

130:8:2 *At Syracuse they spent a full week. The notable event of their stop here was the rehabilitation of Ezra, the backslidden Jew, who kept the tavern where Jesus and his companions stopped. Ezra was charmed by Jesus' approach and asked him to help him come back to the faith of Israel. He expressed his hopelessness by saying, "I want to be a true son of Abraham, but I cannot find God." Said Jesus: "If you truly want to find God, that desire is in itself evidence that you have already found him. Your trouble is not that you cannot find God, for the Father has already found you; your trouble is simply that you do not know God.*

Finding God and Knowing God

An interesting question: Is it equally good to see a map with a gorgeous city located on the map and yet never go to that city to experience its beauty? We have never been to the wonderful city of Singapore. We have been told of its amazing people, lush foliage, delicious restaurants and dazzling crafts created by their artisans. However, we do not actually KNOW OF this city. We have only been told ABOUT it. In order for us to of a certain KNOW Singapore we would need to travel there, stay there, see the people, eat the food and view with our own eyes the lush beauty of its natural wonders. God is just like that. We can find God. However, the real question is "Do we KNOW God?"

131:4.4 *Our God is the Lord of life and the Comforter of all men; he is the lover of mankind and the helper of those who are distressed. He is our life giver and the Good Shepherd of the human flocks. God is our father, brother, and friend. And we long to know this God in our inner being.*

Do you KNOW GOD in your inner being?

In order to become well one might need to see a doctor. If one does not actually travel to a doctor can one actually discover a cure for what ails them? No, they cannot. What we have been calling "worship" at a church service is actually a lovely, inspirational and religious "social gathering" where mainly ONE person instructs us about what we should "think". The truth is that true religion worship is experienced when one is quite alone with God...quiet and still. This is just what Jesus did. And – this is what Jesus meant when He used the term "follow me".

YOU are the very child of God. Sonship!

131:10:2 *"The Lord our God is one Lord, and you should love him with all your mind and heart while you do your very best to love all his children as you love yourself. This one God is our heavenly Father, in whom all things consist, and who dwells, by his spirit, in every sincere human soul. And we who are the children of God should learn how to commit the keeping of our souls to him as to a faithful Creator.*

When we hold something in keeping for someone we are physically experiencing handling that item, securing it, hiding it away and keeping it safe. Our souls are are to be "kept" by God...not us...as we trust Him to secure our inner most beings to His loving over-care. This is what Jesus did as He stood before Pilate, experienced those horrible midnight trials with scourging s and His torture on the cross at the hands of murderous and dishonorable religious-leader thugs. Our Father did not kill Jesus for His blood used for remission of sins. They killed Him. Even in these terrible hours Jesus was fully confident of His Father's over-care to the point that Jesus was "devoid of fear". We can as well.

The ministry of the spirit of heaven to us.

131:10:5 *"I will no longer be satisfied to believe that God is the Father of all my people; I will henceforth believe that he is also my Father. Always will I try to worship God with the help of the Spirit of Truth, which is my helper when I have become really God-knowing. But first of all I am going to practice worshiping God by learning how to do the will of God on earth; that is, I am going to do my best to treat each of my fellow mortals just as I think God would like to have him treated. And when we live this sort of a life in the flesh, we may ask many things of God, and he will give us the desire of our hearts that we may be the better prepared to serve our fellows. And all of this loving service of the children of God enlarges our capacity to receive and experience the joys of heaven, the high pleasures of the ministry of the spirit of heaven. ~ Ganid*

Please say this with us, "God is MY Father!" [say this out loud as a group]

Is it not easier to say that God is everyone else-s child for we do not know all the wrong things that someone else has done as only God sees these things? But how much the harder it is to say that God is MY Father because He really does know every single thing that I HAVE DONE and so how can He still really love me? Yet, this is very true! God IS forgiveness. Jesus IS mercy ministry. YOU really ARE forgiven without the need for any kind of blood to be shed from anyone at any time. Jesus never said that anyone needed bloodshed for their forgiveness. God truly IS your loving Father who just wants you to make good decisions so that your own souls will grow and your life can be happier.

"This great and glorious Being is my spiritual Father!" ~ Ganid

131:10:8 *"Henceforth will I do my good deeds in secret; I will also pray most when by myself. I will judge not that I may not be unfair to my fellows. I am going to learn to love my enemies; I have not truly mastered this practice of being Godlike. Though I see God in these other religions, I find him in 'our religion' as being more beautiful, loving, merciful, personal, and positive. But most of all, this great and glorious Being is my spiritual Father; I am his child. And by no other means than my honest desire to be like him, I am eventually to find him and eternally to serve him. At last I have a religion with a God, a marvelous God, and he is a God of eternal salvation." ~ Ganid*

There is SUCH a difference in the old religious beliefs that try to tell us ABOUT God. Yet, we see far too often that they were and still are incorrect even to this day. "Our Religion" [as Ganid states] is the true religion whereby we are seeking to KNOW God who dwells within. As stated earlier it is not that we cannot "find God" but it is that Jesus said that we do not KNOW God...for ourselves. Anyone can do this for it is God's intention that we do find Him and know Him as a Person.

Let God bring you UP and INTO your higher nature.

132:4:6 *To a Roman soldier, as they walked along the Tiber, he said: "Be brave of heart as well as of hand. Dare to do justice and be big enough to show mercy. Compel your lower nature to obey your higher nature as you obey your superiors. Revere goodness and exalt truth. Choose the beautiful in place of the ugly. Love your fellows and reach out for God with a whole heart, for God is your Father in heaven."*

We may view others who walk in step with the crowd doing only those things that everyone else seems to be doing. The mob may have more unthinking and lower nature-d people running it than those allowing their higher natures to lead them. Respect and admire goodness and truth in the place of common lack of decency. When going UP and INTO your higher natures you find God who is your very own Father.

Know God as YOUR spiritual Father!

132:4:7 *To the speaker at the forum he said: "Your eloquence is pleasing, your logic is admirable, your voice is pleasant, but your teaching is hardly true. If you could only enjoy the inspiring satisfaction of knowing God as your spiritual Father, then you might employ your powers of speech to liberate your fellows from the bondage of darkness and from the slavery of ignorance." This was the Marcus*

who heard Peter preach in Rome and became his successor. When they crucified Simon Peter, it was this man who defied the Roman persecutors and boldly continued to preach the new gospel.

When we KNOW God as our spiritual Father we may then speak to others out of His spiritual insight which He gives freely to all who seek Him and desire to really know Him. We have “powers of speech” that are imbued and empowered by God with His living truths that are capable of freeing those who walk in spiritual darkness and then leading them to His light of His true spirit.

All effects begin with a “cause”.

134:4:1 The brotherhood of men is founded on the fatherhood of God. The family of God is derived from the love of God — God is love. God the Father divinely loves his children, all of them.

We have been created by God for one most divine purpose: To KNOW God as our Father and THEN love our fellows as our brothers and sisters in this family OF God. Once we have all found Him as our Father then we have the never-ending source of His divine love to sincerely offer and bestow upon one another His love that goes beyond mere emotion into the power of God Himself flowing through us.

Daughters and sons are both sons of God!

141:2:1 The night before they left Pella, Jesus gave the apostles some further instruction with regard to the new kingdom. Said the Master: "You have been taught to look for the coming of the kingdom of God, and now I come announcing that this long-looked-for kingdom is near at hand, even that it is already here and in our midst. In every kingdom there must be a king seated upon his throne and decreeing the laws of the realm. And so have you developed a concept of the kingdom of heaven as a glorified rule of the Jewish people over all the peoples of the earth with Messiah sitting on David's throne and from this place of miraculous power promulgating the laws of all the world. But, my children, you see not with the eye of faith, and you hear not with the understanding of the spirit. I declare that the kingdom of heaven is the realization and acknowledgment of God's rule within the hearts of men. True, there is a King in this kingdom, and that King is my Father and your Father. We are indeed his loyal subjects, but far transcending that fact is the transforming truth that we are his sons. In my life this truth is to become manifest to all. Our Father also sits upon a throne, but not one made with hands. The throne of the Infinite is the eternal dwelling place of the Father in the heaven of heavens; he fills all things and proclaims his laws to universes upon universes. And the Father also rules within the hearts of his children on earth by the spirit which he has sent to live within the souls of mortal men.

The kingdom of God is here...NOW! YOU, as His sons, and daughters just the same, are the very temples of this kingdom of God. His spirit and your faith will show you this path whereupon you may meet your Maker and make contact with your Father within this temple of YOU. You are His children and He wants to work with you from the inside of the temple to the outside. As a result of this finding OF God within you then each of you, and then ALL of you, become the family of God on our world. You are a part of this living organism of true religion that makes up God's fraternity of God's people of whom then all have a bond that can never be broken.

God as the loving Father of the individual.

141:4:1 While sojourning at Amathus, Jesus spent much time with the apostles instructing them in the new concept of God; again and again did he impress upon them that God is a Father, not a great and supreme bookkeeper who is chiefly engaged in making damaging entries against his erring children on earth, recordings of sin and evil to be used against them when he subsequently sits in judgment upon them as the just Judge of all creation. The Jews had long conceived of God as a king over all, even as a Father of the nation, but never before had large numbers of mortal men held the idea of God as a loving Father of the individual.

Our minds are so often set upon things material/physical that we forget how the spiritual realm can impact our lives for the greater. When we understand that God is not One who is “out to get us” but this loving Paradise Father who longs to know us in a personal, intimate and deeply caring way. He has NO motives of keeping track of our wrong-doings, rather He longs to uplift and heal us in order for us to learn how to live our lives for the better towards even helping our fellows if we can do so. For, not only does God love us as a Father but He loves every single person on this world as His beloved child also. There are no chosen people whom God loves more than another. We are ALL dearly loved and cared for liberally and completely.

Jesus' gospel is the true religion that you are all sons of God as your Father!

141:4:2 In answer to Thomas's question, "Who is this God of the kingdom?" Jesus replied: "God is your Father, and religion — my gospel — is nothing more nor less than the believing recognition of the truth that you are his son. And I am here among you in the flesh to make clear both of these ideas in my life and teachings."

If we have seen the Son then we have seen the Father, Jesus told us clearly. We are His sons [meaning daughters as well] and our gorgeous truth is that our Father in heaven is our loving spiritual Parent. This is **Jesus' True Religion**. When we experience our Father in personal spiritual worshipful communion He can be known and loved as we are known and loved by Him. This is REAL. This is for YOU ~ His temple.

Some questions to discuss:

How deeply do we want to KNOW our indwelling Father? Why?

How might experiencing God as your personal spiritual Father change your thoughts about what religion really is?

Is considering God as your Father a difficult or an easy idea for you? Why?

Discuss how the preconceived idea of God living outside of man/woman differ from what Jesus really taught.

Does the potential for knowing God personally make you think or feel differently than you have before? Why?

~ Marin DeJohn

Now is a good time to say as a loving group **The Lord's Prayer** all together. Please turn these sheets back in.

Write down any questions you may have and give them to your leader. Feel free to write down a prayer request and give it to your leader.

Next week we will discuss The Temple of God.