

V.O.C. – October 2017

October 1, 2017: Who is God? His Word shows us God as God!

Dear Listeners,

Do you know God? That's not an easy question, I realize. It could mean a variety of things: do you believe that God exists; that God is there? Do you know what God is like? Do you know what it means that God is God? Do you know God and how He is, what He does, what He means to you, etc. etc.? During this month of October I would like to consider all these questions! As you know, the *Voice of the Church* is the voice of the *Word of God*, for in the church His Word is opened, expounded, professed and proclaimed. Hence, tonight and in the coming weeks, in messages on the Voice of the Church, I wish to share with you *what the Word of God reveals about God: God as God, God in His characteristics, His virtues, God as He is toward us, and God as He is believed by us.* It is important that we *know God rightly*, very important! In fact, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, said that *knowing God is eternal life!*

As you well realize, dear listeners, knowing and knowing is two. In your life you have a lot of people, acquaintances, colleagues, neighbours that you *know*, by name, superficially, know somewhat. There also are people whom you know well, like your wife, your husband, your children, friends, family members; they're the people whom you *know* truly, deeply, personally. Well, it's this kind of knowing that we should have in mind when speaking about God: *knowing God is eternal life* that means that you know Him well, personally, deeply, sincerely, lovingly, etc. That's the kind of knowing we learn from God's Word; it's the kind of knowing Jesus Himself showed in *His* life, in *His* walk with God, *His* prayers to God, and in *His* speaking about God. Then you know God and you know what you have in Him, how He is, how great and good, how holy and divine, and how exalted and *yet* close by, intimate, and personal!

Just from this brief description of what it means to know God, really, truly, you will realize dear listener that we *need* to have *God's own Word* to know Him *rightly*. Of course, we know that God has revealed Himself in His *works*: in Creation, in His Providence, and in His government of this world. Last month I had the privilege of speaking to you about this. However, for us to know God truly as He is, we need His Word, His *self-revelation*. In His Word God spoke by His Holy Spirit to people like Moses, David, Isaiah, Luke, Paul, Peter, and the like. From them we get to know who God is and how and what He does, and what He means to us, and what He has done for us. Then we know Him even better, though, through Jesus Christ: *He* made Him known as He is, for He was with God the Father, "in the bosom with the Father," as John puts it. Hence, through Jesus Christ, God's Son, and through His life and service, His suffering and death, we are able to know the true God.

Then, dear listener, you know Him in His *love* for you, because you get to know God in His gift of His Son to you that He might save you from sin and death, from guilt and condemnation. *Knowing Him* that way, in His love, His grace, and His mercy, His justice and salvation, then *you truly have eternal life!* In fact, then eternal life starts *here and now*

already, in your life of faith in Him, and in your life of love to Him! That's what I pray you will come to see through these messages this month!

One of the first characteristics of God, dear listener, is what God revealed to Moses, the leader of the people of Israel (as we see in the book of Deuteronomy, 6: 4, 5): *God is one*, the LORD is God alone. God is a *God of one piece*, you could say, always the same, not contradictory. God, as He has revealed Himself in His Word is the only *true God*. The gods of the nations had gods beside them, even relative-gods like sons and daughters. *God is one*, and He is God alone! Hence, He also wanted that His people Israel would not have any gods beside Him. He wanted them to serve Him with their *whole life, a life of one piece* as well, without conflict, contradictions, but with their whole heart, soul, and mind, and all their strength. God wanted to be there for them *all the time*, in every aspect of their life. He wants to be the one and only God in all of our life, the life that He has created for that purpose! That's a great blessing when your life is united, of one piece, as God is one, doing all that you do for Him alone!

Then we know about this one true God that He has always been that way; God is also *eternal God*. Again, I realize that this is hard to fathom, comprehend: *eternal*. God has always been there, from before the world was created, eternally, and He always will be. He was there at the creation of the world, in the days of Moses, David, Jesus, and He is still there today and is in control of everything all this time! Amazing! It also means that He has always been there for the people, for Adam, Moses, Isaiah, Peter, John, and He is there for you and me too, and will always be there, also in the future, until the Lord Jesus returns (as He has promised). As Moses already said, and Peter repeated, "from everlasting to everlasting I am God!" One day is to Him as a thousand years and thousand years as one day! That's how God is: *eternal!*

Perhaps, by now you might be wondering, how can I know that this is right, that this is true? I've never *seen* God! That's true, God also is *invisible*; no one has ever seen Him or can see Him. That's why it's so important that we have the testimony of Jesus: He is the *image of the invisible God*; He is God incarnate, God in the flesh. He said, 'He who has seen me has seen the Father!' So, true, since God is *invisible*, God is *Spirit*, we cannot see Him! Yet, He did come to us in Jesus Christ! He has been revealed to us in His Word. His Spirit has come to us in His Word. Then you know that God, though invisible, still is *everywhere*; God is free: He was with His people in the temple, where they didn't need any images of wood, stone, silver, or gold, because they *knew* God was there. God has come to us in His Word, in His Spirit, and especially in His Son!

You see, dear listeners, this is how God reveals Himself in His Word as God: *God is one, eternal, invisible Spirit!* That means God is *power*, unbound, not stuck in one place, or limited to one way or method or people. God is coming to you too, speaking to you through the Voice of the Church, which is the voice of *God's Word*. Thus He is coming to you that He would also live in you, fill your life, and make it one! He wants to be one with you, intimate with you, and He wants that you too might serve Him and worship Him in Spirit and in truth! That's the way God is pleased to be served: *in Spirit and truth!* And for that purpose it is important that you *know* Him *rightly*, from His Word; that *you* may believe in Him, love Him, and live for Him!