

Message Three

Knowing Christ and the Power of His Resurrection

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:10; John 11:25; 20:22; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 1:9

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

- A. 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.
- B. Paul first received the revelation of Christ, then sought the experience of Christ—to know and enjoy Christ in an experiential way.
- C. *The one thing* in the book of Philippians is the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ—2:2; cf. 1:20-21; 2:5; 3:7-9; 4:12-13.
- D. To know Christ is not merely to have the knowledge concerning Him but to gain His very person—2 Cor. 2:10; cf. Col. 2:9, 16-17:
 1. To gain something requires the paying of a price; to gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches (Eph. 3:8) by paying a price.
 2. Christ has gained us, taken possession of us, that we might gain Him, take possession of Him—Phil. 3:12.
 3. The Christian life is a life of gaining Christ in His full ministry in His three divine and mystical stages—incarnation, inclusion, and intensification—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 1:4; 4:5; 5:6:
 - 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; for this reason he was still advancing toward the goal—the gaining of Christ to the fullest extent—Phil. 3:12-14.
 - b. In order to gain Christ to the fullest extent, Paul not only forsook his experiences in Judaism but also would not linger in his past experiences of Christ and be limited by them; he forgot the past—v. 13.
 - c. 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.
 - d. 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—Phil. 3:13.

II. Paul aspired to know 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. The Spirit is the reality of Christ's resurrection and its power—Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:6.
- C. The Spirit compounded with Christ's resurrection and its power (Phil. 1:19; Exo. 30:23-25) indwells our spirit (Rom. 8:10-11) to dispense Christ's resurrection and its power not only to our spirit and soul (vv. 6b, 10) but also to our mortal body (vv. 11, 13b; 2 Cor. 4:11).
- D. We should cooperate with the resurrecting Spirit to recognize that we have been resurrected with Christ (Col. 2:12; Eph. 2:6a) and to pursue the power of the resurrection of Christ:

1. It is by this power of Christ's resurrection that we, the lovers of Christ, determine to take the cross by denying our self—Matt. 16:24; cf. S. S. 2:8-9.
2. It is also by this power of resurrection that we, the lovers of Christ, are enabled to be conformed to His death, to be one with His cross—Phil. 3:10; cf. S. S. 2:14-15.
3. In order to experience the life-giving Spirit as the reality of the flourishing riches of the resurrection of Christ, we have to discern our spirit from our soul—Heb. 4:12; cf. S. S. 2:14-15.