

Knowing God (4)

Scripture Reading — Jeremiah 22:1-10

They have forsaken the LORD ... and turned their backs on him. Isaiah 1:4 —

There are so many ways we can get to know God. But how can we be sure we're not just "going through the motions"? For example, we shouldn't assume we know God simply because we go to church. Is there some kind of test for knowing God?

When God established his covenant with his people, he made a promise, saying, "If you walk closely with me and really get to know me, you will continue to experience the blessings of our relationship--more than you can imagine. But if you behave as if you don't know me, then you will experience what ignorance is like."

God's people disregarded their relationship with God, so he sent prophets to remind them to repent and be faithful. Throughout the centuries God told the kings and the people again and again that if they did not repent, he would send enemy destroyers to ruin their great city and carry them away. But most of them wouldn't listen. So finally God punished the people, sending them into exile for their unfaithfulness.

The frightening thing is that when God's people were sent into exile, they were very busy "doing religion" (see Isaiah 1:11-17). They attended worship services and went through all the motions. But God was saying, in effect, "It's like you don't even know me anymore!" It was clear that they didn't really know God at all.

Prayer

Lord, it can be frightening to think we could be "good" church-going people and yet not know you. Deliver us from meaningless ritual to authentic life in Christ. Amen.

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