

Are You Pursuing God or the Prophet?

During a crisis, the prophetic always becomes very popular. The uncertainty of our contemporary time motivates people to long for an assuring, personal word from the Lord. Many people who function in the prophetic know they can easily garner many followers on social media by dispensing prophetic statements. However, when we read the Scriptures, we learn that it is valuable to know God's ways. To know God's ways is to understand His attributes. Knowing this illustrates not only His character, but also what He loves and loathes (Ps. 97:10, Prov. 8:13). Unlike receiving a prophetic word, understanding God's ways is a lifelong journey.

The best way to get to know God is by being filled with His Spirit while saturating oneself with the Word of God (Ps. 119:97-99, Eph. 5:18-20). One time, a young man asked me for a "word from God." I asked this young man if he went to church, and he said, "Rarely." I asked him if he took the time to pray; he said, "Rarely." I asked him if he read his Bible regularly, and he said, "Once in a while." I responded, "This is the word of the Lord for you: Read the Bible and obey it!"

Allowing the Word of God to saturate us the same way the rays of the sun saturate the Earth will transform us to be like Yahweh (Ps. 19). A lifestyle of meditating on the Word of God causes us to flourish and bear much fruit because doing so transforms us into His image (Ps. 1, Ps. 2, 2 Cor. 3:18, Rom. 12:1-2).

The Bible is filled with references that teach the various attributes of God's character (Ex. 34:5-7, Ps. 36:5-7, Ps. 97:2, Ps. 145:8-20, Ex. 20:5-6, John 4:23-24). Once we know His ways, we can discern His paths (Ps. 25:4). Several weeks ago, I was asked to give my perspective on the coronavirus. I

disagreed with the prophetic voices that indicated it would leave quickly. Some people said that around the time of Passover, there would be a substantial downward shift and it would dissipate soon. The reason I disagreed with these statements is not that I had a particular "prophetic word," but because, based on my knowledge of God's ways, I felt this crisis would linger longer than many expected. I discerned that God was presently working through this crisis to purge and prepare His church for a real spiritual awakening.

Merely using this time to get "a word" instead of searching the depths of His character to know Him will result in a superficial faith. Prematurely praying for revival without the precondition of "breaking up the fallow ground" is missing the significance of the moment (Hos. 10:12). Scripture admonishes us to earnestly seek Him, to grow in the knowledge of God and to know Him (Heb. 11:6, Phil. 3:7-14, 2 Pet. 3:18, John 17:3).

God gets upset when we do not know His ways (Heb. 3:7-10). Something that set Moses, Asaph and David apart from others was not only their faith, but their hunger to know and seek God (Ex. 33:13, Ps. 25:4, Ps. 42:1-2, Ps. 63:1-8, Ps. 73:25). Moses was able to perform many miracles because He knew God's ways while Israel only observed God's actions (Deut. 34:10, Ps. 103:7). Hence, to the extent that we know God is the extent to which we can make Him known. As a result, we can then express His heart in words that are filled with power, authority and accuracy.

We have to ask ourselves the searing question, "Are we seeking God commensurate to our calling and destiny?" If you aren't, then it should not be a surprise to you as to why you're not maximizing your divine assignment. The ultimate goal of the gospel is to transform people to maturity and become Christlike (Rom. 8:29, Eph. 4:13-16, Col. 1:28, 1 Pet. 1:15-16).

I believe that during the coronavirus, God placed the whole

world on a forced Sabbath rest. His ultimate goal in all of this is for us to be still and know that He is God (Ps. 46:10). Of course, when in a personal crisis, there is nothing better than receiving an accurate prophetic word from somebody who has no true knowledge of your situation. Unfortunately, the charismatic church is often fixated on the "quick fix" prophetic word instead of a lifetime commitment to know God. A person can receive a transformational prophetic word, but unless it results in that person permanently drawing closer to God, its effect will be short-lived.

May we all behold His face in righteousness, and be satisfied only by being like Him in the process (Ps. 17:15).

According to the Westminster shorter catechism, when asked the question, "What is man's primary purpose?" the answer is, "Man's primary purpose is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever."

May it be so with all believers. Amen!