?

Then start today to worship and rejoice in god alone and get up tomorrow morning early to get a good start on letting Him become your one overwhelming desire – your love!

And watch the difference it makes in your life!

You can come to know your lovely Lord in this joyous, intimate way. *Yes, you can!*

--Ron Marr

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