

The Excellence of the Knowledge of Jesus

TEXT: Philippians 3:8

INTRODUCTION:

- A. PAUL'S PAST LIFE WAS SUCCESSFUL(**Gal. 1:13-14; Phil. 3:4-6**).
- B. KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS WAS MORE HIGHLY PRIZED(**Phil. 3:7-8**).
- C. WHY IS A KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS SO GREAT? HOW DO WE GET IT?

I. THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS THAT IS EXCELLENT.

- A. IT MUST BE A PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE.
 - 1. Another person's acquaintance with Him is not sufficient.
 - 2. We learn about Jesus from others, especially the authors of the New Testament, but **we must come to know Him for ourselves**.
 - a. Paul spoke in the first person: "that I may know Him" (**Phil. 3:10**).
 - b. The "faith of our fathers" must become OUR faith, for **God does not have any "grandchildren."**
- B. IT MUST BE AN "INTELLIGENT" KNOWLEDGE.
 - 1. A knowledge of Jesus is based on a thoughtful consideration of evidence (**John 20:30-31**).
 - 2. Paul, with the rest of the apostles used what(**Acts 18:4; 2 Tim. 1:12**).
 - 3. His desire that we understand and explain(**1 Pet. 3:15**).
- C. IT MUST BE AN "AFFECTIONATE" KNOWLEDGE.
 - 1. To know Him, is to love Him.
 - 2. Indeed, I am accursed if I do not!(**1 Cor. 16:22**).
 - 3. Our love comes from knowledge(**1 John 4:8-10,19**).
- D. IT WILL BE A "SATISFYING" KNOWLEDGE.
 - 1. The Bread of Life Water of Life(**John 4:13; 6:35**).
 - 2. Figures showing that he satisfies most basic needs(**Matt. 9:36**).
- E. IT WILL BE AN "EXCITING" KNOWLEDGE.
 - 1. In Him "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"(**Col. 2:3**).
 - 3. "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"(**Col. 2:9; John 14:7**).
 - 4. We are "complete in Him"(**Col. 2:10**).
- F. IT WILL BE A "HAPPY" KNOWLEDGE.
 - 1. For in Him is the key to joy despite all our circumstances(**Phil. 4:4-5**).
 - 2. We may have tribulation, but in Christ we can have joy!(**John 16:33**).

II. GROWING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.

- A. THE WORD OF GOD IS ESSENTIAL.
 - 1. The only accurate source for learning about Jesus is the Word of God.
 - 2. Movies, books, magazines, etc., written by men can be entertaining and sometimes instructive; but such are often filled with erroneous concepts.
 - 3. Wrong to limit our search for knowledge about Jesus to the four gospels.
 - a. The Old Testament contains prophecies(**Isa. 9:6-7; Micah 5:2**).
 - b. **Acts** is the only history we have of the early years of His church.
 - c. The epistles reveal much about His present work as our King and High

Priest(**Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-16; 1 Pet. 3:22; Rev. 1:5-6**).

4. If you wish to truly learn of Jesus, you must study the Bible!

B. OBEDIENCE IS ESSENTIAL.

1. "True knowledge" of Jesus comes only as we obey Him(**1 John 2:1-6**).

2. And as we develop the character He displayed, which is the goal of all His commandments(**2 Pet. 1:5-8**).

a. Note that it is only when these Christ-like qualities are "yours and abound" can it be said that we are "neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ"(**vs. 8**).

b. This is what it really means to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."(**2 Pet. 3:18**).

CONCLUSION:

A. HAVE YOU COME TO KNOW THE EXCELLENCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS?

B. JESUS INVITES ALL TO KNOW HIM(**Matt. 11:28-30**).