

KNOWING JESUS - Phil 3:4-14

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INTRODUCTION

Being willing to be STRETCHED, out of comfort zone

You can't walk on water if you don't get out of the boat!

Out of comfort zone so -trust God 100%

-become more like Jesus

TRANSITION

let God stretch you, out of comfort zone so more like Jesus

I. GOAL: KNOWING CHRIST 3:4-14

THIS PASSAGE a favorite of mine – if had to say my 'life verse'

KEY THOUGHT: Knowing Christ

8. I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord

10. I want to know Christ

What does it mean to 'KNOW CHRIST'?

KNOW CHRIST = not know ABOUT Christ but Know CHRIST

Can know about someone without knowing them

– President Bush, Donovan McNabb

Knowing about someone = HEAD

Knowing someone = HEART

Do you know ABOUT Jesus?

Do you know JESUS? Do you desire to know Him better?

Paul's lifelong goal, mine (which verse means so much to me)

KNOWING JESUS = lifelong process (getting to know anyone)

I know Nancy, better than any of you, married 31 years

Still in process of getting to know her, will never stop

Same true of Jesus = lifelong process

#1 goal not to serve, do things, obey Him but to KNOW Him

-others grow out of knowing Him or HYPOCRISY!

1 SALVATION – accept free gift (free to us) - know as SAVIOR
2 DISCIPLESHIP (step II) – give of self– know LORD, MASTER
TRANSITION

Paul explains about how this worked for him – for us as well

A. THE PAST LOSS 4-9

1. NOTHING WE OBTAIN PHYSICALLY CAN MATCH UP TO KNOWING JESUS 4-7

4b. If anyone thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5, circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6. as for zeal, persecuting the churches; a for legalistic righteousness, faultless. 7. But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

Nothing we obtain match greatness blessing of knowing Jesus
Nothing we 'give up' to get to know Him better is too much
-anyone in heaven now saying they gave up too much for God?
-can we possibly give up more for Him than He gave up for us?
World can't offer enough to make up for not knowing Jesus,

2. NOTHING WE OBTAIN SPIRITUALLY CAN MATCH UP TO KNOWING JESUS 8-9

8. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ

9. and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

All we have spiritually comes from Him
– the closer you grow to Jesus the more you see that is true!

ONLY HE can and will meet the longing inside for something
'god-shaped vacuum' that only He can meet

TRANSITION

PAST: nothing can't give up to know Christ better

PRESENT: when put Him first go thru process of knowing Him

B. THE PRESENT PROCESS 10-11

10. I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, 11. and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

1. KNOW THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

Power of new life – not live in old life: sin, darkness, death

But His power creating new life within us, becoming like Him

WHEN DIE experience same literal res power Jesus had

This life temporary, best yet to come!

2. KNOW THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERING

that's where the STRETCHING comes in

suffering – anything uncomfortable

-makes us depend on Him more

He suffered so we will, too – not like He did for us, though!

Becoming like Him in His death

We need to die to self, sin – give up own life for Him

“I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal 2:20

some literally killed for Jesus – thousands each year
all must be like Him in dying to self
us here to serve Him and others, not try to have Him serve us

3. KNOW THE SECURITY OF ETERNITY WITH HIM

11. and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

NOT indicating doubt or uncertainty
BUT intense involvement – “I have no idea how God redeems and resurrects sinful human being, but I know He does it!”

I don't know how He does it, but I know I'll be with Him forever!

TRANSITION

Knowing Jesus a process, a present process
Takes lifetime to even begin

C. THE FUTURE PERSEVERANCE 12-14

1. WE'RE NOT THERE YET!

12. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect,

2. FORGET PAST FAILURES

Forgetting what is behind

but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

3. KEEP PRESSING ON

12. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

13. Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

14. I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me

What is Jesus' desire for me? Why create me? Why save me?

Fellowship with Him, know Him, be more like Him!

If that's His goal for me that should be my goal for me as well!

12., 14. I press on

13. straining toward what is ahead,

STRONG word picture

picture of ATHLETE giving 200% to finish the race, not quit

14. I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

FINISH LINE = heaven, eternal life at end of this earthly life

NOT striving to attain it for we will have it

BUT straining on to attain reward/prize when get there

-“Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

All worth it to hear that – agree?

PRIZE: not salvation, have that now already

But rewards, special blessings, crowns to cast at His feet

Can't take anything in this life with us –can send ahead

Basis: faithfulness, perseverance, love of Jesus

Allowing Him to stretch us and keeping eyes on Him

TRANSITION

KNOWING CHRIST is our goal

But HOW do we know Him better in this life?

How to we stay faithful when stretched?

How do keep our eyes on Him when out of the boat?

He has provided for that as well

II. WAY TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL

A. BIBLE STUDY

God gave us the BIBLE to learn ABOUT Him – first step
PRIVILEGE to have letter, revelation from God!

SPIRITUAL FOOD FOR SOUL

When don't eat physically get weak, then lose appetite
Same true spiritually

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

PRAY for God, Holy Spirit, to reveal truths about Him to you

ANALYZE

Read systematically, not just open and jump around
Pray about what portion or book and stick to it
Go deep, not fast – no rush, better to go slow and deep
Eating a meal you savor, enjoy, taste each part

YOU AND JESUS, together 'eating' the word

Makes us more like Him as we
-spend time with Him
-learn His view (world view) of things

Read and meditate:

If writer of passage were here, what would I ask him about it?
If I was one of the ones who this was written to,
how would I understand it?

Pray the verse to God, using the phrases and truths **v 7-14**

APPLICATION

What does this teach me about me?
What does this teach me about God?
Is there an example to follow?
Is there a command to obey?
Is there a promise to claim?

Is there something here I could use in my life?

MEMORIZE verse – ‘sword’ of the spirit

Only offensive weapon is word of God

Quote, use against any temptation

MUST know where you will be tempted this week

verses you can use to speak truth to the temptation!

TRANSITION

BIBLE STUDY how God speaks to us we get to KNOW HIM

PRAYER another means to get to KNOW HIM better

B. PRAYER

Prayer is not preparation for the battle, prayer **is** the battle

QUICK PRAYERS WON'T WIN THE BATTLE

Battles of life, during the day won or lost in AM prayer

If we believe prayer makes a difference, why don't do it more?

JESUS sent needy people away, prayed all night, got up early

LONG TIME to enjoy, talk about anything & everything

SHORT PRAYERS send up all day, sharing, asking,

Prayer = COMMUNICATION

Not giving God His 'to do' list for the day (me do that in 2 min)

Communication = talking on a deeper level

Listening with 100% attention

ENJOYING GOD'S PRESENCE, talk, listen, quiet His presence

Christian life NOT do's and don't, what we do to serve Him

Christian life first and foremost a RELATIONSHIP

Me with children = not WORKING relationship

But PERSONAL relationship where enjoy each other

INTIMACY with God goal of prayer, not getting Him to do what

TAKES TIME TO BE CLOSE TO SOMEONE, quality time

Set goal: pray for 15 minutes (seem hard at first, force you to enjoy

His presence, talk

about things you wouldn't have talked about)

SPECIFIC PRAYER important

Not 'God bless USA, MSBC, etc.'

We don't have because we don't ask

James 4:2 You do not have, because you do not ask God.

CONTENT OF PRAYER

CONFESS SINS

NEEDS OF OTHERS

Keep lists, write things down
I give lists on back of bulletin

OWN NEEDS

PROTECTION, hedge, like Job
FRUIT OF SPIRIT – Gal 5
ARMOR OF GOD – Eph 6 (piece #7 is prayer)

WORSHIP

Need both:

 WORSHIP - Who and What God IS

 THANKSGIVING – What God DOES

Worship gets our eyes off ourselves and onto God

Best antidote for worry, fear, discouragement

 Big God = little problems

 Little God = big problems

 Worship reminds us what a big God we have

Focus today is on worship as ENTERTAINMENT

 On what WE get out of it

 Does it make US feel good?

Focus must be on GOD, not on us

We are too aware of our feeling good

 Not if God is feeling good

When awake during night, early in morning – praise & worship!

 If God doing it – obey and pray

 If Satan doing it – spend time with God and he'll stop

SUMMARY: Goal = Knowing Christ

CONCLUSION

Make own plans, commitment to KNOW CHRIST