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Need to Know

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Need to Know

In government or businesses where secrecy is an issue, certain information is only made available to a restricted number of persons who need to know, in order to meet their responsibilities. In our relationship with God, secrecy is completely irrelevant and altogether unnecessary. We need to know everything that will enable us to accomplish our particular purpose in life, and all of that information is unrestrictedly available to us.

God wants us, for our sakes, to keep nothing secret, because whatever we would hide from God is something that we do not value within ourselves. We do well not to hide those thoughts and deeds of ours which we might like to disown, or the many disappointments and sufferings in life which we would rather not face. We do not help ourselves by denying some of our painful feelings, especially to the extent that we become depressed.

God has a need to know us, but entirely for our sake, for our healing and for that exercise of honesty that love requires. None of the thoughts, movements or feelings that we find to be uncomfortable or unwelcome are in the least troubling to God. But we come to know and appreciate ourselves properly when we reveal the specifics of our lives to God, and discover that we are accepted and loved as we are. We might have a secret of some kind as we begin a particular encounter with God, but in opening everything of our minds and hearts, we end not with the loss of our secret, but with the gain of being appreciated and consoled for our exercise of trust.

What do we need to know? First, we need to know that God has no favorites: that each of us is given all that we need in order to fulfill our lives. None of us needs to know the same as everyone else, and none of us needs to know today what we will only need to know tomorrow. We need to know how to make decisions that are truly good for us as members of the human community and not to make choices that are merely for appearances' sake. We need to know whether or not we are thinking and acting in accord with the particular capabilities and desires that we have, and we do not need to know what others might think of us.

We also need to know God. But we do not need to know God as we know one another. God is infinite, and we can scarcely cope with the concept, much less comprehend fully the person of God. Yet, God reveals self to us in all of creation, and also and especially in the person of Jesus Christ. Nature and Scriptures are different kinds of "books" about God. Reflection and prayer in all forms open us to the presence of God who is within us.

What we most need to know is that we are loved, and that we are capable of loving God back, especially by loving those whom God also loves, who are created in the "image and likeness of God," and who are everywhere around us.