

SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS

And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. -John 12:20-21

The desire of "certain Greeks" to see Jesus was greater than concern about embarrassment or being considered audacious. Because they wanted something more than ceremonial worship, they didn't pretend the ceremony had reached deep cores of their souls. Also, they had observed Jesus. Jesus' effect on people's lives made a pursuit of Him imperative.

Similarly, Acts 17:16-28 says that in the idolatrous city of Athens, the people also were worshipers, even though they were uncertain whom to worship. Verse 23 says their altar contained an inscription, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Paul, the Apostle, not only was "stirred" about the idolatry, his LOVE for God reflexively prompted him to explain Who God IS; and that they "should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him." (*A gentle reminder: In light of Luke 6:46 and Mat. 28:19, shouldn't it be a natural reflex for persons who truly love God to be apologetics on God's behalf, to help others to know the blessedness we have come to learn of God?*)

The Acts 17 and John 12 worshipers symbolize types of voids of something / someone beyond traditional piety that probably every human feels at some point. The John 12 feast-goers desired deeper intimacy with Jesus; and the Acts 17 people in Athens felt prompted to pursue some form of religion, regardless of who or what the god was.

Similar to Paul's unrest, as Christians mature, we would rather not attend a 'dog and pony show'. We also would not entertain foolish religions or idolatry. Like the Greeks, we do not want to 'make do' with worship rituals that fail to deepen our triumphs and fellowship with God. As we continue being taught "a more excellent way," we understand that

beneficial religion and worship produce not only measurable satisfaction, but victorious living (Rom. 8:37-39), despite what we encounter in life. Further, aside from a popular chant: 'don't judge me', we give deference to Rom. 16:17 and 1 Cor. 5:6. All the same, neither transgressions nor shortcomings can defeat people who avail themselves of Christ's sanctifying love.

Certainly, Christian Pilgrims are sometimes painfully aware of their having signed up to travel the (Heb. 12:14) holiness journey. However, despite any pain, we do not regret alliance to Jesus. Like soldiers in battle, like stiff joints put to exercise, we are convinced that submission to the Captain of Salvation is the very best decision for our lives, with the richest rewards (Rom. 8:18; 1 Cor. 2:9). Also, irrespective of how we may feel about it, since Jesus (Heb. 5:8) "learned obedience by the things which He suffered," we can be sure of OUCH somewhere with our name on it! Even for occasions when things don't turn out as hoped -sometimes awfully disappointing, we conclude like Peter in John 6:68: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Moreover, particularly after crushing setbacks, we would see Jesus (for peace, strength, wisdom, instruction, courage, focus, consolation, direction, and more).

Yet, genuine Pilgrims (on the Christian journey) have no problem with LOVING reproof, as we call to remembrance songs of old, like: 'when you see me not walking right'; and passages such as Gal. 6:1-2; James 5:19-20. In fact, Gal. 2:11-14 tells how Paul confronted and rebuked Peter. Why all the bother?

Because, we would see Jesus.

Also we would see Jesus because manifold human incapacities (Rom. 7:15-25) compel us to recognize our need for God. Likewise, because the soul's hunger does not, will not disappear, the requirement to take up Christ's cross and follow Him doesn't really matter -for He is more than an adequate Consolation and Sustainer of all who take refuge in Him. To have Him, to know Him, to see Him -is just that dire! We would see Jesus because, unlike any other Being, His excellence is inexhaustible treasure.

He IS altogether Lovely. He IS Emmanuel. He IS Righteousness and Truth. He IS our Adonai. He IS our Savior. He IS the Living Bread. He IS our Confidence, our Life and our Joy. He IS the Lover of our souls. He IS our Song, our Hope, our Foundation, our Wisdom, our Praise, our Celebration. He IS our only True and Faithful Friend, our Comfort, our Way-Maker, our Purpose, our Advocate, our Deliverer, our Meaning, our Leader, our Delight, our Strength. He IS our Teacher, our Commander, our Provider, our Intercessor, our Companion, our Redeemer, our Covenant maker, our Shepherd, our Cheer. He gives us a sound mind and regulates it! He prays for us. He reproves us, resurrects us, feeds us, quickens us. He is enamored with us. He laughs with us, lovingly laughs at us, disciplines us, holds us, sings to us and with us, weeps for us, weeps with us; incredibly, He seeks us. Although we forsake Him, He never forsakes us. He chastises us. He is our Healer, our Defender, our Protector. He IS the Light for any darkness, the Treasure hid in a field. He IS Rabboni. He IS the Lilly of the Valley; the Pearl of Great Price -our All in All. For these and many more reasons, **WE WOULD SEE JESUS.**■