



Let God be God

## *It's all about God*

### **It's not all about us**

On the whole, people everywhere live as if life is all about them. It's about their hopes, their dreams, their comfort, their well-being.

This is generally true for the believer and unbeliever alike. This is confirmed by the fact that almost all, if not all of the thinking, is concerned with self. And even if God is considered, it is only as some remote religious practices. God is for most people so remote from their presence that He can only be understood as some distant ideal far removed from the reality of the world.

This natural way of man is getting what he wants from the world, so he has no real interest in the God who created all things and needs to be worshipped.

However, when we become Christians, we are to come out of the world and preoccupation with getting the comfort of things. So we live

by faith in God, trusting in Him for our needs on earth while we live life according to His life in the Spirit.

Unfortunately many who claim Christ as saviour often have not broken their attachment to the world, so their interest in the world remains and their interest in God is minimal, more often than not it is to get God to get them what they desire in the world.

When they want stuff from the world they ask God to get it for them. When they get sick they turn to God to make them well again. When trials and tribulation come along, they ask God to deal with it so they don't have to suffer. It's all about them.

This highlights the problem for man in that his chief concern is to be comfortable in the world, rather than having daily communion in the presence of God who created all things in the first place.

How much do we know about our God?

- God is light. James 1:17
- God is spirit, He is invisible John 1:18; 4:24
- God is our Creator. Gen 1:1; Gen 1:27
- God is eternal, immortal. 1 Tim1:17
- God is unchanging. Mal 3:6
- God is incomparable. Psalm 86:8
- God is mysterious; unfathomable. Psalm 145:3
- God is just; showing no favouritism. Deut 32:4
- God can do anything. Jer 32:17
- God is present everywhere. Psalm 139:7-13
- God knows all things. Psalm 139:13-16
- God is one; there is no other god. Deut 6:4
- God will not ignore wrongdoing. Rom 3:21-26
- God is sovereign, nothing can stop Him. Psalm 93:1; Jer 23:20
- God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
2 Cor 13:14

God is truth, fixed in honesty. Psm 117:2

God is holy and separated from all sin. Isa 6:3

God is a consuming fire in judgment.

Habakkuk 1:13

God is gracious, in goodness, kindness,  
mercy, and love.

Exodus 34:6

God desires to know each of us personally.

Psalm 31:19; John 17:3

God desire we seek Him as our God. Jer 29:13

If we claim to know these things, does our life give good witness to the truth or are we still living according to the ways of men? Isn't God in the best possible position to decide what the best is for us in any situation?

Jesus came to change the old way of thinking about God for those who will believe in Him, but a detailed examination of the lives of many Christians would indicate the old mindset continues as before. Even the most religious person can still think of God as a distant relative they have never met.

Many Christians talk about having a relationship with God, but when the pressure is really on, when there is severe testing of faith, the response often reveals a level of anxiety that has got to mean God is absent from their deepest thinking. Knowledge of the reality of God is not the same thing as experiencing that reality of God.

### **God puts us to the test**

All training in every sphere of life is about receiving knowledge and then being able to put it into practice. Therefore when the knowledge has been given, there is an examination to prove that something has actually been learnt.

The examination of Christian faith, that is, the knowledge of God, is done in the world of hard knocks. Christian testing takes place in the darkness of the world that does not know God. The proving of our faith to be genuine can only occur if the believer doesn't fall apart

but stands firm, trusting God without anxiety derailing their peace in His presence.

However, many have the strange idea that God is something like the tooth fairy, painless extraction with miraculous rewards. Many think that all we need to do is attend class and listen to the teacher and graduate with honours.

However, being competent and having the ability to do what is taught takes some determined effort. It requires the believer to become an overcomer. He must not only know what is taught, but he must overcome his connection to the world, and also be able to resist the pressure to conform to the world's values.

When it comes to the things of faith, we have the added incentive that what we need to learn is required to save our lives. This is because we are at war with the evil powers of darkness who want to destroy our souls as believers in Christ. Christian education is for the

protection of our faith so we survive spiritual attack. God provides abundantly for our training as soldiers of the cross, but we have to listen to the instructions given or we will be nothing more than cannon fodder.

Like the people in the church at Sardis, we may think we are alive, but we may already be dead. Knowledge that makes no difference to living the life of faith is of no value. And if the Lord doesn't send us a letter, we won't know we have failed the test until the final reckoning.

Jesus was very concerned for the welfare of His people so He sent letters to seven churches in Asia. The letters in most part recognise the struggle for faith that is going on, and He gives a warning of the seriousness of the battle to come. The Lord makes it very clear that He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and end of all things. He has the keys of Hades and He will judge all who do not have their names written in the book of

life, who have instead received the brand of the world forces of darkness because they seek what they want from the world. He declares the victory is already His, but there is a need for diligence and perseverance under persecution until He returns.

We may begin our life as creatures of the world. And the natural way of the man of the world is to make life comfortable. All our effort is to get as much from the world as we can. However, the new life the spirit God gives to us means we are to live for spiritual realities. The kingdom of God and the ways of God are to be our main concern. The spiritual life is a life that looks to God because He is God, the God who is to be worshipped in all we say and do.

Col 3:23 Eph 6:7

## **God is all we need**

For the devoted believer there is only God, nothing else can take His place. If God isn't all we want and need, we have missed the point of being reconciled to God by the blood

of the cross of Jesus Christ. Everything that exists in our lives must come after God. The way we live in His presence can only have meaning when He is God to us and not our personal servant to do our bidding. Regardless of what we say, God will decide what's best.

Jesus came to reveal the truth about God as Father. Jesus taught us that God is our Father who desires that we know Him intimately. (John 17:3) Jesus teaches us that our Father wanted us to know Him so much that He sent His Son to die on a cross for our sins so we could be forgiven and be reborn in His image by the power of the Spirit. He wants us to live in His presence, trusting Him for all things in all things. Jesus said "*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.*"

John 15:4

To abide in Christ we must be bound intimately to His life, we must be dependent on His life force flowing through us. And this

can only be possible when He is all we need, for He is our God almighty, the beginning and the end.

Jesus taught about the Father. The Father wants us to be His sons. (Matt. 5:45) The Father will take care of us. (Matt. 6:8, 26-32) And we should respond to others as our Father has treated us. (Matt 5:44) The Father loves the Son and gave Him all authority. (Matt 11:25-27) And we can share in this relationship when we look to God as our Father. For this end, the Father sends His Spirit to us so we can live with Him.

John 14:26

### **Disciples walk as He walked**

When Jesus told the disciples they were to do His work in the world, (John 14:12) He also told them it would be no holiday. They would face opposition as He did. They would not live comfortable lives, but face persecution and even death. *“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its*

*own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. (John 15:18-20) "You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved."*

Matt 10:22

In order to live that life of trials as faithful disciples, they would need God as the first thing in their life. Jesus even prayed to the Father that the disciples would know their lives were one life with the Father and the Son.

John 17:6-26

These things are written for us to understand that we have to follow the same example in all things.

After Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles knew what it meant to walk with God so that God was first in all

things. Jesus had promised that the Spirit of God would teach them all things. John 14:26-31

## **We are to walk as Jesus walked**

We are to walk as Jesus walked, (1 John 2:6) and we are told in order to do that, we need to have the attitude that was in Christ. *'Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.'*

Phil 2:5-8

And there was never a time when Jesus walked amongst men that He didn't know that God was the God of all. Because of this, Jesus walked before God as His beloved Son. He spoke with God as His Father. He bowed down to the Father's will and laid down his life so we might live with God. Luke 22:42

Jesus didn't seek a comfortable life; He only sought to be about the Father's business. He even saw doing the Father's work as more important to Him than the bread we eat. Doing the Father's work was His bread. *"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."* John 4:34

For Jesus it was all about God being God. God was first in His life and would always be first.

### **Walking with God is being led by the Spirit**

In order to walk closely with God, as His children we must not only see God's providence working around us, we must also take note of the moving of His blessed Spirit within our hearts. *'For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.'*

Rom 8:14

Walking with God means having daily communion and fellowship with God; this is keeping close to the Holy Spirit who is dwelling in us. This is what our Lord

promised when he told His disciples that “*the Holy Spirit would be in and with them.*” The Spirit would dwell in their hearts.

The Spirit would teach and lead them into all righteousness, so listening to the Spirit and obeying His leading would mean they would survive the attack of the powers of darkness. *'And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.'*

Eph 6:17-18

Trusting God first, obeying God first, doing God's work first. Living the Christ life first in all things; and always putting the Spirit of God first in all things. Regardless of whether we are safe or suffering, we need to have God first.

### **Walking with God removes all anxiety**

The quality of our lives in the world is of small concern when we have God first,

because He works for our good all the time. With God first and foremost in our thinking, we can indeed be anxious for nothing. When we have God first we can give thanks in all things.

When the calamity of the fallen world cause us suffering, whether by natural disasters, or by the actions of men, or physical illness, or economic hardships, or political or religious persecution, God is all we need. If we persevere in the faith, looking only to God, He will keep us in perfect peace though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

Psalm 23

The quality of our lives before God who is always first depends on how much we have been able to separate ourselves from the world and the ways of men who don't know God as God. Our ability to give thanks in all things depends on our faithfulness to God who is first in our hearts and minds. We need to be like the disciples who were thrown into prison and beaten; and they rejoiced and sang praise

to God because God was first, not their safety or comfort.

Acts 5:40-41

## **It's all about God**

The big picture about God's peace in our lives is that it's not about this physical life, it's all about having God and God is Spirit. So God has made it possible for us to be born of the Spirit. It's not about us possessing God, but about God possessing us when we know the Almighty Heavenly Father is judge of all men. It's all about His kingdom way of life. It's about us walking in the spirit in His presence. It means our attention should be on God and how He wants us to live as His spiritual children of light in the world which has been corrupted by sin.

As God's chosen children, we live in a fallen world that does not honour God, and we experience all the tragedies of the world along with everyone else, saints, and sinners suffer together. But our lives as children of light should demonstrate that even in trials and

tribulation we live by faith in God, even in the worst of conditions known to man. Our lives should show we have God now living in us so we don't despair for our life on earth, no matter how bad things might become.

The Christian life is not about the quality of our lives here on earth, but about the quality of our relationship with God as we walk before Him as those who know they are always with God.

The letters to the seven churches in Revelation Chapters two and three should remind us that comfort in the world of man and the acceptance of people who don't know God will lead us to experience eternal judgement. But a willingness to suffer the disapproval of men as a result of standing up for the truth of God in the world will mean blessing and honour in heaven in the presence of God. Without genuine faith that will withstand persecution at the hands of men, we cannot please God.

There are only two ways to live. We either live under Satan's dominion according to the world or we live under the dominion of Christ. To live for earthly experiences motivated by the world's attitudes to life is to side with the dragon that has dominion on earth, this is called living in the city of man, also known as the great Babylon in the book of Revelation.

But to live for God by faith in Christ as Lord and saviour, means to live for the heavenly City, the City of God. Living for God is to live for the one who has ultimate authority over all things in heaven and on earth, Satan included. Aligning ourselves with the world of human experience means we will pass away in the world according to Satan's darkness. If we choose to live in the world we have no part in heavenly things. We were made from the dust of the world created by God and we will return to the world as dust.

If we align ourselves with God and live for heavenly things according to the Spirit we will always remain with God, and go to be with Him in heaven.

### **Do you have God?**

When unsettling trials arrive, when sickness comes, when opposition to faith blocks our way, when unjust treatment is forced on us, we need to understand trials and suffering will increase in these last days. Then we need to remember it is only God who can uphold us. *God will never leave us.*

So, do you have God? If you do, it is all His doing. For by the work of His Son, by the receiving of faith through obedience after repentance, with the filling of His Spirit, we are born again in His image and likeness, so that we now walk according to the Spirit, having died to life in the flesh and the world, with the result that we do the work of God, by walking as Jesus walked. *The love of God is with us.*

If we have God, then we have all we need. We have His kingdom life. We have His revealing light. We have His spiritual enabling. We have His intimate presence. We have all His magnificent promises. We have His redeeming purpose. We have His supportive ministry for one another. And we have each other as the body of Christ to build up one another to the glory of God. *God works for our good.*

Therefore we have His peace wherever we are and in whatever situation His Providence places us. In good times or bad, God causes all things to work together for our good as He transforms us into the fullness of the image of His Son. (Rom 8:28-29) In fact, nothing the world can throw at us can separate us from God's love, except if we give our full attention to the world and negative experiences.

Give thanks to God in all things for He cares for you. It is only when we allow God to be God that we can have peace on earth.

*'Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.'* 1 Thess 5:16-18

The bible calls on us to pray to God without ceasing. How is this done effectively if we only see God as an absent landlord? No wonder many who claim Christ often grumble at the way things have turned out in their lives. Grumbling shows we have placed ourselves first. Absent landlords cannot be, and are not the God and Father of Jesus Christ who taught us to put God first.

Abiding in Him, means to live in His presence as our God. It is to be God alone, not God and us who get Him to do our bidding.

When God is really our God without question or hesitation, we will know the meaning of Paul's challenge to the church at Philippi. *'So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is*

*God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.'*

Phil 2:12-15

*God's promise: 'You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.'*

Isaiah 26:3

When we accept that God will work in us and through us according to His sovereign will, we can relax and get on with being the children He desires as light of the world.

Be happy with our God who knows all things, and wants the very best for all His children. Be happy with God who upholds you through all things in your life. Be happy with God who is using your walk to mould you into His likeness. Be happy with God in control and His contentment will complete your days.

# Living Water Resources



## Come to the River

*'You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing moulded will not say to the moulder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honourable use and another for common use?'*      Rom 9:19-21

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