

A Christian's Ultimate Desire

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death”, Philippians 3:10.

1. That I may know him. There are many who claim to be ‘Christians’ in this world based on,
 - a. ‘I have heard of Him from friends’.
 - b. ‘I go to church on Sundays’.

The above two are purely speculations that you hope you will spend eternity in a place called Heaven, whilst putting in as little as possible on earth.

Paul wanted to have a richer knowledge, gained by the experience of walking a life that emulated his Lord.

The experience here is brought about by Faith – Forsaking All I’ll Take Him – for, unless we get our knowledge of Jesus Christ through a faith in Him. All other earthly experiences will remain valueless in the depths of despair, and are not valid requirements, and therefore remain valueless as a requirement to enter the Kingdom of God.

Thus Paul is not expressing “That I may know him” as a sinner seeking to repent. Paul knows that his sins have been forgiven. Paul has been ship wrecked, stoned, whipped, and left for dead. Therefore Paul’s expression “That I may know him” is not to ‘know – have a knowledge of’ but to have the strength of the Lord that comes through an intimate relationship.

Every one of us can say that we know many people, mainly as an acquaintance which may – or may not – develop into a friendship. When we marry, we start a relationship with our wife/husband and children, and continue to build that relationship on a day to day basis.

A relationship then with the Lord is built on a day to day relationship, not

- a. ‘I have heard of Him from friends’.
- b. ‘I go to church on Sundays’.

2. And the power of his resurrection. When God raised our Lord from the dead, He proved that He was able through the gift of His Son, to raise us from a spiritual death.

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”, Hebrews 11:6.

Throughout our Lord's time of this earth, he never ceased to seek the Will of Him that sent Him.

Thus Jesus never thought that a miracle healing might not work, for He knew that it was the Father's desire that it should happen to glorify the Father's Name.

When then disciples were in the boat on a stormy night, Jesus knew that they were – to fulfill His Father's Will – to get to the other side, not drown in the middle of the sea.

When the Lord asked "Where is your faith?", it was more of a question of "You've been with me all this time, and your faith has not grasped the fact that you have the authority?"

Their reaction was no more than "I have heard of You from friends", or "I go to church on Sundays to meet up with you". However, they still had to learn to have an intimate relationship with the Lord.

If you do not have an intimate relationship with Jesus – your Spiritual Brother – how can you claim the Father as your 'Spiritual Father', through whom, and by whom, YOU CAN DO ALL THINGS? Philippians 4:13.

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Paul, writing to Timothy, a person he regarded as a spiritual son, said, "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness", 1 Timothy 6:11.

Although the power of God is freely available, it is only available to the Christian who freely surrenders his life to permit the Son, Jesus Christ, to dwell in him, Ephesians 1:19–20.

3. And the fellowship of his sufferings. This declares an interesting partnership. We suffer as we comprehend what Jesus did for us, especially regarding the last forty-eight hours as a man being obedient to His Heavenly Father. Likewise He suffers as we are abused and hurt, for it is the Lord who is being attacked – NOT OURSELVES.

When we read John 17 His Prayer then says a lot about our fellowship with Him and sufferings,

- a. for Himself, our Lord uses just five verses – 1–5,
- b. for His Disciples He uses fourteen verses, 6–19,
- c. for His Church He uses seven verses, 20–26.

Therefore, in the courts of heaven, it was an established fact that Christians would suffer.

The main reason for these sufferings would come about by our use

of His Name. They will come about through,

- a. Governments,
- b. Racially,
- c. Ethnicity,
- d. Sects,
- e. Between family members,
- f. Denominational churches,
- g. Spiritually.

As we saw in 2 above, the disciples suffered when crossing the sea to the other side. It was a suffering of terror. Yet by that suffering, they grew in the Lord.

4. Being made conformable unto his death. As our Lord died upon the Cross and was raised the third day, the Christian must also die to self that he can stand as a witness of a new life in his life.

This not a case of name tag religion. It is not a case of being 'attached' because you signed a piece of paper. It is not a case of check every step forward three times, and if you are still not certain about the step, go back three steps and pray again.

You do not get into Heaven and pick up a crown of life with the words "I'm here!" because you kept a tight hold on the one spark of decency you could see in YOUR life.

You get into Heaven because you lived a life for God. Jesus ministered for three and a half year before He was put to death.

YOU, dear Christian have to die first that you are a fit person to do the work that our Lord is orchestrating FROM His Heavenly throne, and the only way He could make you a fit person was to die for you.