

GLEANINGS — July 24, A.D. 2016  
A Personal Relationship with God, Part One

A DEIST is someone with a theory about a supreme being. His speculations about that being arise out of his own finite, sin corrupted resources. The Deist does not claim to have a personal relationship with his god. Nor can he, for the obvious reason that it has no real existence!

So Deism is merely a sophisticated form of idolatry. Its idol is not a statue of stone or wood, but it is just as unworthy of worship and just as harmful to their worshipers as are those physical monstrosities.

Then we have the false religionist, the one who has "*...a form of godliness but denies the power thereof*" (2 Timothy 3:5). For him, everything is external and mechanical so to speak. The wooing Voice of Proverbs 23:26 says, "*My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways.*" The false religionist has no ears to hear those precious words.

But the Bible tells us that the fear of the LORD is the beginning of true knowledge and wisdom (Proverbs 1:7, 9:10 et. al.). The one who fears the self-revealing, triune God of the Bible does indeed have a personal relationship with his heavenly Father, his Lord Jesus, and the One Who indwells him, the Holy Spirit.

The Christian, by the power of the Holy Spirit, receives the holy Bible's essential Gospel message about Christ the eternal Son of God becoming man to accomplish redemption for all the heavenly Father's family. By grace, he is both born again and adopted into that family. His spirit cries to God, "Abba...Father!"

In His high priestly prayer the Lord Jesus said, "And this is eternal life, that they may **know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (John 17:3)

The inspired words of the apostle John, who was right by Jesus' side when He instituted the Lord's supper, teach us the same truth. "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may **know Him** who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. (1 John 5:20)

So of course it is quite accurate for the believer who is bearing witness to an unbelieving Deist neighbor to proclaim that he is not a fellow speculator about what a supreme being might be like. Rather, he testifies that he was lost in darkness but then was found by the one true God. He affirms that he knows that one, true God in a personal way.

And it is quite accurate for the believer bearing witness to the false religionist to say, "I don't have a religion, I have a personal relationship with Jesus." The disciple is one who says amen to the apostolic affirmation, "*...though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory*" (1 Peter 1:8).

But more must be said about the believer's personal relationship with God triune.

*to be continued...*