

may 10

how well do you know me

"that i may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." phil 3:10

how well do any of us really "know" someone else? we all have secrets and mindsets we do not share with anyone. psychology would tell us there are three levels of knowing. level 1 of knowing someone involves understanding their general traits, almost as a person would be recognized by sight. level 2 knowledge of someone means seeing what someone wants in life and the strategies they employ to get it. level 3 knowledge of a person refers to having a nuanced understanding of their identity, perhaps who they really are deep down and how they can be depended on for something.

when we first come to Christ it is simply because we have been told of Him or experienced Him in some supernatural way. i would still call this level 1, much as a child recognizes someone is taking care of them and has authority over them.

as we grow we should advance to level 2, a learning of what God expects from us; what is necessary to have a good relationship with the almighty; a good and prosperous life. believe me, this usually comes with many hard lessons; a kind of "spare the rod and spoil the child" situation.

it takes time and determination for someone to advance

to level three. one can only predict behavior by what another has been repeatedly done in the past. i suppose this would mostly be like the intimacy shared between a husband and wife. and yet, even in that knowing, much is still withheld from a spouse. i am always amazed when someone discovers they have been married to a serial killer for years without a hint. deception deceives by its very nature.

i would suggest there is yet a further, fuller knowing of something or someone; an intimacy that goes beyond anything flesh alone could ever know. some might call this an experiential knowledge or knowing. all lives are full of secret and hidden things. only the Holy Spirit can discern the heart of someone and what lies within. scripture says that Jesus "had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man." john 2:25

if we are to ever really know someone we must be diligent in the word and listen to the Holy Spirit; the only One who can truly discern someone's most guarded thoughts. "for the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." heb 4:12

i think of isaiah and when he was called to be a prophet. "woe is me, for i am undone! because i am a man of unclean lips, and i dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." isa 6:5 the consciousness of sin and unholiness must have filled his entire being; all our "filthy rags" as paul would later call them.

that's how it will be in the judgment; every guarded thought, every secret sin will be made manifest. now that is what it means to really know someone.

although we can never truly know the heart of man, knowing God is something we must fully embrace, especially in these lying and deceptive times. know our God and cling to His promise to always be the same and unchangeable. so hold on. let no one deter you from the hope that has been set before you. He knows us already - even better than we know ourselves. His blood and the word of our testimony will get us there. confess Him now if you haven't already.