

The Responsibility of Knowing God

We read in the scriptures that it is Life Eternal to know who God is. Such knowledge, however, is very sacred and when this goal is reached it brings a great responsibility upon the person or persons who achieve it.

A great man once answered my request for advice by asking me if I was prepared to carry out his advice he was going to give me, or was I going to do what I wanted to do anyway. So when I get a request from someone to explain who God is, I ask the same question, "What are you going to do with this knowledge-- act upon it, or believe what you have previously decided upon anyway?"

Whoever God is, he revealed himself to several worthy men over the years, including just recently, Joseph Smith, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff and John Koyle. That these men conversed with God and angels there is no doubt, and they understood who he was and how he functioned. However, it appears that they had considerable difficulty in describing him, and how he functioned; and whether there was one, two or many.

That one finds contradiction in the different prophet's descriptions of God is understandable. This holds especially true in the case of Brigham Young, who tried to put things together from someone else's words and teachings, without seeking further revelation when there was confusion and doubt concerning a pertinent matter. He came to the Salt Lake Valley with certain knowledge he had been given by Joseph Smith. When he first got there he probably came the closest to what was correct. Yet some of the things he said contradicted other things he said when he first arrived, resulting in irreconcilable confusion which has continued to this day. It was no wonder that some of his apostles had difficulty with his concept, and didn't readily accept it.

Yet, even though he warned against it happening, he, possibly without being conscious of it, made it virtually impossible for anyone to disagree with him. This set the stage for the dogma of the "infallibility of the prophet-- dogma prevalent in the church today.

The solution to this confusion would have been for him to have sought further revelation concerning the matter. For some reason he never did, or was not able to do so.

We must consider that the situation dictated what happened. The membership began even then, to be in rebellion, and to give them a clear understanding of who God really was, would have put them under much greater condemnation. So what happened to Brigham Young may have been the result of a merciful god. (I have used the word God to mean both singular and plural.)

When comparing the scriptures in the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, etc, it becomes even more and more difficult to make sense of what is written. This may well be how it was meant to be. However, there are certain keys of knowledge that can be obtained from God to put all the pieces of the puzzle together. It is up to God to choose who he will entrust these keys with. These keys can be obtained in only one way, and that is by means of further revelation. Without it confusion will continue to reign.

Because of what happened in Brigham Young's case, and the interpretations of his teachings by others, God has become a different entity, to first the church, and then to the many different sects that embrace the teachings of the prophet Joseph Smith.

If these keys of this knowledge were here, would it be correct to make this knowledge available to everyone who enquired? Since God has apparently purposefully kept this knowledge from the church membership and its breakaway sects, would it not be a reasonable request to ask to those who inquire (just like the wise man who asked me if I was going to carry through with what he suggested) if the person or persons making this request were going to incorporate it into their beliefs, or if they were going to continue on believing as they had before. Or if upon receiving this knowledge they disregarded it as worthless and made it a subject of ridicule, would it not be wise then to follow the example of the Lord and impart this knowledge to only those who were sincere and willing to make the necessary sacrifice; and who have proven, by their works, that they were worthy to be recipients of this precious treasure that promises Eternal Life.