

*I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I have learned from my Father I have made known to you.*

(John 15:15)

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know that this love surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

(Ephesians 3: 18, 19)

## **Love Leads to Knowledge... and Vice-Versa**

When you want to share something that you've discovered that you think is truly wonderful or delightful, do you share it first with your worst enemy? Of course not – you go find your best friend to share it with, because you trust your friend and are happy to share your secrets with him or her.

God does the same thing. The general knowledge of Salvation – the Lord Jesus paid the penalty for our sins that we *should* have paid, and opens the way to a restored relationship with God if we will accept Him – is made known to all, because God desires that all people be saved. (1 Timothy 2:4). Before we are saved, let's be honest; we don't know Him, and probably didn't care to, thank you very much. We couldn't be bothered, either out of a sense of guilt over our sins (*Ah, He wouldn't forgive me – I've done too much*), the knowledge that He's God and we're not (*He's so far above me – how can I ever reach Him?*), trying to avoid the guilt of our sins by saying, *Oh, well, then there is no God* (which the Psalmist says is being a fool in Psalm 14:1), or being so full of ourselves that we think we're right up there with – or above – Him (the old cry of the New Age adherents – *I am God!*). After Salvation, however, it's amazing how much we learn of God. And, in keeping with the idea of our being part of the Body of Christ, we not only learn the general deeper truths of God, but each of us learns a little something special about Him, almost as if He gives us something that He knows we will respond to; deeply, profoundly and *uniquely*. (And though He doesn't mind if we share it with others... just don't be surprised if others aren't "turned on" by it like we are.)

*He shares His secrets with His friends.* Yes, He is still God – creator, sustainer and Lord of all, Ruler of the Universe, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the great I AM, almighty, omnipotent, the first and the last, worthy of all glory, honor and praise (which He will receive) for all eternity – but He calls us friends. It sounds like the ultimate in presumptuousness or pretentiousness, doesn't it? *God shows me stuff because I'm His friend.* But this is hardly a new thing; Abraham was called the friend of God in 2 Chronicles 20:7 and James 2:23. Before that (in Genesis 18), after Abraham enters into covenant with Him, God actually takes him into His counsels and reveals what He's about to do about Sodom and Gomorrah.

*So, how come I didn't know about (fill in the blank) before it happened? I could have been spared a whole lot of grief/expense/suffering if I had been forewarned.* First of all, if you've never entered into a relationship with God, can you honestly say you're in friendship with Him? Really, you cannot. Only the covenant fulfilled by the Lord Jesus

offers this kind of relationship with God through the sacrifice of Himself; all else is mere religion and a bunch of rules, rites and repetition that offers no certainty of getting into Heaven once you die. Does God still love you? Absolutely – but He makes the offer of forgiveness and redemption available to everyone. Those who continue to go their own way and handle their lives alone simply have not responded. But even if you *have* taken Him up on it, sometimes God withholds information (and *never* in a malicious or callous way) for the larger purpose of helping you to grow in Him. And sometimes, He *does* warn us, either through His Word or by direct revelation via prophecy, dream or vision... and sometimes, we ignore it and plow on ahead with our plans, anyway... usually, to our pain and regret.

Usually, all believers have to learn not to do the latter, sometimes the hard way. But once we learn this lesson and come to trust in God, we find ourselves open to a great deal of wonderful things. Often, such things are meant to be shared with others. Sometimes, however, they are between God and that person and no other – often because no one else would understand the meaning of the revelation. For lack of a better term, such things are *gestures of affection* between the Creator and His creation, meant solely for that person and designed to draw the person closer to God.

It's an interesting cycle – love leads to knowledge, which leads to greater love, which leads to even greater knowledge, etc.

When I turned 50, my wife gave me a birthday card – store-bought, but with a wonderful letter on the inside. I still have that letter in my Bible. Am I going to relate the contents of my letter? *Absolutely* not – such communications are for my wife and I alone. (And, no, it's not what you're probably thinking.)

God does similar things, but takes it to the next level since He understands us better than anyone and knows best what will truly make us happy. In my case, I will say that one of the things He has revealed to me is the wonderful interconnectedness of every believer, using the analogy of the Body of Christ, which I have written of before on several occasions. God delights in revealing to us things that help us to realize that He's even more wonderful than we thought.

Lately, as the climate in this nation changes, I have written what God has warned me of regarding this nation and the need of the Church to wake up from its lethargy and be the Body of Christ – reaching out in His name, doing the things He would do and honoring Him with our lives. God has been trying to remind about the dire consequences of walking away from Him who established a relationship with the United States from its very beginning. But like with Salvation, “fire insurance” or merely avoiding the negatives goes only so far. There is so much more of Him, His creation and His Kingdom to learn about, and God never ceases to amaze and inspire awe and leave you wanting more.

What do you suppose *you* could learn if you let everything else go and opened yourself up to Him?