

ON THE FRONTIER

“For the glory of God and the furtherance of the gospel”

Believing Demands Obedience by Linus A. Mathis III

Most people, if asked, will tell you that they believe in God. But they are hard pressed to verbalize their beliefs and even more challenged to write them down. It is difficult, if not impossible, to believe in something you cannot define. (If you like your steak cooked in a certain manner, or your eggs, try ordering them without giving your table server a clear description.) Thankfully, God has made Himself known via the life of His Son and the magnificence of His Word.

John 1:18

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [to draw out in narrative, unfold in teaching] *him*.

In other words, Jesus Christ makes known God. And the way to know Jesus Christ is by knowing the written Word of God.

There are those who will argue that God can be known by nature. While the magnitude of the creation testifies that there *is* a God, it tells you little about Him. You must go to His Word for the details.

Psalms 138:2b

... for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name [all that He has set His hand to].

As splendid as the creation is it pales in the presence of God. It is also not the means by which God has chosen to reveal Himself. Man's failure to embrace God's Written Word has caused man to think, speak and act foolishly.

Romans 1:19-25

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature [the creation] more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Furthermore, He tells us in His Word that EVERYTHING He does is according to His Word.

Ephesians 1:11

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel [the written Word is God's counsel and purpose] of his own will [desires, or wishes]:

I am all for environmental preservation. But, it seems to me we ought to be more interested in what the Creator has to say about it. After all, He is the one who created it. Don't you think His concerns demand precedence? He does have seniority. Shouldn't He be the one to say what should be done about what? And wouldn't He know more about Himself than anyone else? Who do you think I should ask to find out what you like? I suppose I could guess at what you like, but if I really want the bottom line I must ask YOU.

How can we know about Him if He does not tell us? How blessed we are that He has seen fit to reveal Himself to us with the descriptive precision of words. There is no guess work needed. God has satisfied one of man's greatest needs by making Himself known.

II Peter 1:2-4

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Once we know Him we can trust Him. Can you imagine giving your wallet and car keys to a complete stranger for safekeeping? Of course not! A Christian's responsibility is to accept and trust God's ability. This is the reason that the foundation and threshold of all Christian life is dependent upon our knowledge of Him. This is the essence of

all our trust. It is difficult to trust someone you do not know, yet little effort is required in trusting someone you do know. Our trust of God is in direct proportion to our knowledge of Him, and our trust of God is conditioned by our knowledge of Him. It behooves us then, to grow in our knowledge of His Word.

God gave His Word so that we can know His Will for us. Once we know His Will we are supposed to be obedient to it.

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are revealed belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

That we may DO. This is the crux of it. Once we know God's Word we are to be obedient to it.

Romans 16:25,26

Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

It is one thing to say, "I believe in God", it is quite another to believe Him. If you believe Him you will obey him.

James 2:19-26

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith

made perfect?

And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 1:22

But ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

In any relationship, it's a good idea to find out what the other party's likes and dislikes are. When you love someone you find out as much as you can about them. The best way to do that is to ask *them*. And, if you sincerely love them, you do your level best to do the things that your partner finds pleasing. So, how can I please God unless I know what He considers pleasing?

Colossians 1:9

For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

How can we walk worthy of the Lord with out knowing Him? And how can we believe what we do not know?

Romans 10:13,14

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

How can we say we believe Him if we are not obedient to His Word?

Romans 10:16

But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

To know God you must know His Son and to know His Son you must know God's Word. Once you know it then, and only then, can you believe Him. And to believe Him, you MUST be obedient to His Word.

Romans 10:17

So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
