

## HWMR - THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST, Week 6

### Being Found in Christ, Knowing Christ, and Pursuing Christ

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:9-14

- Philippians 3:9 And **be found in Him**, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is **through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith**,
- Philippians 3:10 To **know Him** and the **power of His resurrection** and the **fellowship of His sufferings**, **being conformed to His death**,
- Philippians 3:11 If perhaps I may **attain to the out-resurrection** from the dead.
- Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been **laid hold of by Christ Jesus**.
- Philippians 3:13 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but **one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before**,
- Philippians 3:14 **I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward**.

#### THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD BASED ON FAITH

In verse 9 Paul does not speak merely in a general way, but in a very **definite way**. He says that he did not want to have his own righteousness, but he **wanted the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God based on faith. *“Not having my own righteousness...but...the righteousness which is of God”* is the condition in which Paul desired to be found in Christ. He **wanted to live not in his own righteousness, but in the righteousness of God**, and to **be found** in such a transcendent condition, **expressing God by living Christ, not by keeping the law**.

Before Paul was saved, he had no idea that Christ could be his righteousness. The **righteousness of the law** is the righteousness which **comes from man's own effort** to keep the law, as mentioned in verse 6. Formerly, Paul lived in that righteousness which was according to the law. Others could invariably find him enveloped by the righteousness of the law. But now Paul's **desire** was to be observed as a person living in Christ and having Christ as his righteousness.

The righteousness in which Paul wanted to be found was the righteousness *“which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God based on faith.”* The expression “the faith of Christ” implies **our believing in Christ**. Such faith issues from our **knowing and appreciating Christ**. It is Christ Himself **infused** into us **through our appreciation of Him**, who **becomes our faith in Him**. Hence, it is also the faith of Christ that **brings us into an organic union with Him**.

The **righteousness which is of God based on faith is that righteousness which is God Himself lived out of us to be our righteousness through our faith in Christ**. Such righteousness is the expression of God, who lives in us. It is based on faith because it is on the basis, or condition, of faith. **Faith is the basis, the condition, for us to receive and possess the righteousness out from God, the highest righteousness, which is Christ** (1 Cor. 1:30). (Life-Study of Philippians, Chapter 20, Section 1)

### Day 1

**I. Paul's desire was to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness but “that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith”—Phil. 3:9:**

- A. Deep within Paul was the **aspiration** to have his whole being **immersed in** and **saturated with** Christ so that all who observed him might find him fully in Christ; **we also should have the earnest desire to be found in Christ**—v. 9a.

### Day 2

- B. Paul **wanted to be found in Christ** in the **condition of not** having his own righteousness **but** the **righteousness of God**, taking Christ as his subjective, **lived-out righteousness**—v. 9:
1. There are two aspects of Christ being righteousness to the believers:
    - a. The **first aspect** is Christ being the **believers' righteousness for them to be justified** by God **objectively**—Rom. 3:24-26; Acts 13:39; Gal. 3:24b.
    - b. The **second aspect** is Christ being the **believers' righteousness lived out** of them as the manifestation of God, who is the righteousness in Christ given to the believers for them to be justified **subjectively**—Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 2:24a; James 2:24; Matt. 5:20; Rev. 19:8.

2. The **subjective righteousness of God** in Philippians 3:9 is actually **God Himself becoming our daily living**, a living that is right with God and man:
  - a. Paul did not want to live in his own righteousness, the righteousness that comes from man's own effort to keep the law—vv. 6, 9.
  - b. Paul **desired to live in the righteousness of God** and to **be found in the condition of expressing God by living Christ**; if we would be found in Christ, we must be in such a condition—1:20-21a.
- C. **Faith** is the basis, the condition, on which we receive and possess the righteousness that is out of God, which is Christ—3:9; 1 Cor. 1:30.

### Day 3

**II. Paul lived in a condition of having not his own righteousness but the righteousness that is out of God in order to know (experience) Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, to be conformed to His death, and to attain to the out-resurrection—Phil. 3:10-11:**

- A. To have the **excellency of the knowledge of Christ** (v. 8) is **by revelation**, but **to know Christ** (v. 10) is **by experience**—to have an experiential knowledge of Him:
  1. To experience Christ is to know and enjoy Christ in an **experiential way**— 2:17-18; 4:4, 10.
  2. To know Christ is not merely to have the knowledge of Him but **to gain His person**—2 Cor. 2:10.
  3. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches **by paying a price**—Phil. 3:8; Eph. 3:8.
  4. We need to know Christ **by experiencing Him, enjoying Him, being one with Him, and having Him live within us**; in this way we know Him by both revelation and experience—Phil. 3:10; 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20.

#### TO GAIN CHRIST AND BE FOUND IN HIM

To have the **revelation** concerning Christ **does not mean** we have already gained Christ. **After** seeing the revelation, there was the **need** for Paul **to pursue in order to gain Christ**. Likewise, we may have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, but Christ may not yet be ours in our experience. Therefore, like Paul, **we need to pursue Christ that we may gain Him**.

At the end of verse 8 Paul speaks of **gaining Christ**, and in verse 9 he speaks of being **found in Him**. These are two aspects of one thing. Paul desired to gain Christ and be found in Him. **To have** the excellency of the knowledge of Christ is one thing. However, it is another thing **to gain Him and be found in Him**. Although I may have seen the revelation concerning the extensiveness and all-inclusiveness of Christ, I may be found in ethics, culture, or good behavior and not in Christ. If someone visits you at home, will you be found in Christ? You may declare, "Hallelujah, I am in Christ! I have been transferred out of Adam and into Christ." However, this may be **merely a declaration, not a fact** of actual experience.

In 2:14 Paul says, "*Do all things without murmurings and reasonings.*" Instead of being found in Christ, **we may be found in our murmurings and reasonings**. For example, a wife may murmur to her husband, and he may react by reasoning. In such a case, neither the wife nor the husband is found in Christ.

We have spoken a great deal about Christ **versus** religion, culture, and philosophy. Nevertheless, most of the time we are found in our culture, self-imposed religion, and self-made philosophy. We may make up a certain **policy for ourselves** to follow in our married life or in the church life. Hence, others may find us not in Christ, but in **our self-made policy** concerning married life and the church life. This policy may be the source of much of our murmuring, reasoning, and criticizing. We may also use this policy as a yardstick for measuring others. Oh, it is crucial that, **having the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, we gain Him and be found in Him!** (Life-Study of Philippians, Chapter 51, Section 1)

This matter of **being found in Christ** is not mere theology; it is **a matter of the practical experience of Christ**. **First**, we need to **see the revelation** of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. **Second**, we need **to pay the price** that we may gain Christ. **Third**, we need to **live in Christ, remain in Christ, lodge in Christ, speak in Christ, act in Christ, and move in Christ**. We need to have our being in Christ. Then whenever an angel or a saint finds us, we will be found in Christ. Our being found in Christ will surprise the demons and terrify the devil. Oh, that we may gain Christ and be found in Him! **Being found in Christ is not a once-for-all matter**. On the contrary, **it is a daily matter, an hourly matter**. If men do not know where we are, at least the angels know. Others may not be able to see us, but the angels know whether or not we are in Christ. **Day by day and hour by hour, we need to be found in Christ by the angelic eyes that are watching us**. Where do we live, work, and have our being? We need to be found in Christ by the angels, by our husband or wife, and by the brothers and sisters in the church. This is a serious matter.

Today it is **not a matter of law, regulation, or a way** of living. Rather, it is absolutely a matter of Christ. Have you seen Christ? Have you gained Christ? Are you found in Christ by both men and angels? **In our daily living we need to be able to declare that for us to live is Christ.** (The Experience of Christ, Chapter 13, Section 3)

## Day 4

B. Paul aspired **to know** the **power** of Christ's resurrection and the **fellowship** of His sufferings—Phil. 3:10:

1. The **power of Christ's resurrection** is His resurrection life, which raised Him from the dead—Eph. 1:19-20:
  - a. The **Spirit** is the **reality of Christ's resurrection and its power**—Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:6.
  - b. The Spirit compounded with Christ's resurrection and its power indwells our spirit to dispense Christ's resurrection and its power into our entire being—Phil. 1:19; Exo. 30:23-25; Rom. 8:6b, 10-11.
  - c. If we **put ourselves aside** and **remain** under the death of the cross, we will experience the power of Christ's resurrection, and spontaneously, the power of resurrection experienced by us will build up the Body—Phil. 3:10; Eph. 4:12, 16.
2. The expression the **fellowship of His sufferings** in Philippians 3:10 **refers** to **the participation in Christ's sufferings**, a **necessary condition** for the experience of the power of His resurrection—Matt. 20:22-23; Col. 1:24:
  - a. We **first experience** the power of Christ's resurrection, and then by this power we are **enabled to participate** in His sufferings—Phil. 3:10.
  - b. These sufferings are mainly for Christ's Body, the church—Col. 1:24.

We seek to know **not only** Christ **but also** the **power of His resurrection** and the **fellowship of His sufferings**. "*To know Him*" refers to knowing Christ in a **general** way. But knowing the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings are **details** related to knowing Christ. Actually **to know Christ is to know the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings**.

Christ today is in resurrection. He is no longer natural and no longer in the flesh—He is in **resurrection**, and the **reality** of resurrection is the **Spirit**. Christ is now in resurrection as the pneumatic Christ, as the life-giving Spirit. Since He is the pneumatic Christ in resurrection, **it is in resurrection that we meet Him and experience Him**.

Christ and His resurrection are one. **Christ Himself is the power of His resurrection**, and the Spirit as the reality of the power of Christ's resurrection is Christ in resurrection. We need to experience this power that we may gain Christ. Because Christ is now in resurrection, we cannot **know Him experientially** unless we know the power of His resurrection.

Christ's resurrection power **is not** an outward physical power; **it is** an inward, intrinsic power. As such, **it is a life power**. Christ has manifested in His resurrection the intrinsic power of the divine life. This is the power of His resurrection. By experiencing the power of Christ's resurrection we obtain Christ in reality. The more we experience the power of Christ's resurrection, the more we obtain Him.

The **process of obtaining Christ**, as revealed in Philippians 3:10, is to know Him **by** knowing the power of His resurrection. However, if we would know the power of Christ's resurrection, **we must share in His sufferings and know the fellowship of His sufferings**. The **participation in Christ's sufferings**—"the fellowship of His sufferings"—(Phil. 3:10; Matt. 20:22-23; Col. 1:24) is a necessary **condition** for the experience of the power of His resurrection (2 Tim. 2:11) by being conformed to His death. Paul was pursuing to know and experience not only the excellency of Christ Himself but also the life power of His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings. With Christ the sufferings and death came first, followed by the resurrection. With us the power of His resurrection comes first, then the fellowship of His sufferings and conformity to His death. We **first received the power of His resurrection**. **Then** by this power **we are enabled to participate in His sufferings and live a crucified life in conformity to His death**. Such sufferings are mainly for producing and building up the Body of Christ. (Conclusion of the New Testament, The (Msgs. 135-156), Chapter 8, Section 4)

There are **four important matters** in 3:10: **to know** Christ, **to know** the power of His resurrection, **to know** the fellowship of His sufferings, and **to be** conformed to His death. Actually, being conformed to Christ's death is related to knowing both the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. The words "being conformed" indicate how we may know the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. **By being conformed to the death of Christ we experience the power of His resurrection and enter into the fellowship of His sufferings**.

Being **conformed** to Christ's death is **the base** of the experience of Christ. If we are not conformed to the death of Christ, we do not have the base for the experience of Christ. **In order** to experience Christ, we must be **conformed** to His death. **But** to be conformed to the death of Christ, we must have the **fellowship** of His sufferings. By participating in Christ's sufferings, we are **ushered** into a **position** to experience the power of His resurrection. **Then**, when we **experience** the power of Christ's resurrection, **we know Him**.

As we partake of Christ's sufferings **for the Body**, we are **conformed** to His death. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He lived a crucified life. He continually put His natural life to death. By living such a crucified life He was alive to God and lived Him. When we are **willing to suffer for Christ and His body, we also shall live only to Him**. Then we shall truly be conformed to His death, for we shall share in His death. Day by day we shall experience the power of His resurrection. This is the way to know Christ in an experiential way. By knowing Christ in this way, experiencing Him in the power of His resurrection, we obtain Him. (Conclusion of the New Testament, The (Msgs. 135-156), Chapter 9, Section 1)

## Day 5

- C. Philippians 3:10 also speaks of “*being conformed to His death*”; this indicates that Paul desired **to take Christ’s death as the mold of his life**:
1. Being **conformed** to Christ’s death is the **base** of the experience of Christ— 1:20-21a; 3:9-10.
  2. The **mold of Christ’s death** refers to Christ’s continually putting to death His natural life so that He might live by the life of God—John 6:57a.
  3. By being **conformed to Christ’s death**, we experience Christ in His death for the **release, impartation, and multiplication** of life, and **we also glorify the Father**—12:24-26, 28; 13:31; 2 Cor. 4:12

**God’s economy** is to have our **old man** (the outer man) **consumed** and our **new man** (the inner man) **renewed** day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). Being consumed is not the same as being killed. A person may be killed instantly, but the **consuming of our old man is a long process** that requires many years. I have been in this process for nearly seventy years; nevertheless, the consuming of my old man has not yet been consummated.

**Every day in the church life we are being consumed.** This **consuming** is our being **molded**, or **conformed**, to the death of Christ (Phil. 3:10c). In making cakes, dough is put into a mold and pressed into the mold. In this way the dough is conformed to the form of the mold. If the mold is in the image of a fish, the dough that is pressed into this mold will be conformed to the shape of a fish. **The death of Christ is our mold**, and we are the dough. Since the day we were saved, **we became the dough**. This dough is made of fine flour from wheat (Lev. 2:1; John 12:24; 1 Cor. 10:17). **Christ is the fine flour for us to be made the dough**.

God has put us all into the mold of Christ’s death. The death to which we are being conformed is not Adam’s death but Christ’s death. The death of Christ is a particular death. Out of millions and even billions of deaths, only Christ’s death is a particular death. **From the time that we became dough, God put us into this death** (Rom. 6:4), considering this death as a mold. Day by day and year after year **God is molding us to conform us to this death**.

On the one hand, we are happy in the recovery and in the church life, but on the other hand, deep within we are suffering here. However, we have no way to escape. **Every day we are being molded**. When we come to the dining table to eat, we may not like the food that has been prepared for us. This is part of the mold, the mold of the death of Christ. Marriage too is a part of this mold. Marriage is used very much by the Lord to conform the married ones to the death of Christ. (The Christian Life, Chapter 16, Section 2)

## Day 6

- D. The result of **being conformed to Christ’s death** is that we **attain to the out-resurrection** from the dead, which will be a **prize** to the overcomers—Phil. 3:11:
1. **To attain to, to arrive at, the out-resurrection** means that our entire being is gradually and continually **resurrected**—1 Thes. 5:23.
  2. The out-resurrection is a resurrection **out of** the old creation **into** the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.

### III. Like Paul, we should pursue Christ Himself and “pursue toward the goal for the prize”—Phil. 3:12, 14:

- A. In order to pursue Christ, **we should** not think that we have attained, and **we should forget the things which are behind and stretch “forward to the things which are before”**—vv. 12-13.
- B. The **goal** toward which we are pursuing is the **full enjoyment and gaining of Christ**, and the **prize** is the **utmost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom** as a **reward** to the victorious runners of the New Testament race—v. 14; 1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 10:35; 11:26; 12:1-2.

Many Christians are not clear about the goal of their Christian life. After we believed in the Lord Jesus according to God’s New Testament economy, we were baptized. The **significance of baptism** is to **terminate** our natural being and to be **germinated** with the divine life. In baptism the natural life is buried, and a new life rises up. **Baptism**, however, is simply the **beginning of our Christian life**. **Our Christian life also has a goal, and this goal is the out-resurrection**. This term **out-resurrection means that every part of our being will be resurrected**. When we were baptized, our old life, our natural human life, was terminated and buried, and a new life, the divine life, which is Christ, rose up from within. At that time we began our Christian life and walk. The Christian walk involves a **long process**, and **it takes us a long way**... The way toward this goal is the **process of resurrection**.

**Arriving** at the **out-resurrection** is the **result**, the issue, of being conformed to Christ’s death. To be **conformed**, molded, to the death of Christ means that we **remain** always in His death. If we remain in Christ’s death, **allowing** ourselves to be **molded** into its likeness, the outcome will be that **every part of our being will be gradually resurrected**. (The Experience of Christ, Chap. 19, Sec. 1)