

KNOW that HE IS the "I AM" GOD (pt 3)

I Cor 2:6-16, 12:1-6; Rom 5:1-5; II Peter 1:4; I Jn 3:2

I. THREE WISDOMS

- A. Rational—metaphysical/philosophical, definitions & logic; often via analogy, e.g. Plato's Cave
- B. Revealed—Scripture, Creeds (Apostles; Nicene), Theology ("consensual theologians," recognized "doctors"—Basil; Augustine, Gregory Nazianzus; Jerome, *et al*)
- C. Mystical—spiritual/infused, prelude to *Beatific Vision*; "The mystics, to give them their short familiar name, are men and women who insist that they know for certain the presence and activity of that which they call the Love of God" (Evelyn Underhill, *The Love of God*, p. 3).

II. MYSTICAL/SPIRITUAL/INFUSED WISDOM (I Cor 2:6-16)

- A. Given by: Sanctifying Grace
 - 1. New Birth: regeneration
 - a. Baptism—sacrament, sign, significance
 - b. New creature in Christ Jesus, consequence of infused (supernatural) life
 - c. Renewed/recovered original design (Adam's destiny)
 - 2. Adoption: new status as "sons of God" entitled to special position
 - 3. Confirmation, consecration
- B. Nurtured by: Sustaining/perfecting Grace
 - 1. "Partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 2:4; Jn 14:25-26)
 - 2. "Temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor 3:16, 6:19)
- C. Resulting in:
 - 1. Supra-human knowledge, inspired by Holy Spirit, prophetic in nature
 - 2. Supernatural virtues: Faith; Hope; Love (I Cor 13:13)
 - 3. Co-natural knowledge—shared *agape* via indwelling Holy Spirit
- D. Evident in Seven Gifts of Holy Spirit given Christ Jesus (Is 11:2-3): Wisdom; Understanding; Counsel; Strength; Knowledge; Piety; Fear of the Lord
- E. Further Evident in spiritual "gifts" distributed to the Church (I Cor 12:1-31; I Cor 13; Ro 12:6-8; Eph 4:11; I Pet 4:11)—many related to wisdom, knowledge; gratuitously given by God
 - 1. *Marturia*: prophecy; teaching; wisdom; knowledge; faith; tongues; apostles; prophets; evangelists; teachers; speaking
 - 2. *Koinonia*: exhortation; liberality; discernment; interpretation; edification; hope; pastors
 - 3. *Diakonia*: service; giving aid; acts of mercy; healing; miracles; love; serving
- F. Even Further Evident in "the fruit of the Spirit"—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control" (Gal 6:22-25)

III. PREREQUISITES for MYSTICAL, KNOWING-GOD EXPERIENCES, INSIGHTS, GUIDANCE

- A. Being in a "state of grace"—right with God; "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"
- B. Seeking to know Him better—"blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness"
- C. Humble-in-heart—"blessed are the poor in spirit"
- D. Self-surrendered, "crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me"
- E. Attentive to the Word
 - 1. Noting His signature in all of creation, providence, relationships, etc.; "God passes through the thicket of the world and wherever His glance falls, He turns all things to beauty" (St John of the Cross).
 - 2. *Lectio Divina*—meditative, "sacred reading" of Holy Scripture, "a kind of divine picking or choosing of a given sentence, phrase or word through which God himself speaks. . . . It is undertaken not with the intention of gaining information but of using the texts as an aide first to contact the living God and secondly, to sustain that contact."
- F. Prayer, interfacing within the bond of Love—in addition to other worthwhile forms of prayer, i.e. liturgical, intercessory; silently listening to the "still, small voice" Elijah heard
 - 1. **Adoration**—"the first and greatest of life's responses to its spiritual environment" (Underhill, p. 133)
 - 2. **Communion**—oneness with the "all-penetrating God," akin to oneness of conjugal union
 - 3. **Contemplation**—the "power of seeing into eternity" (*Theologica Germanica*); employing the "mysterious eye of the soul" (Augustine); "The contemplative, on whatever level his faculty may operate, is contented to absorb and be absorbed: and by this humble access he attains to a plane of knowledge which no intellectual process can come near" (Underhill, p. 152).
 - 4. **Intercession**—"an awful privilege to stand in the gap between the world's infinite need and the treasures of Divine Love" (Underhill)