

Childlikeness Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time Wednesday, July 17, 2019 Ex
3:1-6, 9-12; **Mt 11:25-27** (God discloses himself personally to those who are willing to
come to him as children in a simple way, not necessarily a verbal way.)

“I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike.”

Jesus is distinguishing learning from revelation. They are both extremely important, but they are not the same thing. When I learn something I have to use my own effort. I have to actually separate myself from the subject I want to learn to observe it, to study it, to master it. That’s a good word; **if I want to learn something, I have to master the subject.** With God we cannot master the subject—impossible. So we really can’t learn about God, not really. We can learn about God’s work. We can learn about God’s creation. But **we can’t learn about God because we cannot master the subject.** But there is communication possible, but it’s a different kind. It isn’t about mastering or learning. It’s about disclosure. **God can disclose himself.**

Now the disclosures of God of course have begun at the very beginning of creation. That itself is a disclosure. It’s hard to read it, and at the very beginning there was no one to read it. When humanity came upon the scene there was now someone who could read the disclosure, which creation itself is, but that wasn’t enough even then. **Revelation, disclosure came in bits and pieces, the creation first then appearances, epiphanies.** Today we read about the burning bush. But that’s a very limited type of disclosure. In fact **all these disclosures are filtered through the minds of human beings who are very limited themselves.** So even though there’s a disclosure, all we know about it is what’s been **filtered by people who then write about it or talk about it or tell stories.**

Now you notice in the story of the burning bush, God is very limited. It says, “And God saw Moses coming over,” hum. You mean, God didn’t know Moses was there in the first place? And of

course later on it says, “And I have truly noted that the Egyptians are oppressing them because I have heard the cry of the children.” **So this is a matter of thinking of God something like us, being informed.** I’ve mentioned it before. Yahweh went looking for Adam in the garden. He came down to see for himself what was going on in Sodom, and so on. This is because **people are limited, and so their understanding of God is limited.**

But in Jesus we have something not so limited. In Jesus the revelation of God is complete and it’s completely human, and therefore **Jesus can touch us in a human way with true knowledge of God. But the only way we can receive this is in a childlike way.** Again, it cannot be mastered. There may be people who have **Masters Degrees in theology**, but that doesn’t mean they have mastered the subject of God. **All they have mastered is what people said about God**, which is very different; it’s all filtered through human weaknesses and conceptions and culture and language, all of which are beautiful in one way, but limited in another.

So Jesus now is talking about how God discloses himself personally to those who are willing to come to him as children in a simple way, not necessarily a verbal way. People are always talking to children. I’m not so sure how much children get out of their talk. But children are very much influenced by touching, hugging, kissing, and so on, various forms of **various gestures of affection and support and caring.** And in this way God reveals himself to our childlikeness when we are ready. And gradually **the goal is that we actually enter into the relationship the Jesus has with the Father, so his relationship is our relationship, and his Spirit breathes in us.** That’s the idea.