

In What Do You Glory?

Jeremiah 9:23-24 reads, “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” In light of the coming judgment in the form of Babylonian overthrow and captivity, Jeremiah speaks of three tools people of the world trust in: wisdom, strength, and riches. These three cannot help the worldly. If these fall short in the time of need, what will avail?

Our highest good is to know God, not just intellectually or philosophically, but in spirit and in His true character. This is the true and lasting wisdom. The path of God’s approval is clear. Ethical qualities follow a true knowledge of God. God manifests “lovingkindness” — a readiness to manifest grace and mercy; “judgment” — a proper evaluation of the rights of men; and, “righteousness” — the essential of all faith and worship.

Anyone who wishes to “boast” should boast in knowing the Lord (contrast v. 6: “Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord.”). These attributes are the delight and the favorite topic of conversation for such people, because it is in these characteristics that there is hope for the faithful remnant of God’s people. These are the people who manifest the true fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and who control their minds by thinking righteous thoughts (Philippians 4:8).

In the New Testament, Paul quotes this verse as he admonishes the Corinthians to boast in Jesus Christ alone: “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).

God doesn’t delight in a nation’s learning, political influence, armies, or gross national product. He delights in a people who practice lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness because they know and fear the Lord.

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