

## Knowing and Being

Harmony M.B.C., September 19, 2010

Robert P. Myers

**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;

**Philippians 3:11** If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

I'm going to say something this morning that may shock a lot of you folks. That is, one of the least popular subjects among congregations across this land is the subject of Jesus Christ and a deep meaningful relationship with Him. The reason I say that is that you can tell it by how people respond to a sermon that has that theme in it. People often seem on the verge of being bored when a preacher begins to describe the matchless wonder of Jesus Christ and the awesome reality of having a deep and close relationship with him.

When I say that Jesus and the subject of a meaningful relationship is not popular, I am not saying that people show a dislike for it. No. It is not a show of dislike, but it is something far more unsettling. It is an attitude of ignorance about the subject. And the reason it is an attitude of ignorance is that we have a world full of people who have embraced religion of some kind, but have never had a true meeting with Jesus. They have never come to know a huge need to be cleansed from their sins, they have never discovered that only King Jesus can pardon those sins; they have never come with soul sickness to the foot of the cross of the crucified Lamb, confessing sin and asking forgiveness; they have never seen the sunlight of spiritual day that flows into a soul who has received empowering faith, who has come to know for certain that the Lord of Lords has made him whole. THAT is why they look on with boredom or ignorance born and harbored in the dead soul, when the preacher begins to praise the wonder of knowing the Mighty Jesus, Savior of men!

Today, I want, by the help of the Holy Spirit to present some thoughts about King Jesus and our relationship with him as born again believers. It is my greatest desire to see two things happen in this congregation. That is, first, to see the saints of God here get excited, infused with spiritual joy and power as we look at this Jesus through the lens of this sermon subject. Second, I want to see any lost people here brought face to face with the Great Shepherd of the sheep, the Lord and Savior of any who will come to Him as sinners and receive the salvation He offers.

I. **Note first**, the intense desire of those who have experienced true salvation and have begun to understand how glorious King Jesus is: "That I may know him...."

■ To know the person of Christ on a personal basis

> **Act 10:38** How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

■ To know the principles held in the heart of Christ as the person He is

■ To know the passion of Christ as the Redeemer, Intercessor, and Saving God that He is

■ To know the precepts of Christ as the Teacher and Mentor that he is

II. **Note second**, that the intimate knowledge of our Savior is not the only thing we seek when

our spirits are stirred by the Holy Spirit, and our spiritual lives are animated: (that I may also know) "...the power of His resurrection..."

- This statement is from a man who has already experienced being raised from the dead, since like us all, he was dead in trespasses and sins. So, what is this desire to know the power of Christ's resurrection after already experiencing something of it in the new birth?
  - > To feel the aliveness that His resurrection made available to me...not just some of the aliveness but the fulness of that alive-ness
  - > To know with understanding the absolute victory over death, hell, and the grave obtained by the people of God through the authoritative resurrection of Jesus Christ
  - > To know by experience the ultimate transformation out of mortality into immortality that His resurrection guarantees.

### III. **Then there is more we want to know:** "...and the fellowship of His sufferings..."

- To understand what it is Paul means when he says he wants to know the fellowship of Christ's suffering, let's take a look at what that is (notice it is plural):
  - > It is a mistake to look at that day at Golgotha as the only suffering the Lord experienced. We should look at it all in order to be able to appreciate what the apostle is talking about:
  - > He was born into a human baby body that knew the pangs of birth into a strange environment away from Mother's comforting and protecting womb (suffering discomfort, physical helplessness, and total dependence on human parents for all His needs)
  - > He was hunted like an animal by the king of the land; he was hauled away into a foreign land to live for some years
  - > He was raised in a common household where manual labor was the source of income (hard work makes the body suffer; even if temporarily)
  - > He was raised in a hostile Pharisaical environment where religion was used as a club (exposed to brutal religion based on works causes suffering)
  - > He was radically different in viewpoint and thought from his peers (being different brings opposition and even persecution)
  - > He was without a permanent home during His adulthood (as He said, He did not have a place to lay His head. The homeless suffer deprivation)
  - > He was exposed to the elements even when performing simple things like resting, sleeping, walking
  - > He was often tired
  - > He was oppressed by exceeding sorrow even unto death
  - > He was accosted by a band of religious bigots who were nothing more than a bunch of religious bullies
  - > He was beat and stoned, and stripped and mocked
  - > He was ridiculed in a kangaroo court
  - > He was sentenced to death for crimes He did not commit
  - > He was hung on a cross all day long without any relief
  - > He had our sins laid on Him by God and was left to die for those sins
  - > These things are some of His sufferings
- Here are the reasons we want to know the fellowship of His sufferings:
  - > First: "...being made conformable to His death."
    - We might say that like this: "to act and be in accordance with or in harmony with His

death.”

- We want to get to the place that we can and do take whatever the world has to throw at us in the way of things that cause suffering when those things are brought upon us because we walk the path of being dead to the world; when we hold forth the death of Christ as the answer to eternal life.

- ✓ Paul wrote the testimony that accompanies this attitude: in **Acts 20**, he is speaking to the Ephesian elders about what things he has suffered and what the Holy Spirit has indicated to him that he is going to suffer because he discounted his life for the purpose of ministering the gospel of a crucified and resurrected Christ. In **v. 24** he states: “none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy....”

- ✓ We can understand this perhaps even better when we think of this statement in the light of the fact that Jesus died as a carrier of sin, but arose without sin...completely victorious. When we are made conformable to His death, we are dead to the world, dead to sin.

- > Being made conformable to His death also speaks to us about a death of total obedience. In other words, (**Philippians 2:8**) “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

- Second: “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”

- > We believe Paul had two things in view here. He summed up the first idea in this verse:

**Rom. 6:4** “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life.**” This idea covers everything I have said. Because:

- In walking in newness of life we LIVE the new aliveness
- In walking in newness of life we act out our eternal state, our new creature (there is no dead-person behavior in our walk)
- He summed up the second idea in this verse: **2Cor. 4:14** Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus **shall raise up us also by Jesus**, and shall present *us* with you.

- > The other thing we understand that Paul was looking for was that final resurrection or transformation also. Attaining to that perfect state when all the things of mortality would be shed once and for all.

- **Philippians 3:20-21** For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: **21** Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.