

TODAY'S TOPIC:

PURSUING CHRIST [#1]

TODAY'S KEY VERSE:

1 Cor 2.1-2 - And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2 FOR I DETERMINED NOT TO KNOW ANYTHING AMONG YOU EXCEPT JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.

2 Pet 1.2-3 – 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you IN the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, THROUGH the knowledge of Him who called us BY GLORY and VIRTUE...

Grace and peace can only be found and multiplied

within the sphere of knowing God!

Outside of knowing God?

Grace and peace ... can't be found outside that sphere!

THINGS WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ... PURSUING JESUS:

1. NOT UP... OR OUT. IN!
2. NOT BY WORKS OR MERIT. BY FAITH!
 - a. BLOOD: Confidence in the PROVIDER: what we already have. Not a process.
 - b. OIL: Confidence in the APPLIER: Capitalizing on the gift. Process w/o end.

Phil 3.10-14 - 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection...

Phil 3.12-14 - 12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE PRIZE OF THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.

Paul's relationship with Christ

ON THE ONE HAND...was a

once-for-all-can't-add-anything-to-it

reality to Him. IT.. IS... FINISHED!!

But ON THE OTHER HAND...

his capitalizing on that reality?

Taking advantage of it?

It took A LIFE-TIME of

continual PROGRESS... with the Holy Spirit.

And at whatever stage... or point... he arrived at...

He could always look down the path ahead of him...

and see an infinite journey ...yet to go!

WHY?

BECAUSE CHRIST IS INFINITE!

AND ...OUR KNOWLEDGE OF HIM...

WILL ALWAYS BE... INFINITE!

There's no end!!!

"Pursuing Jesus" DOES NOT mean...

He's running away... and you're trying to catch Him!

Your complete and total relationship with God

is already purchased for you!

It's built into the New Covenant!

"They will all know me from the least to the greatest"

SO...PURSUING JESUS... MEANS...

capitalizing on ... taking advantage of... not ignoring...

His open arms... desire for communication and intimacy...

That were already promised in your 'marriage covenant'

AND GOD DOESN'T BREAK HIS PROMISES!

PURSUING JESUS MEANS

paying attention

to the Holy Spirit who promised

never to leave or forsake you...

While he's been waiting for a conversation

With you for 25 years!

PURSUING JESUS MEANS

not wasting the opportunity to know him better

That he already bought for you!

SO...ABOUT PURSUING JESUS

1. It's Christ within.
2. It's by faith in Christ's provision and Holy Spirit's application.
3. IT DOESN'T TAKE STRENGTH OR WILL-POWER.

IT TAKES SUBMISSION. YIELDING.

& RESPONSIVENESS.

Rev 3.20 - 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

Jn 16.13 - However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH...

We can't decide to love God more! Want God more!

Give up everything for Jesus! [AND SUCCEED AT IT!]

NO!

Our job is to quit fighting... quit resisting...

as the Holy Spirit LEADS US INTO THESE REALITIES:

...Loving God more! Wanting God more!

And giving up everything to follow Jesus!

We don't just decide to love... and then LOVE!!

How can we?

But like the Lukewarm Laodiceans...

We begin to have dinner with him...

and as we do... we learn his love for us...

and our love for HIM... GROWS!

We don't decide our way into Christ's love!

We GROW our way into it

OVER DINNER!!

1. It's Christ within.
2. It's by faith in Christ's provision and Holy Spirit's application.
3. It doesn't take will power. It takes submission.

4. WE DON'T GET RID OF FLESH

IN ORDER TO

FILL UP WITH SPIRIT!

THAT'S BACKWARDS!

We fill up with Spirit...

IN ORDER TO overcome the flesh

that has been binding... and overcoming... US!

JESUS WILL RELATE TO YOU...

WHILE YOU'RE IN YOUR FLESH PIT!

IN FACT... THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET OUT!!

THE BLOOD BOUGHT US THAT RIGHT!

RIGHTEOUSNESS:

From believing>>>>TO FAVOR>>>> to behaving.

Eph 2.8-10 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

LAW: LIFESTYLE LEADS TO FAVOR [OUR WORK GETS CREDIT]

GRACE: FAVOR...RECEIVED AS A GIFT UNDESERVED ... LEADS TO LIFESTYLE

[THEN CHRIST'S WORK GETS CREDIT]

INTERNAL FELLOWSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT...

WHILE...

WE'RE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE FLESH

IS THE ONLY WAY POSSIBLE...

TO BREAK THE FLESH'S CONTROL!

[TICKET TO GET ON BOARD THE 'CHANGE TRAIN'?

THE CROSS!]

We can't change our lives...

without joining hands in fellowship... with the Spirit!

When you find his life inside...

you CAN change your life inside!

NOT BEFORE!

And when you change your life inside...

because you found His life inside...

THEN...

You can change your life... OUTSIDE!!

THE SPIRIT LEADS THE WAY...

IN CLEARING OUT THE FLESH!!

WHEN BURIED IN THE FLESH...

THE BLOOD BOUGHT YOUR RIGHT...

TO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE SPIRIT...

THEN...WHILE

STILL BURIED IN FLESH...

THE SPIRIT YOU BEGIN

TO FELLOWSHIP WITH...

WILL WALK YOU

RIGHT OUT OF THE FLESH...

BY HIS POWER...

NOT YOURS!

Gal 5.16 - 16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Rom 8.13 - 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if BY THE SPIRIT you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Phil 3.10-11 - 10 THAT I MAY KNOW HIM AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS, BEING CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH, 11 IF, BY ANY MEANS, I MAY ATTAIN TO THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.

Eph 3.14-21 - 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH MIGHT THROUGH HIS SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN, 17 THAT CHRIST MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS THROUGH FAITH; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled WITH ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD.

20 NOW TO HIM WHO IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDINGLY ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKS IN US, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

THAT'S NOT JUST A CHALLENGE!

IT'S A DARE!

"I DARE YOU TO TAKE ME UP ON THIS!!"

WHAT DOES ALL THIS

HAVE TO DO WITH

PURSUING JESUS?

You don't have to first become

something you aren't...

in order to become it...

eventually!

And you don't have to first know Jesus

any better than you already do...

in order to know him better

eventually!

The Holy Spirit will take you

from EXACTLY where you are...

and lead you to...

the place you could never possibly get to!

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS...

LIIIIIVE... IN THE SCRIPTURES!!

CLAIM THEM! OWN THEM!

MAKE THEM YOUR 'LIFE PARTNER'!

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT...

TALK TO HIM...

BE AWARE THAT HE'S TALKING TO YOU!

COMMUNICATE!

AND PRAY IN THE SPIRIT!

A LOT!!