

John 8:12-20. Christ Declares That the Father Is His Witness.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus Christ is the witness to the Father, and through Him, we can know God as holy and merciful.

Scripture: John 5:31

Topics: "Knowing God", "Divine Providence"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the Pharisees' disbelief in Jesus as the light of the world and their failure to know the Father. He emphasizes that knowing God should be the first desire of our hearts and that God can be known through His works of creation and providence. Mortimer highlights that God sent His Son, Jesus, to teach us about the Father, and through belief in Christ, we can know God as holy and merciful, willing to forgive those who trust in Him.

Transcript

We behold our blessed Savior again surrounded by those enemies who had so lately retreated ashamed from his presence. The officers had refused to take him, after hearing him invite the thirsty to come and drink. But the Pharisees persisted in their wicked designs, though they heard him say, "I am the light of the world--he who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Instead of following the light, they accused him of speaking falsehood, and insolently said, "You bear record of yourself--your record is not true." They referred to words Jesus had once uttered, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," (John 5:31,) but by this he meant, "If I only bear witness of myself, and have no other witness, then my record is not true." But He had another witness, even the Father, who had declared by a voice from heaven that Jesus was his beloved Son, and who had enabled him to do astonishing miracles.

The Pharisees scornfully inquired, "Where is your Father?" How different from the request which an apostle afterwards made, "Show us the Father, and it suffices us!" These unbelieving Jews did not desire to know the Father; yet they thought they knew him already. Jesus told them plainly, "You neither know me, nor my Father." Would He say this to any of us, if He were now to speak to us? No reasonable creature can be happy, who does not know his Creator.

If we were not sinful creatures, the first desire of our hearts would be to know God. A child desires to see his parent. If a mother were to tell her little son that his father, who had long been absent in a distant country, would soon return, would not the child be glad? But if the child were willful and wayward, and had

heard that his father would restrain him from fulfilling his sinful inclinations, in that case he would not desire to see him return. Men have heard that God hates evil, and therefore they do not desire to know Him.

If they were not sinful, they would learn to know him from the works of creation. It is written, "That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has showed it unto them." (Rom. 1:19.) How has he showed it unto them? "By the things that are made." By the earth, and sea, the sun, moon, and stars; by the animals from the enormous whale that agitates the ocean, down to the tiny insect that floats in the breeze. But men did not gain the knowledge of God by the works of creation. "They glorified him not as God." The works of Providence are even greater than those of creation. It is of those works that David speaks in the Psalms, when he says, "How great are your works!" (Ps. 92:5.) If men were not sinful, they would learn to know God from the works of Providence. Paul said to the Athenians, God "has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him." (Acts 17:26, 27.) But did men feel after him? No--they wandered farther and farther from him.

But in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son.

And why did He send Him? That He might teach us to know God. And all who believe in Jesus Christ know the Father. They know Him to be the God of holiness, and yet of mercy; so holy, that he will not clear the guilty; and yet so merciful, that he will pardon the vilest sinner who trusts in the blood of his Son. But they never could have known Him, if Jesus had not come in the likeness of sinful flesh, and died upon the cross for their sins.

Do we know God? Do we desire to know him? How dreadful it would be to hear the Lord Jesus at the judgment-day declare, "If you had known me, you should have known my Father also." No one will be able to reply, "I desired to know God, but could not find him." O no, all who seek to know Him, shall find Him.

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