

RESTORE
KNOWING GOD

Thursday, May 21

Reading: Hebrews 2:5-18

Hebrews 2:17 *For this reason He had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people.*

18 *Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.*

If you asked the average person-on-the-street to describe God to you, there would be a vast array of answers. Some would explain God like a kindly old grandfather in the sky. Others would view God as a “cosmic cop” waiting to zap you when you misbehave. Still others would talk of God as the ultimate Santa Claus who gives you what you want. Still others believe ‘God’ is the Force or “energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us and penetrates us. It binds the galaxy together” (thank you Obi-wan Kenobi from *Star Wars*).

Why all these different ideas about what God is like? It is because most people shape God in their own image. “Our beliefs or nonbeliefs about God are driven as much (or more) by our personal wants and needs than by reason...It is only this God, one who is not a product of your wishful thinking, who can profoundly reprogram your self-understanding and make you something new. Your heart’s deepest need is for a God who is not just the product of your heart’s wants and needs.”¹

So how do we know God? We can know something about God from His creation. We also learn about the true and living God through the Scriptures He has given us. But there is one more wonderful way we can know the heavenly Father. At the Last Supper, the disciple Philip asked Jesus, “Show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus replied by saying, “Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:8-9). We can know God through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 2 reminds us that God created humanity to have dominion over creation. But we messed it up through sin and thus also messed up our relationship with God. That is why the Son of God became a man, “so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone...bringing many sons and daughters to glory...” (2:9-10). He became like us so that He could be our perfect Representative. “Jesus did not come and say, ‘I’m strong and brilliant. Now pull yourself together and you can be like Me.’ Jesus Christ exchanged places with you. He came to live the life you should have lived and die the death you should have died so you could be reconciled to God, forgiven, and remade.”²

In Jesus, we see the power of God. His miracles proved that He was who He said He was. His miracles also showed the love of God as He reached out to heal and restore those who were hurting. He treated people with compassion. He felt what we felt and knows what we are going through – even suffering and death! Jesus shows us what God is like! And that we can know Him, love Him, and serve Him. When we accept His salvation, we become children of God and submit to His will for our lives – because He has gone through it Himself. He died to restore our relationship with God and He rose again to prove His power can help us have victory over our messed up lives.

¹ Timothy Keller. *Hope in Times of Fear*, p. 107-108

² Keller, p. 79