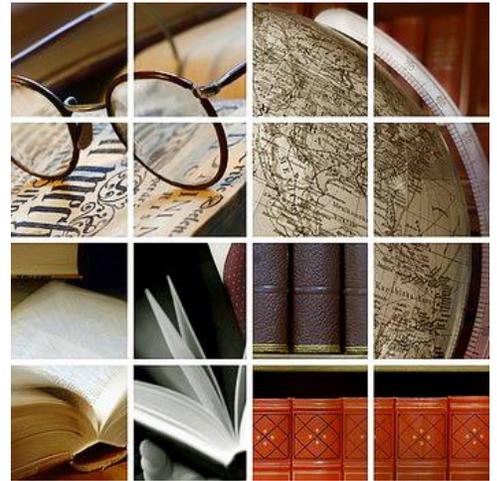


*"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;" 2 Peter 1:5No2 KJV*

Without virtue there can be no knowledge. *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."* We cannot be truly virtuous without being intimate with The Almighty. Our first contact with the Lord of Heaven is fearful, unless of course, we're a fool. We fear His Wrath and Judgment. We fear Him because we realize we've sinned against Him; we've disobeyed Eternity's Sovereign! Remember how you feared Dad when you were bad, but not when you were good? There is always a certain hesitation to admit sin, because we fear the consequences of being found out. We fear punishment, rejection, and rightly so. Men are perhaps, the most unforgiving lot in the whole of creation. With God, however, the consequence of confession is forgiveness and cleansing. *"If we confess (admit) our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* Experience with carnal men does not prepare one for the foot of the Cross. We come fearful of reprisal and condemnation. Jesus came to redeem, not to condemn. *"God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."* We can only acquire "knowledge" from the source of all knowledge, Jesus Christ, *"the Word made flesh."* We must spend time in His classroom, the Bible, studying and learning from Him. We must learn how to conquer the flesh which plagues our earthly sojourn. *"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed (knowing and obeying) thereto according to Thy Word. Thy Word have I hid in mine heart (thoughts), that I might not sin against Thee. Therein shalt thou meditate day and night."* We must *"study to show [ourselves] approved unto God."* All the knowledge in the world will not instill the desire to do right until you know and love the righteous God. *Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."* The apostle Paul said, *"the Love of Christ constraineth (binds) me;"* Christ's Love for him, and his love for Christ. Two sides of the same coin. Jesus is Love's Source. *"We love him because He first Loved us. God is Love."* Our reward is secure before we begin, because, for the believer, our *"Life is hid with Christ in God."* Religion requires works for eternal security, and even then, it is not sure. Faith only requires us to love and obey God. Fearing God is only the beginning. As virtue grows, knowledge grows, and we become more and more intimate with the KING. We need to move from the courtroom to the throne room; from the throne room to the classroom; from the classroom to the dining room; and from the dining room to the Garden!



Knowledge starts with Godly fear,  
Knowing He is ever near,  
That His power is infinite,  
And at His feet begin to sit. ~CGP

Those who love and obey God while on earth will see life as joy and death as a celebration! Each day will bring the anticipation of watching for of His return! One day, soon, Jesus will gather all believers to be forever with Him! We must joyfully anticipate and rejoice in this Truth, while we add to our virtue the knowledge of The Most Holy. *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep (obey) His Commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."* Fear Him, know Him, love Him, obey Him, and please Him!

*"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory and Honour and Power: for Thou hast created ALL things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Revelation 4:11 KJV*

C. G. Palmer