

THAT I MAY KNOW HIM

PHILIPPIANS 3:10-14

Text: Philippians 3:10

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:

Paul's greatest desire was that he might know Christ. Not just know about Him but know Him.

Paul want to know:

- The Bread of Life (John 6:35)

John 6:35

³⁵ *And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*

Bread sustains and satisfies – As does Christ

He wanted to know:

- The Light of the World (John 8:12, 9:5)

John 8:12

¹² Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world**: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 9:5

⁵ As long as I am in the world, **I am the light of the world**.

The Light provides guidance and direction. Light dissolves and removes the darkness – As does Christ.

He had a desire to know:

- The Good Shepherd and the Door of the Sheep (John 10:11, 14; 10:7, 9)

John 10:11

¹¹ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

John 10:14

¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

John 10:7

⁷ Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

John 10:9

⁹ I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

The door opens to make an entrance possible and a shepherd protects and provides for the sheep – as does the Lord.

Paul also had a desire to know:

- The Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)

John 11:25

²⁵ Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

The resurrection and life is just that death has no victory – which is also provided by the Saviour.

Paul desired to also know:

- The Way the Truth and the Life (John 14:6)

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

This is certainly self-explanatory

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Paul reckoned that to know the Lord was such an excellent thing that it was well worth losing everything else to gain this knowledge.

Philippians 3:7-8

⁷ But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 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,

What did Paul lose in order that he might gain this excellent knowledge? What did he count as refuse? When Paul became a Christian he lost his former friends, social prestige, and worldly advancement financial gain and, of course, he lost physical comfort. But he lost very much more.

Note verses 5-6

Philippians 3:5-6

⁵ Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

- Circumcised the eighth day – Shows us he was a true Jew.
- Of the stock of Israel – Was a descendent of Jacob.
- The tribe of Benjamin – Benjamin and Judah were two very privileged tribes.
- Hebrews of the Hebrews - He enjoyed every advantage that could possibly be derived from the fact that he was a Jew.
- Touching the law, a Pharisee – No other Pharisee could accuse him of religious laxity.

These had seemed great gains to Paul up until the time of his conversion, but after he met the Lord on the Damascus Road, Acts 9:3-6, he viewed all of the things that had been important to him as refuse in order that he might gain the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

Note:

1. PAUL'S PASSION (VS. 10)

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;

This knowledge is four-fold

A. Knowing His Person

All vital Christian experience begins when we come to know not only about the Lord, but when we come to know Him personally.

Paul first came to know Him on the Damascus Road, Acts 9:3-6.

Acts 9:3-6

³ And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: ⁴ And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ⁵ And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. ⁶ And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

Thirty years later he said, Phil. 3:10.

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;*

Do you know Him? How much do you know Him?

B. Knowing His Power

“The power of His resurrection”

He exercised power over death and the grave.

C. Knowing His Passion

“The fellowship of His suffering”

This means to share the reproach, and the scorn, in short, the sufferings which He endured on our behalf when He was arrested, falsely accused and crucified.

Do we rejoice at the privilege of sharing His sufferings?

If we are determined to be faithful to Him we must in some measure enter into "the fellowship of His sufferings".

D. Knowing His Purpose

“Being made conformable unto His death”

God’s purpose for every believer is given to us in Romans 8:28-29.

Romans 8:28-29

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

God's intention is to make us like the Lord Jesus, and in order that this purpose may be accomplished, all that there is about us which is unlike Him must "die".

2. PAUL’S POSITION (vs. 12-13)

Philippians 3:12-13

¹² Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. ¹³ 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,

The life and ministry of the apostle Paul was dominated by one supreme objective, and it is to this that he refers in Phil. 3:13-14, "this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark."

Paul is using an illustration of an athlete.

As he runs along the prescribed course he forgets all thoughts of past failures, and he strains every nerve in an effort of tremendous concentration on reaching his goal; his one and only concern is to win the race.

Likewise, if we are to succeed in the race of life we must deliberately "forget"; and deliberately "press on".

A. Things which are behind which should be forgotten.

Strangely enough, a good memory is not always a great thing!

It is not the things we forget which we should have remembered that cause the most trouble; it is the things we remember which we should forget.

1. We must forget our past sins.
2. We must forget our past failures.

B. Things that are before that we must strive to obtain.

1. Strive for maturity – (perfect)
2. Strive to apprehend the purpose for which God has apprehended us.

God's general purpose for us is indicated in Rom. 8:28-30, but He has a particular purpose for every one of us, a life plan. Have you discovered God's plan for your life?

Romans 8:28-30

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

C. Why are we to do this one thing?

1. Because we're citizens of Heaven.
2. Because the Lord is coming to take us Home.

3. Because there is a prize to be won.

3. PAUL'S PRESSING (VS. 14)

Philippians 3:14

¹⁴ I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

He pressed towards the mark.

As one who runs a race doesn't stop short of the end, but moves forwards as fast as he can, so are those who have heaven in their eye must still be pressing forward to their heavenly home.

Heaven is called here the mark, because it is that which every good Christian has in his eye; as the archer has his eye fixed upon the mark he designs to hit.

For the prize of the high calling.

Observe a Christian's calling is a high calling: it is from heaven, and it is to heaven in its tendency.

Heaven is the *prize of the high calling*; the prize we fight for, and run for, and wrestle for, what we aim at in all we do, and what will reward all our pains. It is of great use in the Christian course to keep our eye upon Heaven.