

It's All About Knowing and Being Known

by Leslie Snyder

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord,' did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'—

Matthew 7: 21-23

Hank strongly believes in the principles and ideas of a candidate for office, Mr. Smith. In fact, he gives his personal time working for Mr. Smith's election by passing out flyers, buttons, stickers and yard signs. He also calls potential voters asking for their support of Mr. Smith and pours much of his own money into the election. After months of Hank's tireless work on behalf of Mr. Smith, Election Day arrives. Hank, adorned in buttons, t-shirt, and logos that say "vote for Mr. Smith," is the first one at the polls, casts his vote and spends the rest of the day meeting voters, thanking them for their support, and carefully watching the voter results. At the end of the day, Mr. Smith is the clear winner, due, much in part, to the grassroots efforts of Hank and others. They quickly head to the location of the celebration party and to Hank's delight, Mr. Smith is there walking among his supporters. Hank runs up to congratulate him, excitedly shaking his hand and telling of all the things he has done to make this election a success. But, Mr. Smith returns his enthusiasm with a blank stare and the words, "Do I know you?" It's a great question that relates to today's Scripture passage.

Of all the teachings of Jesus, I find that I have wrestled with this one quite often. In fact, before I took the time to examine this passage, it seemed something like a cruel joke, as if Jesus opted for the "bait and switch" approach to ministry. But, with more study, I discovered the secret is found in the word "know." The original Greek in today's Scripture passage is the word *ginosko*, which frequently indicates relationship between the person "knowing" and the object that is "known." In other words, when applied to the story above, Mr. Smith never knew Hank, and didn't know what Hank was doing for him because there was no relationship, no friendship between Mr. Smith and Hank.

Applying this understanding, the biblical warning is clear. Jesus wants to know us, to have a relationship with us. He is not interested in all that we are doing for Him unless we first know Him and are known by Him. Make this your goal today.

GOING DEEPER:

Have you "missed the boat," getting caught up in the "doing" for God, while neglecting the "knowing"? Take time today to restore the relationship Christ desires with you.

FURTHER READING:

Micah 6:8; Hebrews 3:14; 1 John 2:19