

The Manifest Presence of God

Scripture

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I [am] in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.” (Joh 14:18-24 AV)

Commentary

Being a Christian is not some ritual you add to your life. Those who speak of their involvement in false religions rarely talk about having a relationship with God. Muslims say that Allah’s will is known by his teachings, but he is not known personally. The Buddhists speak of being one with the universe. Buddha is more a state of conscience than a god. However, the true God of creation, Jesus Christ has promised a relationship to those who love Him.

Jesus said He would manifest Himself to His followers. Yesterday we looked at the need to draw near to God. The promise was He would then in turn draw near to us. Today let’s consider what the presence of God is like.

First, we know that this manifestation involves comfort. He said I will not leave you comfortless. When God draws near, there is a deep sense of love and wellbeing. This is grounded in obedience. He that has my commandments and keeps them is he that loves me.

Second, there will be joy. “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and [that] your joy might be full.” (John 15:10-11 AV)

Third, there will be answered prayer. “And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give [it] you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” (John 16:23-24 AV)

Fourth, there will be wisdom and understanding. “He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed [it] unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” (Mt 16:15-17 AV)

All of these and more are of course fruits of the Spirit. For the comforter is the Holy Spirit of God. He is our down payment, our earnest money. “In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” (Eph 1:13-14 AV)

Now the question is are you experiencing the manifest presence of God? Do not be deceived; His presence will only be realized in the absence of sin. Remember, He will come to those who keep His commandments.

If you do not have a deep sense of wellbeing, then examine your life for sin. If there is un-confessed or un-repentant sin, then deal with it immediately that you might have the assurance you seek. God will not despise a broken and contrite heart. The world may comfort the flesh, but only the Holy Spirit can comfort the soul.