

THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD

2 PETER 3:18; PHILIPPIANS 3:7-14

Text: 2 Peter 3:18; Philippians 3:8, 10

2 Peter 3:18

¹⁸ *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

Philippians 3:8

⁸ *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

Philippians 3:10

¹⁰ *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

Introduction:

We read that we are to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord.

This is not a suggestion but rather a command.

The Bible tells that Paul, before his conversion on the road to Damascus, lived a very reckless life. He lived for his own pleasure and the accolades of others. Paul was bent on pleasing others and lifting up himself.

It was an amazing day when Paul met and trusted Christ as his Saviour. Truly old things passed away and all things became new.

There are some important principles that we can learn from Paul.

At one time in his life he was seeking his own pleasure and the praise of the world, but he became a new creature in Christ.

In Philippians 3:7, he said, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." From this point forward, he began seeking to know God with his whole heart.

Notice:

1. HIS COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

A. Paul had a strong commitment to Jesus.

(Philippians 3:7) "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

B. The Bible states this principle in the Old Testament as well.

(Psalms 119:2) "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart."

(Psalms 119:10) "With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments."

Illustration:

Jim Elliott the famous missionary who was murdered in South America said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

2. HIS CONFORMITY TO CHRIST

Paul was a man who wanted to understand more and more, and he wanted to be like Christ.

Notice:

A. The knowledge of Christ

(Philippians 3:8) "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,"

1. This is referring to a personal relationship.

(John 17:3) "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

B. The righteousness of Christ

(Philippians 3:9) "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"

C. The fellowship of Christ

(Philippians 3:10) "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;"

1. If you are going to get to know someone you are going to have to spend time with them.

2. Paul knew that knowing the Lord and living for the Lord involves some suffering.

(2 Timothy 3:12) "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

3. HIS COMMENCEMENT OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE

(Philippians 3:13-14) "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, {14} I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

A. Forgetting those things which are behind

1. Living in the past will ruin your future.

B. Reaching forth unto those things which are before.

1. Too many are giving into the fatalism of the day instead of determining to live fervent until Jesus comes.

2. We cannot live on yesterdays name or accomplishments or victories.

C. Pressing toward the mark.

1. The Christian life is a race to be won.

Paul was saying, "I'm pressing on the upward way, new heights I'm gaining everyday."

2. Anyone can start in the Christian life, but it takes someone totally committed to Jesus Christ, someone who conforms to Christ day by day, to stay in the race until Jesus come.

3. It is tragic to see the casualties, dropouts, and those who fall by the wayside.

(Hebrews 12:1-2) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, {2} Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Close:

Back in Polk Pennsylvania, two other boys also had seen 'The Program.' These boys were 10 and 14 years of age, and they decided to make a name for themselves.

They too lay down on the yellow lines as cars drove back and forth. By God's grace, they were not harmed.

If we are not careful, we might be just like those little boys. We will try to get our pleasure, joy, and excitement from the things this world has to offer.

We may try to acquire the praise of men or the possessions of this world, but we will be just as foolish as those boys unless we acknowledge what Christ has done and determine to be totally committed to Him.

Are you seeking God with your whole heart? Do you want a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ that gets sweeter every day? Are you committed to Him? Are you conforming to Him day by day?

God helps to know Him, and to seek Him with our whole heart.

(Psa 119:2) "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart."

(Psa 119:10) "With my whole heart have I sought thee:
O let me not wander from thy commandments."

(Psa 119:34) "Give me understanding, and I shall keep
thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart."

(Psa 119:58) "I entreated thy favour with my whole
heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word."