



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – November 28, 2021

To Know Christ...

Have you ever wondered what Jesus was thankful for? We can easily think of Jesus being thankful for the bread before He fed the 4,000 and the 5,000. [Matthew 15:36 & John 6:11] We might even think of Him giving thanks for the unleavened bread and the cup of the fruit of the vine at the Last Supper before His crucifixion the following day. [Luke 22:17-19] Or maybe you even think of Jesus, after His resurrection, sitting down with Cleopas & his traveling companion in the city of Emmaus to break bread. Then as Jesus blessed the bread and broke it, their eyes were opened to recognize this was actually Jesus Himself. [Luke 24:30-31] But other than food, there is only one time recorded where Jesus thanked His Father for something specifically, do you remember what it is? If you had to guess, what would you imagine it to be? (Take a few seconds to ponder it.)

In the life of Christ there are three distinct stories of Jesus raising the dead. One of them concerns a dear friend named Lazarus. Jesus has already encountered Lazarus' two grieving sisters, and Jesus even wept. Then He commanded them to remove the stone that was lying against the cave where Lazarus was buried, being dead four days. Then Jesus raised His eyes and said, "**Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.**" [John 11:41] Out of all the things imaginable, would you have ever guessed this is what Jesus would be so thankful for? That His Father heard Him! Is that simple or is it profound? "**I knew that You always hear Me;**" [v42] Jesus even said it out loud just so they would know that the Father sent Him. Jesus wanted them to be aware. When is the last time we were simply thankful to have our Father hear (attentive to) our voice?

During this time of year, as well as all the other months of the year, we are thankful for the food the Lord has granted us to receive (and that is a proper response), but it is time to learn another lesson from Jesus. It is much more necessary and far more impactful for the Father to be attentive to our humble voices in prayer than it is to have delicious meals set before us. Jesus is our mediator [1 Timothy 2:5] between us and God, the Father. How awesome is the thought,

when we pray in the name of Jesus because we are washed in His blood, we are being HEARD by the Father because the Father ALWAYS hears Jesus, our mediator! It changed Lazarus! Jesus prayed to the Father and then said, “**Lazarus, come forth.**” [v43] And Lazarus came out of the tomb ALIVE. The Father not only heard, He also RESPONDED! If drastic things change, will not also the simples? Certainly! The next time you pray (even crying), ask yourself: what am I more thankful for ... food or to serve the Almighty God who listens & responds because of Jesus Christ, the righteous? Another thought to consider, we know that Jesus went 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness without food [Matthew 4:2], yet His Father always heard Him. What is more important to us ... food or being heard by the Father in Jesus Christ?

- Carey Terry