

# The Excellence of the Knowledge of Christ

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[ 0 : 00 ] in this day that you have set apart for us to worship you, to magnify your name, calling the teaching and preaching of your word, that we may magnify you in every sin that we do.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. So today we're going to touch on Philippians chapter 3. We've been preaching about that for a while, and chapter 3 is the part where we see the applications of many of the great things that Paul has been teaching in this epistle. And in chapter 2 he's talking about the supreme example of Christ. And as we think on those things, particularly today as we break the bread and drink of the cup, we're going to see here the implications for the life of the believer.

And in that we will see three points, mainly the contrast between a carnal and a spiritual mind, what is of foremost value for a Christian, and what is the ultimate goal of a believer.

[ 1 : 30 ] And those from you that have the scripture, your Bibles, turn to Philippians chapter 3. I will read verse 1 through 11.

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord, for to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation. Circumcision, for we are the circumcision who worship God in spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

Though I also might have confidence in the flesh, if anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so. Circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, concerning the law, a Pharisee, a Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

But what things were gained to me, these I have counted laws for Christ. Yet, indeed, I also count all things laws for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the laws of all things, and counted as rubbish, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness, which is from God by faith, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death, if by any means, I may attain to the resurrection, from the death.

[ 3 : 53 ] And in this section of scripture, we see how in the first three, four verses, there's a alternation between a carnal mindset and a spiritual mindset.

After Paul talk in chapter two about the supreme example of Christ, that we are to imitate, to follow, for our life, he set himself as an example in chapter three, and there we see the practical implications being explained, and particularly by Paul being lived out, as he writes these letters to them.

And we see in the first verse, where he says, finally, brethren, rejoice in the Lord, for to write the same things of our Lord Jesus Christ, for to write the same things is not tedious, but for you it is safe.

So there we see that one of the main characteristics, Paul, is over and over in this epistle showing how he rejoiced in Christ in spite of all the suffering that he was going through.

And this morning we were listening about that, the same picture where those brethren in the letter of the Hebrews were feeling tempted to go back and not putting their eyes in Christ.

[ 5 : 30 ] Here we see an example at an individual level where Paul being in prison, going through a lot of affliction, is setting an example to the brethren of what is the imitation of Christ, the practical implications.

So having his mind in Jesus in that hope and that strength kept him going through the time of affliction being in prison. And at the same time we see that mixture with people that were related in some way to the ministry of the brethren in Philippi that Paul is warning them.

And there we can see what is a carnal mind. In verse 2 he says beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation.

And in that verse he's talking about people that primarily were acting based on their desires. At the time dogs used to run wild in Israel they were unclean animals and they would eat anything rotten meat or things that were disgusting just to survive.

But the horrible thing here is that he is using that word to refer to people that were primarily guided by their desires and by their flesh.

[ 7 : 09 ] we see that he calls them evil workers and it says beware of mutilation. And with that it seems that Paul is referring to the rite of circumcision that was being made in some Gentiles to try conforming them to the law of the Old Testament in order that they may be accepted in the church.

And apparently the procedure was being done in a really incorrect inappropriate way such that those persons were being physically deformed when the process was being done.

And Paul is warning them of those things. He first is telling them that we are to rejoice in the Lord and call those that are trying to conform to the all rights to live according to their desires and instincts as evil workers.

He then happens to talk in verse three about what is the real circumcision. And he talks about the those that worship God in spirit and rejoice in Christ again.

We see again the same word rejoicing having that joy satisfaction complete hope in Christ.

[ 8 : 46 ] In verse three he says we are the circumcision who worship God in spirit rejoicing Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

We see in this letter how Paul used many times not only in these two verses the rejoicing in the Lord again.

In verse four of the chapter four he tells them rejoice in the Lord always again I will say rejoice. And he is again telling them what should be the source of our hope and our meaning.

When by contrast he goes to the carnal mind we see there are three things that those people are guided by what they believe by their passion and their flesh.

And we see this alternation in these verses where we see the contrast in somebody trusting God and somebody trusting in their own works. And in that time and age we see in scripture in many of the letters this conflict from people that wanted to justify themselves in their ethnic cultural heritage in this case a lot of Jews coming from the Old Testament background to try to find merit in Christ and that is what Paul over and over is calling them not to do.

[ 10 : 25 ] We see how in the book of Jude in that epistle that only has one chapter right before Revelation in chapters in verse 17 to 19 the apostle says but you beloved remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who walk according to their ungodly lust these are sensual persons who cause divisions not having the spirit so we see again a carnal mindset is characterized by sensuality in other words following what their senses tell them if they see something they like to see they will watch that if they try something they taste it and taste good they will eat that it's not to be so with those that love

God we are to worshiping in the holiness of the spirit we see how circumcision being a symbol of the covenant of the people of God in the Old Testament with Abraham that was good for the covenant became a stumbling block in the new age when Christ came the circumcision that was given in Genesis 17 where we see Christ telling God telling Abraham these words Genesis chapter 17 verse 10 this is my covenant which you shall keep between me and you and your descendants after you every male child among you shall be circumcised and we see how circumcision in the flesh became a symbol a sign of being part of the people of

God for the Old Testament after Christ the circumcision was no more the symbol of being a child of God but a new heart and we see that Paul says that over and over to the point that in Romans chapter 2 verse 28 he uses these words for he is not a Jew who is one outwardly not it is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh but he is a Jew who is one inwardly and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit not in the letter whose praise is not from man but from God so we see this transition when a changed heart a new heart characterized by a life of holiness takes over as opposed to having the ethnicity or the culture or the external symbols in the flesh of being the

people of

God those things were symbols pointing to the time of Christ when those things would be superseded and that's what we see Paul here talking so in the spiritual mindset we find three basic things they worship God in spirit they rejoice in Christ and they don't have confidence in the flesh so those three things characterize the spiritual mind that we see in the children of God in the new covenant in verse four we see how Paul talks about the sins that he has left behind that he was trusting before knowing God to find merit before him and I'm going to read verse four though I also might have confidence in the flesh if anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh I more so circumcised the eighth day of the stock of

Israel of the tribe of Benjamin a Hebrew of Hebrews concerning the law a Pharisee concerning seal persecuting the church concerning the righteousness which is in the law blameless so Paul is talking about the things that he was holding to before knowing Christ to find merit in his presence and we see how he left all of that when Christ opened his eyes and he saw his scene to follow Christ and to act according to his will one of the things that we will see over and over will be how Paul in spite of that heritage brought the gospel to the Gentile people without asking them to submit to those rights but to repent rejoice and believe in

[ 15 : 56 ] Christ we see how over and over that came to the point that today even we has to left behind things that we were in the past or being raised in a church that has a good doctrine or having a family that was characterized for following the Lord and we find to find ourselves if we have that intimate real relationship with God through the new birth in order to make sure that we know Christ so in verse 8 and 9 we see how the Lord how Paul talks to them about what is now of for most value to him in verse 7 he says but what things were gained to me these

I have counted lost for Christ yet indeed I also count all things lost for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and counted as rubbish that I may gain Christ so there we see that none of those things that he had as important as the distinctive of being the people of God were of value anymore before Christ now we see how him coming to the knowledge of Christ him seeing the excellence and supremacy of Christ gave him the ability to estimate to appreciate the value of those things in the flesh that were not useful anymore and he counted not only as not useful but as lost to the point that he found them as rubbish and in some translations the meaning of that is pretty much cow manure like nothing lost he has then as rather a stumbling block to see

Christ and pursue him with all his might so we see there the object of the foremost value for the Christian is the excellence of Christ the excellence of Christ experiencing that reality in our life and in verse 9 he says and be found in him not having my own righteousness which is from the law but that which is through faith in Christ the righteousness which is from God by faith there we see once more only before the holy God that has no fellowship within only we cover by his justice and that happens when we repent and believe the perfect work of Christ is imputed in our favor the perfect work of

Christ his perfect life that he live in sinlessness is imputed to us and God sees us through Christ and that's how we are spotless blameless in him and until we don't understand that glorious reality we may be holding to some things or not trying to eat this or that type of food or not drinking this or that thing because it's sinful until we don't realize that there's nothing that we could do to have any merit before such a holy God and this truth of the righteousness of Christ is what sets apart true religion from a cult in every cult you think that is Christ plus something or you need to follow Christ but not eat pork follow Christ and you cannot drink wine follow Christ and you have keep the Sabbath follow Christ and you have to keep the feast in here we see only Christ and that is the reality that Paul is talking about in verse 9 and not only that we conforming the ultimate goal of the Christian now we conforming to his image for what we were created for in order to bring glory to him and in verse 10 we read that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death now that knowing is not an intellectual knowledge it's not knowing that Christ died for us no he's talking about experiencing as we walk every day a transformation conforming to scripture that example that we have of

[ 21 : 33 ] Christ in first Peter that he suffered for us that we may follow in his footsteps Paul is now longing craving to be conformed to his image and he's not gonna come without affliction the same thing that these mornings were preached they don't gonna come without affliction when he says about that I may know him and the fellowship of his sufferings being comfort to his death is

partaking of the suffering of Christ not for redemption of course not but as we deny ourselves and follow him we gonna find opposition rejection affliction but in that suffering Christ is molding us to his image is separating us more and more from the world and bringing us to him but it's not gonna happen without affliction and that's what we read in the book of

Acts where it says that it is necessary that we enter into the kingdom of heaven through trials and suffering I'm paraphrasing the verse I don't have it here in verse at the end of verse 10 he says being conformed to his death was that Paul will was willing to suffer and even die for the same reason that Christ died that was for the cause of the gospel and serving and serving others and serving others not for redemption of course but for sanctification having the same goal the gospel bringing the good news with his example and his voice wherever God wanted him to go and in that process was willing to die for the same cause that

Christ died and being conformed to his death right before that I jumped that word and the power of his resurrection is through the power of the spirit the power of the spirit that brought Christ to life when he was crucified and died is the same power that bring us from spiritual death to spiritual life so he's talking about the power of the Holy Spirit and verse 11 if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the death and in that verse that is a little bit tricky because maybe puzzling Paul is not doubting at any moment the certainty of his salvation he is talking that he did not know if he will get alive if Christ came and the resurrection from the death took place he didn't know if he will be alive at that moment and his glorification will be through transformation or he didn't know if he actually will die before

Christ came and will not get to be alive at the time of the resurrection of the dead but he will resurrect with everybody but he didn't know if he will be glorified through transformation before Christ when Christ came if he was alive or if he will just resurrect with the rest of the people because he was maybe executed for treason to the Roman Empire being imprisoned and then he will not get to be alive at the time of the resurrection so we saw those three things the carnal mind in contrast to the spiritual mind the object of the foremost value to the Christian and the ultimate goal to us being conformed to Christ to magnify his name and on the day that we come to partake of the elements to meditate in these things and just to keep in mind to things if we are seeing Christ as supremely valuable to us and to keep in mind the goal of our life that is to glorify him through we being conformed to his image he he he This from me Before we take the Lord's Supper, we'll sing hymn 252.

[ 27 : 09 ] The Nazar, we the wondrous cross, on which the Prince of Glory died.

Thy riches gained, I held the cross, and for the death of all my pride.

For it, Lord, that I should most, save in the death of Christ my God.

All the vain things that shall be known, Christ and with my spell to His blood.

Seek the miser, His hands, His feet. Sorrow and love, the wing of now.

[ 28 : 28 ] Give us love and sorrow, peace. For our voice, the most so rich of love.

Hear the hope of nature mine. After the present, why to small.

Love so amazing, so divine. He met my soul, my, my, my own.

Respondent to people who may be saved. If my soul exists. Whereas, let us know that when theionalOM expose is one of our sins inside. Those moments in mon conseils that are d Berlin,rokodal, the old government ofeld Unternehmen and Salyke, every natural family has fired, students already left a fence over on the made. After doing the sunk visit, theolved birman with divorci offices will continue to secure as generations as a Picasso sec Unbelievable!!