

**HWMR: KNOWING, EXPERIENCING, AND ENJOYING CHRIST AS REVEALED IN
PHILIPPIANS, (Week 4)**

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

KNOWING CHRIST AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

Philippians 3:10	To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
Philippians 3:12	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	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 3:14	I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.
John 11:25	Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
Acts 2:24	Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.
2 Corinthians 1:8	For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.
2 Corinthians 1:9	Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;
Revelation 1:17	And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead; and He placed His right hand on me, saying, Do not fear; I am the First and the Last
Revelation 1:18	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.
Revelation 2:8	And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again:

Day 1

- Philippians 3:8* - But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
- Philippians 3:10* - To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

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.

Before his experience on the road to Damascus, Paul did not have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Rather, he thought that Jesus was merely an illegitimate son of Mary who was born and raised in Nazareth. **Paul treasured the law, but he despised Jesus.** However, on the road to Damascus, the excellent Jesus appeared to him, and he was shocked when he met the Lord. The Jesus whom Paul thought was buried in a tomb now appeared to him from the heavens. On that day he learned that Jesus was not earthly but **heavenly and divine.** **He came to see the excellency of this wonderful One.** On account of the excellency of this knowledge of Christ, Paul came to realize that the **law cannot compare with Him.** Therefore, he could have said, “I have made a comparison between Jesus and the law, and I have decided to take Christ. I count all things loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.”

Have you ever compared Christ with all other people and all other things? Have you ever compared Him with your degree or with your wife or husband and children? As Christians, we need to make such a comparison. If you compare the sum total of all people and all things with Christ, you will **gain the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and Christ will become all the more dear to you.** You will be willing to let go of everything and everyone on account of Christ. Some may think it terrible to count all things loss for Christ, but I am serious in saying that everything must go and that only Christ must remain. When everything has gone, that is the time to experience Christ as the remainder. Christ as the remainder will be incomparably precious and sweet. This is Christ for our experience.

When some Christians speak about experiencing Christ, they become greedy and desire to swallow all of Christ at one time. But it took Paul more than thirty years to enjoy Christ. However, some of the young people are impatient in the experience of Christ and complain about enjoying only a little of Him at a time. Do not try to experience too much of Him at once. **Simply keep on experiencing Him and enjoying Him daily.** Regarding the experience of Christ, we need to **slow down and realize that it will take eternity to enjoy Him.** Day by day we need to experience a little more of Him. We need to partake of Christ many times a day. In this way we will have a greater enjoyment of Him. The enjoyment of Christ is an eternal matter. He is inexhaustible, and we cannot exhaust the experience of Him even in a lifetime. (*The Experience of Christ, chapter 7*)

Day 2

Philippians 3:9-11 - 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, To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.

- 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.

Day 3

Philippians 3:12-14 - 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. 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, I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.

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.

Philippians 3 shows that we can know Christ **when we stop ourselves** in matters related to the service of God. We must stop ourselves in the good things. We must stop ourselves not only in committing sins, being cold toward God, and opposing God, but even more we need to stop ourselves in our zeal and service to God. God will never initiate anything in someone **who has not stopped himself**; everything he does, whether serving God or loving others, **is initiated by himself and done by himself** from the beginning to the end. Only those who stop themselves and let God initiate and work can know Christ.

If we have not stopped, Christ cannot initiate anything in us. We can preach Christ, **but** we cannot know Christ or experience Christ. We can speak of Christ constantly, **but** we will not know Christ at all. Christ will be in our mouth **but not** in our experience, and He will be spoken of in the messages we give **but will not** be in our living. We may have preached Christ for many years, but has Christ initiated any of our preaching? Is it “I” who is speaking about Christ, “I” who is preaching Christ, and “I” who is working for God? If this is so, then Christ is not working for God in us, Christ is not speaking of Himself through us, nor is Christ preaching Himself through us. Both kinds of preaching may be on the same subject, but the source and process are different. Paul preached Christ, but the **source of his preaching was Christ**. Not only were his word and subject Christ, but the source and process of his speaking were also Christ. In contrast, our word and subject may be Christ, but the source and process of our preaching are merely ourselves. We may go to a distant place to work for Christ, yet Christ is not in that work. We may work and be zealous, but if we never stop ourselves, Christ will not be present during the whole process.

Before being shined upon by the Lord’s great light on the way to Damascus, Saul was a zealous man. He was zealous for the God of his fathers and blameless in the law, **but he had never stopped**, and he did not know Christ (Acts 9:1-5). In Philippians, however, he could say that he counted as loss, as refuse, the things that were gains to him on account of Christ. **He stopped himself, his zeal and effort ceased, and Christ could begin in him.** Once a person stops, Christ can act, move, and reveal all His riches in him, allowing him to know Christ practically in experience. (*Further Talks on the Knowledge of Life, chapter 19*)

Day 4

Revelation 1:17-18 - And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead; and He placed His right hand on me, saying, Do not fear; 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.

Revelation 2:8 - And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again.

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.

In verse 10 Paul says, "To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." According to this verse, Paul aspired not only to know Christ, but also to know the **power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings**. The power of Christ's resurrection is His resurrection life which raised Him from among the dead (Eph. 1:19-20). The reality of the power of Christ's resurrection is the Spirit (Rom. 1:4). To know, to experience, this power requires identification with Christ's death and conformity to it. Death is the base of resurrection. To experience the power of Christ's resurrection, **we need to live a crucified life according to the pattern of His life**. Our conformity to His death affords a base for the power of His resurrection to rise up that His divine life may be expressed in us.

In Philippians 3 the sequence is knowing Christ, knowing the power of Christ's resurrection, knowing the fellowship of His sufferings, and being conformed to His death. But in our spiritual experience, the sequence is reversed. Daily we are conformed to Christ's death; then we participate in His sufferings, know the power of His resurrection, and, by knowing the power of resurrection, we know Christ Himself. According to Paul's sequence, first we **receive** the excellency of the knowledge of Christ by seeing the vision of Christ; second, we **count all things to be refuse**; third, we **gain** Christ and are **found** in Him; and fourth, we **know** Christ, **experience** Him.

In order to experience Christ, we must be in the power of resurrection. **We cannot be in our natural life**. The more we know the power of Christ's resurrection, the more we shall participate in the sufferings of Christ and thereby have the fellowship of His sufferings. If we experience the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, we shall then be conformed to His death. As we are conformed to the death of Christ, we are ushered into the power of His resurrection. It is by this resurrection power that we know Christ and experience Him. (*Life-Study of Philippians, chapter 21*)

Day 5

Acts 2:24 - Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

Ephesians 1:19-20 - And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

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.

Day 6

John 11:25 - Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

Romans 8:11 - And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

- 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.

“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 and being conformed to His death are details related to knowing Christ. Actually to **know Christ** here means to **know the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings**. Some Christians claim that they have known Christ for years, but they do not know the power of Christ’s resurrection, although they may realize that Christ is powerful and that He displayed this power by raising Lazarus from the dead. However, the resurrection of Lazarus is very different from the power of Christ’s resurrection. Eventually, Lazarus died and was again buried in the tomb, but Christ’s resurrection was a resurrection that brought Him to the throne. When Paul speaks of the power of Christ’s resurrection, he has in mind something different from the power manifested in the resurrection of Lazarus. Paul is speaking of a resurrection that can be called **Christ’s resurrection**. He wanted to know the power of His resurrection.

In the book of Romans Paul does not speak of suffering as a discipline. However, he refers to **transformation** and **conformation**. Romans 8:28 says that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God. Certain Bible teachers place great emphasis on this verse without connecting it to the following verse, which indicates that God’s intention is to have us conformed to the image of His Son. This conformation is the result of transformation. All things work together for our good that we may be transformed and conformed to the image of the Son of God. No doubt, this process involves suffering, **suffering which helps us become mature sons**. As we undergo this kind of suffering, we also can experience the power of Christ’s resurrection, but not as much as when we suffer for the Body.

Knowing the power of Christ’s resurrection is related to **knowing the fellowship of His sufferings**. Paul experienced the power of Christ’s resurrection in this way. When we suffer for the sake of the Body in the name of Christ, we also shall experience the power of His resurrection. I can testify that when I am bold to stand for the Lord, I experience anointing and empowering. However, if you are ashamed to say that you are a Christian, especially a Christian in the church life, you will have no power. But if you **testify that you are a Christian standing on the church ground, you will be empowered**. (*Life-Study of Philippians, chapter 52*)