

Message Four

Knowing Christ and the Power of His Resurrection

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:10, 12-14; John 11:25; Acts 2:24; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; Rev. 1:17b-18; 2:8

I. Paul aspired to know Christ—Phil. 3:10:

- A. In the book of Philippians, the central matter is the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ—2:2, 5; 3:7-10; 4:10, 13.
- B. To have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ in Philippians 3:8 is by revelation, but to know Him in verse 10 is by experience.
- C. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is the excellency of Christ realized by us—v. 8.
- D. Paul first received the revelation of Christ, then sought the experience of Christ—to know and enjoy Christ in an experiential way.
- E. The word *know* in Philippians 3:10 is equal to *experience*:
 - 1. To know Christ means to experience Him, to enjoy Him, to participate in Him, and to partake of Him—vv. 9-10.
 - 2. To know Christ is thus to apprehend Him by experiencing Him—v. 8.
- F. To know Christ is not merely to have the knowledge concerning Him but to gain His very person—v. 8; 2 Cor. 2:10; cf. Col. 2:9, 16-17:
 - 1. To gain something requires the paying of a price—Phil. 3:7-8.
 - 2. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of His unsearchable riches by paying a price—Eph. 3:8; cf. Rev. 3:18.
 - 3. The Christian life is a life of gaining Christ in His all-inclusiveness—Eph. 3:8:
 - a. Even though Paul had experienced and gained Christ tremendously, he did not consider that he had experienced Him in full or gained Him to the uttermost—Phil. 3:12.
 - b. Paul was still advancing toward the goal—the gaining of Christ to the fullest extent—vv. 12-14.
 - 4. In order to gain Christ to the fullest extent, Paul not only forsook his experience in Judaism but also would not linger in his past experiences of Christ—vv. 7-8, 13:
 - a. Not to forget but to linger in our past experiences, however genuine they were, frustrates our further pursuing of Christ—v. 13; Heb. 6:1a.
 - b. Because Christ is unsearchably rich, and there is a vast territory of His riches to be possessed, Paul was stretching out to reach the farthest extent of this territory—Eph. 3:8; Phil. 3:13.
- G. To know Christ is a result of being found in Him—vv. 9-10:
 - 1. The righteousness “which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,” caused Paul to know Christ—v. 9.
 - 2. The righteousness that we work out by our own effort does not cause us to know Christ; the more we do by our own effort, the less we know Christ—v. 9a.

II. Paul aspired to know and experience the power of Christ’s resurrection—v. 10:

- A. The power of Christ’s resurrection is His resurrection life, which raised Him from the dead—Eph. 1:19-20.
- B. Christ Himself is resurrection—John 11:25:
 - 1. “I am the First and the Last and the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades”—Rev. 1:17b-18:

- a. Because of the fall, death came in and is now working to gather everyone into Hades.
 - b. The keys of death and of Hades are in the hand of our Savior, who died and was resurrected—v. 18.
2. “These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again”—2:8:
 - a. *Lived again* refers to resurrection.
 - b. The Lord suffered death and lived again; He entered into death, but death could not hold Him because He is the resurrection—Acts 2:24; John 11:25.
 - c. Christ went into Hades, passed through death, overcame death, and came out of death triumphantly; this is resurrection—cf. 1 Pet. 3:18-22.
 3. Resurrection means that a man—our Lord Jesus—has broken through the barriers, even the greatest barrier of all—death—Acts 2:24; Eph. 1:19-20:
 - a. The Lord’s resurrection broke all the barriers of the natural realm; thus, Jesus is no longer bound by anything, including space and time—cf. John 7:6-8.
 - b. Our biggest limitations are space and time, but these two things cannot limit the resurrected Christ.
 - c. Death is the greatest limitation, but resurrection has conquered death; therefore, resurrection is the greatest power of all—Phil. 3:10; Eph. 1:19-20.
- C. Resurrection is life that overcomes death without being damaged or injured by death—John 11:25; Rev. 1:17b-18; 2:8:
1. Death is powerless to do anything with resurrection life—Acts 2:24.
 2. Death can inflict all kinds of damage on other forms of life; only one kind of life cannot be hurt by death, and this is resurrection life—John 11:25; Phil. 3:10:
 - a. Resurrection is life that passes through death and cannot be held by it.
 - b. According to the full revelation of the Scriptures, God Himself is the resurrection life—Rom. 4:17.
- D. The Spirit is the reality of Christ’s resurrection and its power—8:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:6:
1. In order to experience the resurrection life of Christ, we need to see that in resurrection Christ became the life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b.
 2. The highest definition of resurrection is that it is the process by which Christ, the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit.
 3. Christ’s resurrection was His transfiguration into the life-giving Spirit in order to enter into His believers—v. 45b; John 20:22.
- E. The principle of resurrection is that the natural life is killed and that the divine life rises up in its place—2 Cor. 1:8-9:
1. That which passes through death and still remains is resurrection—Rev. 2:8.
 2. Resurrection is something that has come out of death and that is beyond the natural realm—Acts 2:24.
 3. Resurrection means that no event or circumstance can cause us, who have the resurrection life of Christ, to be held down—2 Cor. 1:8-9.
 4. To be in resurrection means that our natural life is crucified and that the God-created part of our being is uplifted in resurrection to be one with Christ in resurrection—Rom. 6:4-6.
 5. When we do not live by our natural life but live by the divine life within us, we are in resurrection—John 6:57; Rom. 8:11.