



## Me Knowing Christ and Christ Knowing Me

Last time we learned even more about Paul's stand against a self-righteous, legalistic faith, and how he counted all the worldly possessions and accomplishments he'd racked up as nothing but dung ([Phil 3:7-10](#)). In our passage here, we get more to the heart of Paul's reasoning and where he had his mind set.

***that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.***  
[Philippians 3:10-11](#) NASB

It's quite likely that at some point you've heard the gospel shared from a self-centered, temporal perspective. *Jesus wants you to have purpose. Jesus wants you to be fulfilled. Jesus wants you to be happy. Jesus wants you to live your best life now.* Etc. But the heart of the true gospel is not worldly nor self-centered – it is eternally focused and aligned with heavenly things. And while we are clearly the benefactors of God's great love, mercy, and grace, our salvation is not a means to gain riches and happiness on earth.

We get a glimpse of this truth here, as Paul, writing from a Roman prison, centers his thoughts and hopes on eternity. There is no complaining about his present conditions, predicament, or the great losses he has suffered. In fact, the opposite is true.

Breaking this up a bit, let's start by looking at the first of Paul's stated goals: ***to be found in Him*** (Christ). To be *found in the Lord* is of utmost importance. In [Matthew 7:22-23](#), Jesus foretold of the judgement of pretend believers, saying that one day many would tell Him of all the great and mighty things they did for Him and even in His name, but that He will say to them, ***"I never knew you, depart from me you who practice lawlessness."***

Notice that Jesus did not say, "you never knew Me," but that *He* never knew *them*. This means it is possible to have a false faith in Jesus, one that is not based in biblical truths and most likely revolves around a human-centered theology. Being a Christian is not just doing good things or proclaiming Christ's name. It is a personal, thriving relationship with the Lord and one grounded in His will, not ours. We must humbly surrender ourselves to Him and ***work out our salvation with fear and trembling*** ([Phil 2:12](#)) so we can be fully assured that He knows us. It's not something with which we can be flippant! Simply knowing Jesus is by itself not a guarantee of salvation, but *Him knowing us* is where our eternal security rests. Jesus said, ***"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand,"*** ([John 10:27-28](#))

Paul's second goal is that he ***know Him*** (Christ). The English word rendered *know* is from [ginōskō](#) and is the most intimate of the Greek words for knowledge, speaking of an experiential



understanding. You might think of it as knowing your spouse or child. *Ginōskō* is how Christ knows His sheep and this is how Paul wants to know Christ. Not just knowing about Christ, but *knowing* Christ. This requires intention and dedication on a believer's part. Praying, studying the Bible, meditating on His promises and truths, and exercising faith and obedience are a few ways we can know our Lord more intimately.

Paul also wants to know (*ginōskō*) **the power of His resurrection**. We cannot take lightly the importance of Christ being risen from the grave. He is the **firstborn from the dead** ([Col 1:18](#), [Rev 1:5](#)) and **the first fruits** of our own resurrection ([1 Cor 15:20-23](#)). Without His literal, physical resurrection, our eternal hope is baseless and futile. Never forget the empty cross and the empty tomb. It is vital to the Christian's faith!

Finally, Paul wants to have **fellowship of His [Christ's] sufferings, being conformed to His death**. Simply stated, we cannot distance ourselves from pain and suffering as believers. Jesus told us that we must deny ourselves and take up our cross to follow Him ([Matt 16:24](#)). We also must put our old self to death, nail our sinful desires to the cross, and live a life of faith and obedience to the Lord (cf: [Gal 2:20-21](#), [5:24-25](#)). This is sharing in Christ's sufferings and being conformed to His death.

And all of this to what end? **"in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."** Ah yes, our wonderful, magnificent hope! Walking the narrow road is not supposed to be easy; Christ promised us we will face hardships and challenges as our faith is stretched and tested (cf: [John 16:33](#)), but a boundless reward awaits the faithful. So, while the often-proclaimed false gospel that Jesus wants to be your personal genie and ATM is far from true, we do have an incredible and wondrous promise that awaits us on the other side of this life. The **resurrection from the dead** into glory unimaginable and the eternal presence of our blessed God and Savior.

To God be the glory!

~Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece

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