

Philippians 3:7-16 (tx: 10,11)

## KNOWING CHRIST (II)

I. Knowing His person

II. Knowing His power

### INTRODUCTION

There is a **verse** of a beautiful **hymn** that goes like this:

- “There are depths of love that I cannot know, till I cross the narrow sea.
- “There are heights of joy that I may not reach, till I rest in heaven with Thee.”

Now, in light of what we saw this morning, we may never sing this with the idea that knowing & experiencing the depths & heights of Christ & His love is only for the other side of the grave.

- for we saw that our hearts’ desire & delight & determination; our life’s aim & ambition must be to explore the exhaustless Christ.
  - & to more & more know & experience & enjoy Him in an intimate & personal, fuller & deeper & richer way now already in this life, & then in eternity.
- th’fore, it’s like an old Christian who kept on praying: “Lord, make us all that redeemed sinners can become this side of heaven.”

So maybe we ought to change the **lines** of that **hymn** a little & sing:

- “There are depths of love that I ought to know, before I cross the sea.
  - “There are heights of joy I ought to reach, before I rest in heaven with Thee.”
- then, you see, if we so seek & strive now daily to know & experience Jesus more & more with greatest joy, then we can sing with thankfulness, as another verse of that hymn, I just quoted, says:
  - “Oh, the pure delight of a single hour which before Thy throne I spend.
  - “When I kneel in prayer & with Thee, my Lord, I commune as a friend with a Friend!”

Th’fore, **Phil.3:10,11** says we must know Jesus in this life as a real person, as we saw this morning.

- but we must also know His power—“the power of His resurrection, sharing in His suffering & becoming like Him in His death.”
- so tonight we consider KNOWING CHRIST.
  - & His resurrection power—His saving power in our hearts & lives.

## II. KNOWING HIS POWER

Now, what a magnificent meaning that little phrase, “the power of His resurrection”, has for you & me!

- for Phil.3:10,11 stresses that's to be our ardent ambition & aim as we strive to know Jesus more intimately & increasingly.
- you see, Christ's supernatural victory of a vacated grave opens vast vistas & tremendous privileges & possibilities for us who believe & experience the risen, reigning Savior, who abolished death & secured life & immortality (II Tim. 1:10).
  - & in Him we are meant to also know & experience, even now, more & more that supernatural power of His resurrection in our entire beings & total, daily behavior.

Well, as we know, Christ's resurrection power is a saving, subduing, sanctifying, redeeming & renewing power.

- it is a "saving" power because His resurrection has accomplished & assures of our full & final salvation.
- for the fact Jesus arose is positive proof God accepted His work on the cross as a complete & final payment for all our sins & He had gotten salvation.
  - (OVER)
  - it is God's proclamation of Jesus' final & full victory over sin & Satan, death & hell.
  - that He is the only One who at last has broken the power of sin & the grave & has gained true & total victory over them so that He now lives & reigns eternally.

But the greatest fact is Jesus died & arose as our Representative & Redeemer.

- for He came out of the grave as the Victor over death & the Conqueror of sin for us.
  - He did that to live & reign to make His resurrection & salvation power available & applicable to all who believe & obey Him.
- th'fore, it is through HSpirit that our risen Savior & living Lord comes back to us to share with us all the spoils of His saving victory.
  - to make salvation through His resurrection presence & power a living reality & personal experience for us.

So then, to desire to know Jesus & the power of His resurrection is to seek & strive for a deeper, richer, experiential knowledge of the living, life-giving Christ.

- it is to have His living, saving power working & revealing itself in us so that He is totally renewing all our lives.
- we are then raised from sin & made alive with Jesus to live a new, victorious, eternal life with Him.

But Jesus' resurrection power is also a "subduing" power—a victory gaining one.

- through it we have the strength to overcome evil & error in us & our lives.
  - evil tempers, unruly tongues, flaming passions, enslaving habits, unrestrained ambitions, fear, pride, hate, selfishness, temptations, & all the rest.
- for then, we who know & live personally in the presence of the conquering Christ, our living Lord, we share His resurrection power.

- & through it we experience in our hearts & lives the great & grand reality of true & total victory over self & Satan & sin.

Then too Jesus' resurrection power is also a "sanctifying" or renewing & transforming power.

- it is dynamite that destroys sin in us & brings us new, eternal life.
- & by that power we are being changed in our being & behavior to be more like Christ.
  - conformed to His character & conduct.
  - we are made to possess & exercise personal holiness in living for Him in love & obedience.
    - & in serving & witnessing for Him as we serve others.

And the resurrection power of Jesus is also a "glorifying" power.

- by experiencing it we are assured that someday we will attain the resurrection from the dead.
- & we will be completely & perfectly changed in body & soul to live forever in eternal glory with God.

Th'fore, here in **Phil.3, Paul** is expressing his desire & determination to know Jesus & His saving, subduing & sanctifying & glorifying resurrection power.

- he eagerly & earnestly longs to discover & daily experience more & more what it means to have the risen Savior & Lord whose grace & love are infinite.
- he wants to know intimately & personally the ever-increasing power that proceeds from such a Savior whose resurrection power saves & cleanses & changes, liberates & gives eternal life.
- he wants to realize with greater & growing measure in his life the reality of Jesus' resurrection.

That was **Paul's** longing & goal of life.

- & that must be our heart's desire & life's determination too if we are real followers of Jesus
- that we know & daily live out Him & His resurrection power in every area of our lives.
  - that we long to eagerly & earnestly, day by day, to discover & experience a greater measure of the life the risen, living Christ gives.
  - that we strive to be filled with a deeper, richer, ever-increasing supply of His resurrection power.
  - that we want His saving, subduing, sanctifying, glorifying presence & power to more & more reveal & work themselves in us.
    - & that there will be growing, total renewal of our lives from sin & conscience experience of new, victorious, eternal life of joy & peace.

But now, to work at having an intimate, increasing knowledge of Jesus & the power of His resurrection, our **text** says that also involves the desire to know "the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death".

- that's another blessed experience from our union in Christ.
- & notice: only in the order that Phil.3 gives here.

You see, we are apt to think it shouldn't be in the order **Paul** gives in our **text**.

- he should have turned it around & said we must 1<sup>st</sup> know Jesus & then share in His sufferings & then His resurrection power.
- for surely we must know the living Christ, revealed in Bible.
  - then stand in repentance & faith before His cross & there know by faith Him & His suffering & death as our Savior who paid for our sins.
  - & then we must know Him as the risen Lord who conquered sin & death & now lives in us so that we have the power of His resurrection to renew us & make us alive forever.

Well, that's certainly the order in which we are saved & **become** followers of Jesus.

- but in Phil.3 Paul is not talking about how to become a Christian.
- he is talking to us who are already saved, believing Christians in Christ.
  - & how we must now go on & continually know & experience Him better & deeper as our Lord & Savior.

And so, we must 1<sup>st</sup> try to really know Jesus & share in His resurrection life of being redeemed & continually renewed & freed from sin & death as a daily, present, personal desire.

- then we must go on & aim at knowing Him in a deeper, closer way.
- & that by sharing in His suffering & being like Him in His death.

But now, what does that mean for us, Christians?

- well, it surely doesn't mean we share in Jesus' suffering on the cross so that somehow we contribute to gaining our salvation through our sufferings.
  - for we can't & we don't have to add to His sufferings—He had to do it all alone on Calvary.
  - & there He fully & finally paid for all our sins & gain complete salvation & eternal life once & for all.
- & neither does sharing Christ's sufferings & death mean we must die like Him—on a cross or re-enact His death.

But it does mean, 1<sup>st</sup> of all, committed to Jesus, our ambition & aim must be to be crucified with Him.

- that we become more & more conformed to Calvary.
  - that we more & more daily die in Christ to sin & evil & error.
- to become like Him in His death means we must completely forsake all the ways of sin & live only in God's will & ways.
  - we must say: "No", to self, & eagerly & earnestly surrender our all to the lordship of Jesus to obey & serve Him only & always.

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- & we must get rid of all selfishness & live only for Him.
  - & be help & hope & healing to others as He did with His death.
- & all that can only be done by the power of Christ's resurrection.

And so as those saved by faith in the crucified, risen Lord, we will want to experience & enjoy & exercise more fully & personally that salvation.

- we will increasingly desire & determine to make God's forgiveness & acceptance, His peace & purity a reality in our daily living.
- we will daily declare & demonstrate the fact that in Christ we are dead to sin & raised from its deadly power to be alive, living by a new set of rules & for a new purpose.
- we will willingly work to more & more surrender all & any aspect & area of our lives to Lord.
  - & be holy in all our speech & thinking & acting, so that we will be constantly growing in Jesus & His likeness.

That's what means to know Jesus & the power of His resurrection & share in His sufferings & death.

- it is as a little poem puts it:
  - “Yes, Jesus is the One who is now my dear Savior; a Savior living in me, hour by hour!
  - “Now every day He keeps me brave & tranquil, and conquers sin in me by His power.
  - “He lives within, my heavenly Friend & Keeper. He breaks the cords by which I have been bound.
  - “I love to tell His name—His name is JESUS. Yes, He's the risen, living Savior I have found!”

But we must also add that to really experience Jesus' resurrection & death, is to share His feelings of compassion & love that were in His heart while on earth, even on **Calvary**, are still His today.

- like Him, we too must be touched by afflictions of His people.
- we must grieve over His Church when it suffers strife in this world.

Remember Jesus told **Paul** at his conversion the persecution of His people is to persecute its Head & Savior too.

- th'fore, every blow; every lash of a whip on the Church's back; every hating, hurting word & deed & look done to His people is felt by Him.
  - Heb.4 says Jesus is touched by all our infirmities.
  - Isa.63:9 says in all these afflictions, He is afflicted.
- &, as those, who share in His sufferings, we too must be touched by the sufferings of His people.

To share in Jesus' resurrection & death also means to weep with Him over the countless millions who are without Christ & reject & rebel against Him.

- who keep on sinning their way to eternal destruction to perish without Him.
- & then do all we can to go after them with the Gospel of salvation through Christ's cross & empty grave.
  - & rescue them from hell itself.

To share in Jesus' resurrection & death is also to sorrow over the decline of the Church.

- over the evil & error found so often among His people.
- & to weep & work to get rid of the lack of real repentance & genuine living faith & trust & loving obedience for Him & love for others.

Now to so experience & live Jesus' resurrection power & share in His suffering & death, also means we must do it at all costs.

- we must have a longing aim & ambition to know Jesus in a life totally lived for Him & in love for others, even if it means the loss of everything.
  - our friends, or family, our possessions & pleasures & profit & power.
  - & even our lives as we live by the power of Jesus' death & resurrection.
    - distinct, different Christian lives devoted to Lord as His followers.
- we must because nothing compares to the priceless prize of knowing Him & living for Him only.

Th'fore, no matter the cost, we will conform all our character & conduct to Christ.

- strive for completer holiness & Christ likeness in all things.

## CONCLUSION

Well, I hope, we did not just commemorate & celebrate **Good Friday & Easter** only as historical facts.

- but that is our constant, consuming & complete seeking & striving to personally know Jesus & the power of His resurrection & to live His cross in sacrificial love to Him & others.

Indeed, how willing are you & I to let Jesus' resurrection power fill & rule us?

- how willing are we to enter into sharing His suffering & death regardless the price?
- do we really & deeply desire to fellowship with Lord as a real person in our lives?
- are we really willing to discipline ourselves to linger long in His presence through His Word & prayer & faithful worship, & not waste our time on less important & trivial things of life?
- are we really working to know Christ's person & power so that we are living distinct, Christ-centered lives devoted to Him in total love & loyalty?
- are we really willing to take the risk to reach out & love someone, even the hateful & hurtful?

- to touch & help others who hurt in sin & suffering?
- to carry a real burden for the lost & share Jesus' saving love & life with needy neighbors everywhere?
  - to do that until hurts us personally--in our pocketbooks or in the way we live?
  - even by paring down our lifestyles with less possessions & pleasures to share Christ & what we have with others?
  - & are we even willing to go ourselves to the ends of earth as Lord's ambassadors?

Yes, are we really willing to be a real, active part of His Church?

- willing to live close together, united in Christ & with His people?
- & willing to work for unity & love in His people so that we rejoice when other members rejoice & hurt when others hurt?

We must, if we really believe & are living what the truths of **Good Friday & Easter** are all about.

- if we are really redeemed followers of the living Jesus.
- & we want to daily experience Him more & more & the power of His resurrection.
  - & share in His suffering & death., & gain the resurrection of the dead into eternal glory.

AMEN