

Ole Miss FCA Weekly Devotional: 10/5/09

The Power and Passion of the Master Coach, Elliot Johnson



Thought of the Week:

God's infinite knowledge

Verse of the Week:

Before a word is on my tongue You know it completely, O Lord. Psalm 139:4

In the fencing quarterfinals of the 1936 Olympics, Italian Giancarlo Cornaggia-Medici demonstrated a great knowledge and awareness of distance. Perplexed by two close calls, he insisted his opponent's sword was too long. Exact measurements revealed that, in fact, his opponent's sword was one-half inch too long!

Though Cornaggia-Medici's perception was keen, our God is omniscient. He knows all things at all times. God's knowledge is all-inclusive. From the beginning He knows the end, and from the end He knows the beginning. There is nothing God does not know. When we make a decision, we make it with limited knowledge. We consider the past, or what we perceive of the past. But our perceptions are often wrong. We consider the present, or what we think we see. Finally, we consider what we might think will happen in the future. However, no man knows the future! But God always acts with all the facts. He knows the past, the present, and the future perfectly. There was never a time when God didn't know all things!

Man acquires wisdom by experience. God has wisdom by His very essence. He is wisdom! Compare man's thought patterns with God's thought patterns. When we think, we can only think of one thing at a time. We think a thought and build on it. When we think of something past we cannot be thinking of something future at the same time. Try it! It's impossible! We are able to think one thought at a time. But God doesn't think like we think. He knows all things perfectly. He knows the past, present, and future in the same thought. Because of His omniscience, God can be trusted when He commands us to do something. God has developed the wisest plan that could be devised. God has never had to revise anything or change His mind. We change our minds because we discover new things and gather further information, but God never has to change His mind and He never discovers new things. He already knows everything! This is called foreknowledge. He is never surprised and never caught off guard by anything man or Satan does!

The Bible has much to say about God's infinite knowledge, for unless God knows all things, we could not be judged fairly. Unless He is omniscient, His judgment could be questioned. But there will be no debate with God, because He knows all things. He can rightly judge everyone. The Psalmist says, "You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord" (139:2-4). God knows what is going through the minds of the Israelites (Ezekiel 11:5). The Word of God is able to judge the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account (Hebrews 4:12-13)." God can and will rightly judge. He is a righteous Judge because He has all the facts. Not one thing through all eternity has ever escaped God's notice. What a comfort this is to the Christian! He knows all our trials and allows each to come into our lives. Psalm 56:8 reveals that God has recorded every tear we've ever shed! Surely we can trust a God who knows us so well!

God also knows all His created beings perfectly. He knows about young ravens and their need for food (Job 38:41). He knows how to use a worm to accomplish His purpose (Jonah 4:7). All the birds and all the beasts are His (Psalm 50:1). God knows all creatures of nature perfectly, for He created them (Job 38-42).

It is amazing that God knows man, nature, and all other created things perfectly. But there is someone else that God knows just as perfectly. He knows Himself! The craze of our society is to "know oneself." A beer company had a commercial that said, "You know who you are, you know where you are going." We are told we must know ourselves to be happy and successful. But what if we finally get to know ourselves and find that we are just wretched old sinner! That doesn't make us very happy, does it? But we are all sinners before God! Our happiness is not to be found in knowing or finding ourselves. Our happiness comes in knowing God. That is the way God designed us. People without God may look happy, but theirs is temporary and artificial façade. The man who is blessed or "filled with deep inner joy" is the man who walks with God (Psalm 1). Only those who walk with God will never be shaken (Psalm 15). In fact, to know yourself is impossible! Do you really know what makes you tick? Do you know what you will do in every situation? No man can totally and exactly know himself. The world is sending us on a false quest, and even some Christians are deceived! The only One who knows Himself completely is God! Charnock writes: If He did not understand Himself He would be under the greatest ignorance, because He would be ignorant of the most excellent object, Himself. If God does not know Himself, He would not know other things. Unless He knew His power, He could not know how He created things; unless He knew His wisdom, He could not know the beauty of His works:...unless He knew His own holiness, He could not know bad is evil; unless He knew His own justice, He would not know how to punish the crimes of His offending creatures."

Because God does know Himself, He perfectly knows all these things. The omniscience of God amazes us. We agree with the Psalmist, that "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain" (Psalm 139:6). When Job questioned God and the Lord answered him, Job humbly admitted, "Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know" (Job 42:3). We bow in awe of our all-knowing God!

Time Out:

- 1) Think of the smartest person you know. Compare that person with what you have just learned about God. How does this comparison make you feel about God?
- 2) Are you seeking happiness and fulfillment in things of this world or are you seeking fulfillment in knowing God?
- 3) Study Job 38-41 and list things God knows that we don't know.
- 4) Meditate on God. While meditating on God, write your thoughts and feelings.
- 5) Worship the Lord with prayer and praise! He is worthy! List eight reasons why you should praise Him.
- 6) If God knows all things, should we not trust Him despite all our problems and decisions?