

Making Acquaintance with God

(Companion Paper to the Sermon delivered 5/5/2019,

At Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, RI, By James Moriello)

“Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace” (Job 22:21)

These words were spoken by Eliphaz to Job in the midst of his suffering. Though Job’s friends had not assessed his case well, they were believers in the Living God, and uttered universal truths such as our text—truths well attested by the rest of Scripture, and needful to us, as reminders of the love of God. We shall now “acquaint” ourselves with, or get to know, our God better through His revealed attributes, for the purpose of finding peace with Him.

To be acquainted with others is to get to know them. We will argue from the lesser to the greater, beginning at the human level. Now, there are many people who are not acquainted with you at all. They have never heard of you. Others may have heard your name, or have some vague idea of what you do or what you stand for, but that’s it. Still others have heard about you because someone they know knows you. Their report may be good or bad, accurate or inaccurate. Then there are people that know you firsthand, but that you are not really close to on a personal level. They may or may not like you. Finally, there are those with whom you have a relationship. These are those who are well acquainted with you—friends, family, and spouse. Now let us apply all this to becoming acquainted with God.

There are many people who are not acquainted with God at all. They have never heard of the true Christian God, though they may be familiar with one of His impostors. Never have they heard a clear presentation of the gospel. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16). The gospel content that must be believed is *“that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures”* (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Notwithstanding, because creation testifies to God’s existence, and likewise testifies within the human

spirit, not having heard of Him is no excuse for failing to become acquainted with Him, which is rejection. *“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse”* (Romans 1:20). *“Also He has put eternity in their hearts”* (Ecclesiastes 3:11). The lack of acquaintance is therefore not God’s fault. The sunrise and the morning birds cry out a divine call for acquaintance to all who are willing to hear and perceive it.

Others may have heard God’s name, and have a vague idea about Him, but that’s it. These folks are spiritually lazy. And unless they repent and turn to the Lord, they shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:3). God has been trying to get a hold of these folks—perhaps even you—sending evangelists and children to you, and also helping bear through the furnace of affliction (the difficult trials of life). *“And in that day the Lord GOD of hosts called for weeping and for mourning, for baldness and for girding with sackcloth. But instead, joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating meat and drinking wine: “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!” Then it was revealed in my hearing by the LORD of hosts, “Surely for this iniquity there will be no atonement for you, even to your death,” says the Lord GOD of hosts”* (Isaiah 22:12-14). The careless towards God are being careless with their souls.

Still others have heard about the Living God and His Christ because someone they know knows Him. Perhaps there is a Philip in your life who has come to you with a true and accurate report, saying, *“We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph”* (John 1:45). Maybe someone has given a bad report to you about God. Perhaps their bitterness is consuming them and they blame God instead of themselves and the pervasive sin in the world (which is not of God but of the evil one). Maybe their hypocritical behavior, which does not match their Christian profession, has steered you clear of Christ. It may be their legalism, obsession with pet doctrines, or erratic church attendance which causes you to be skeptical of the reality of the beauty of the worship of the Lord God in holiness. There are many stumbling blocks to acquaintance with God through Jesus Christ, but let not your own pride and prejudice make Him *“a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense”* (1 Peter 2:8). Finally, friends, note this:

You shall not get to heaven on another's coattails. Each of us who wishes to gain heaven and peace must be properly acquainted with God. It is not enough that you were baptized as a baby, for that only demonstrates the faith of your parents. It is not enough that you were close to religious people, for it is only your own faith that saves you. Acquaint yourself with the Lord, and then you shall hear, "*Your faith has saved you. Go in peace*" (Luke 7:50).

Then there are people who know the Lord Jesus firsthand, but they are not very close to Him personally. The mighty work of healing from illness or addiction has been done in their lives. The work done is so evidently divine and supernatural that the same cannot be denied. Yet these folks hold God at arms length. Perhaps they are part of the "program." Yet they are not part of God's Kingdom, never having made that sort of acquaintance with the waiting Savior. Can such a person really belong to God? I say to you, no, not without a personal acquaintance with Him. It has become fashionable in certain traditional religious and other circles to claim that it nowhere says in the Bible that one must have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ to be saved, a child of God. Does not our text refute their point? Jesus once cleansed ten lepers at the same time, yet it is only one who heard the words, "*Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well*" (Luke 17:19).

Finally, there are those who have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ the Son. This relationship is personal and lasting. There is no greater Friend than He. Though even your friends, family, and spouse may let you down, God never shall. The Bible speaks of a "*a friend who sticks closer than a brother, born for adversity, (who) loves at all times*" (Proverbs 18:24, 17:17). The more acquainted you are with Him, the more assurance you will have of things heavenly and on earth. Harken unto the words of Jesus Christ Himself. "*And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (John 10:28; Matthew 11:28).

Friend, I urge you this day to heed the Word of the Lord. "*Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace*" (Job 22:21).

How to Find Peace in Your Life

Prepared by James Moriello, Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, RI, 2016

****How to get the most from this study: Follow in sequence, reading every Scripture verse referenced*

1. Natural state of man, Romans 8:7
2. Sinners rebelling against God should not expect any peace, Isaiah 48:22, 59:8
3. Worldly worry and anxiety robs us of peace, Matthew 6:31-33; Luke 12:29
4. Worldly cares block spiritual reception, Matthew 13:22
5. False peace offered by and sought after in the world and in false religion, Jeremiah 6:14; Ezekiel 7:25
6. God possesses perfect peace, 2 Thessalonians 3:16
7. Jesus came to offer us His peace, Luke 2:14
8. Jesus left His peace here, John 14:25-27
9. Peace with God can be had, beginning with receiving and believing the gospel, Acts 10:36; Romans 5:1, 10:15; Colossians 1:20
10. Comes from confidence in Christ's victory and the knowledge of one's secure hope, John 16:33; 1 John 5:13
11. It is available in measure to all believers, Galatians 5:22
12. Spiritual mindedness leads to peace, Romans 8:6
13. "Great peace" found in reading, knowing, obeying God's Word, Psalm 119:165; which lays out a wise path to travel for life, Proverbs 3:17
14. Teachable spirit leads to peace, Isaiah 54:13, as opposed to Isaiah 28:12 rebellion
15. God's peace in a reservoir in times of trouble, Philippians 4:7
16. His peace, when enjoyed, causes us to sleep at night without fear or care, Psalm 4:8
17. Actively seek peace, Job 22:21; Psalm 34:14; Isaiah 27:5
18. Passively seek peace, Colossians 3:15, hand over the reins of your life and know peace
19. Peace achieved by breaking down vertical barriers, Ephesians 2:14-18
20. And, horizontal ones as well, as we imitate Christ, Romans 12:18
21. The benediction, and purpose of this study, 2 Thessalonians 3:16