

January 10

Knowledge or Obedience?

Reading: 2 Peter 1:5-12

"By His knowledge My righteous Servant will justify many" (Isa 53:11)



When Reverend C.F. Schwartz (1726-1798) was a professor in the Halle University, he obeyed the call of God, came to India in 1750, ministered in Tamilnadu for 48 years without visiting his home country Germany even once and finished his race here. Is he not a practical illustration for the truth that obedience is greater than knowledge?

What we need today is not more revelations but obedience to what has been already revealed. No other generation has had so many Study Bibles and Study Aids. With numerous Bible software and multiplied Study Seminars, we seem to surpass all the earlier generations in Bible knowledge. We "run to and fro" to attend Conventions and Conferences to increase our knowledge (Dan 12:4). But the driving force is a lust for knowledge rather than a desire for obedience. This was the sin of our first parents as well. They were interested in acquiring more knowledge than walking in obedience before God. That's why they ate the fruit of the forbidden Tree of Knowledge.

God is not against us gathering knowledge. In fact He is the Source of all knowledge and wisdom. But knowledge brings on us a tremendous responsibility. Sensibly Apostle Peter admonishes us to "add to knowledge self-control." Otherwise we will be "barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 1:6,8). We all boast of how much of the Bible we know. It's time we take a stock of how much of the Bible we obey. Apostle James throws a loud challenge in his practical Epistle: "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by good conduct" (Js 3:13).

There's a renewed interest these days in the study of prophecies. It's certainly profitable. But the study of prophecy serves what purpose if it does not lead us to spread the message of prophecy which is the "testimony of Jesus?" (Rev 19:10c). This was the gentle rebuke of the resurrected Lord to the disciples: "You do not need to KNOW the time of the restoration of the Kingdom. Your job is to just WORK for its expansion" (Acts 1:6-8 free translation). The prophetic testimony concerning Jesus was that by His knowledge He would redeem many (Isa 53:11b). That was why He was anointed with the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge (Isa 11:2). On the other hand the learned lawyers of His day were guilty of taking away the key of knowledge without entering in themselves or letting in others (Lk 11:52). Is our witnessing in proportion to our learning?

Knowledge that does not lead to obedience will only fill us with arrogance!