

# OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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**SERMON TITLE** The Deeper Life, part 2

**SERIES**

**DATE** 11/12/2023

**KEY SCRIPTURE** Philippians 3:4-14

**SYNOPSIS** How do we move into the deeper life with Christ?

**HIGHLIGHTS**



## ☞ The Deeper Life

### Part 2 - Knowing Christ

I want to start this morning with the same question I started with last week. How many of you want a deeper walk with God? We started with defining what the Deeper Life is like. Compliant, Christ-centered, Consistent, and Constant were the characteristics we talked about. Once you understand the qualities of the Deeper Life, do you still want it? And, if you still want it, how do you live it? How do you go deeper? Let's look at how Paul became these things.

#### ☞ Philippians 3:4-14

If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. 7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, **I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus** my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, **that I may gain Christ** 9 and **be found in him**, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. 10 **I want to know Christ** and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I **press on to take hold of** that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: **Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead**, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.


☞ Paul makes a critical distinction in these opening verses. **We need more than to know about God - we need to know Him.** Paul says that he knows all about God. He was a Jew - one of God's chosen, one of the keepers of the true knowledge of God. He was of the tribe of Benjamin - his family had preserved its line; he came from the tribe that gave the first king to Israel; the tribe that never wavered in its support of David. He was a Hebrew - not only Jewish - his family had preserved its heritage. He spoke the Hebrew language and kept its customs. He was a Jew by birth, a Hebrew by education, and a Pharisee by choice - of the strictest of Jewish sects in knowing and obeying the law of Moses.

From his earliest moments to his lifelong training, he knew about God. But he says all this stuff - all he knew - was just loss "compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus." This idea of knowing Christ more and more is of the utmost importance. It far exceeds everything else in life. V. 10 says, "I want to know Christ."


*--David Guzik... To know Jesus is not the same as knowing His historical life; it is not the same as knowing correct doctrines; it is not the same as knowing His moral example, and it is not the same as knowing His great work on our behalf.*



- *We can say that we know someone because we recognize him: because we can distinguish what is different about him compared to other people.*
- *We can say that we know someone because we are acquainted with what he does; we know the baker because we get our bread from him.*
- *We can say that we know someone because we actually converse with him; we are on speaking terms with that person.*
- *We can say that we know someone because we spend time in his house and with his family.*
- *Yet beyond all this, there is a way of knowing Jesus Christ that includes all of these yet goes beyond them.*


To know Christ is *ginosko* in the Greek. It means to know, but also includes a deep understanding of the object; it includes the idea of knowing by feel. This same word is used of physical relations between a husband and wife. It's far more than a mental knowledge. It's a true  understanding and an **intimate, experiential knowledge of the Lord. This is the essence of the Deeper Life.** So, how do you get there?


The first step is to realize and acknowledge that you're not there yet.

 **Admit Your Deficiencies.** v. 12... "Not that I have already obtained all this." Paul was light-years ahead of all of us in his walk with the Lord, yet he acknowledged that he had not arrived. **There's still more. You have not arrived!**

*When Spain led the world (in the 15th century), her coins reflected her national arrogance and were inscribed *Ne Plus Ultra* which meant "Nothing Further" — meaning that Spain was the ultimate in all the world. After the discovery of the New World, she realized that she was not the end of the world, so Spain changed the inscription on her coinage to *Plus Ultra* meaning "More Beyond." In the same pattern, some Christian lives say, "Nothing Further" and others say "More Beyond."*


To get to the More Beyond, you're going to have to give some things up. V. 13 "Forget what is behind," both good and bad. Do you know what you have to give up? Garbage. The word rubbish is very strong language – it means, not just garbage, but dung. Not only worthless, but actually offensive.

 **Abandon Your Dung.** How willing are you to give up your garbage in order to know the Lord more? ...Don't be too hasty here... We often claim trash as treasure. Paul talks about his garbage and it was actually some pretty impressive stuff – his heritage, his training, his studies, his lifestyle. But, when he thinks about knowing Jesus more, those things, in comparison are poop!

*It wasn't so much that those things were worthless in themselves, but compared to the greatness  of the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, they really were nothing. **What really matters is your personal relationship with Jesus.***




So often we give up what is most important for that which will never last. When our schedules get too hectic or our lives too demanding - what do we cut out first? Not the sports, not the recreation, not the TV - it's our Church activities, our service for Christ, and our quiet time that suffers.

If you want a deeper relationship with Christ you need to determine what is really important and begin to live like it's important. Lip service won't do. Paul says that he has suffered the loss of all  things for Christ - but man, was it worth it. **You will never find true contentment in your rubbish, but only in a relationship, a deeper walk with Christ.** *Paul was focused on one thing and would not let those things which are behind distract him from it. He pressed on for the prize.*

### **Adjust Your Direction**

v. 13 Straining toward what is ahead = to stretch towards; to reach out; reaching forward

v. 14 Press on = run after; pursue

Too often, believers like to just stroll along casually in their walk with the Lord. Too often, we're distracted by all the trappings of the world. They're called "trappings" for a reason. Ultimately, the things of this world are snares which will rob you of your true freedom in Christ. Some listening today have been sort of walking along the shore of faith. You've barely gotten your feet wet. Others have only been touching the edge of the waters, tip-toeing in the shallow water. Others have experienced some depths, but when the going got tough you moved back to the  shallows, going away from the deep. But God is still calling you deeper. **Turn around; change course; go deeper. It's worth it!**

*Paul says in verse 12 that Jesus Christ had laid hold of him. This is an important idea; yet sometimes Christians react to that idea by being passive. They suppose, "Jesus got a hold of me; so that is it now. I am a Christian and I am going to heaven." Paul showed a different attitude; he was determined to **lay hold** of (seize, take possession of) that for which Jesus had **laid hold** of him. So, one should ask, "Why did Jesus lay hold of Paul?"*

- Jesus **laid hold** of Paul to make him a new man (Romans 6:4) — so Paul would **lay hold** of that and wanted to see the converting work of Jesus completely carried out in himself.

*"You make me wanna be a better man." –Jack Nicholson, As Good As It Gets*

- Jesus **laid hold** of Paul to conform him into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29) — so Paul would **lay hold** of that and wanted to see the nature of Jesus within himself.

Ephesians 4:13... attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

- Jesus **laid hold** of Paul to make him an instrument in the conversion of others (Acts 9:15) — so Paul would **lay hold** of the work of bringing others to Jesus.

2 Peter 3:9... God wants no one to perish, but to come to repentance. This becomes our desire as well.

- Jesus **laid hold** of Paul to bring him into suffering (Acts 9:16) — so Paul would **lay hold** of even that work of God in his life, wanting to know Jesus in the fellowship of His sufferings.



In Acts 5:41, the disciples rejoiced to be counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name of Christ. The Deeper Life will include some difficulties, including personal sacrifice, persecution and problems aplenty. This is a tough one, but if you can keep eternity in mind, it is worth it. When persecuted, the disciples were able to see beyond the moment and even rejoiced in their sufferings. And, here, Paul has eternity in mind as well...

- Jesus **laid hold** of Paul that so that the Apostle might attain to the resurrection from the dead (Philippians 3:11) — so Paul would **lay hold** of that heavenly hope.

There is more than this life here on earth. There is eternity ahead and it will be glorious; more than you can fully comprehend. Ultimately, the Deeper Life leads to eternity with the Lord. You can begin today on this journey of the Deeper Life, knowing that it is totally worth it.

**Admit Your Deficiencies.** You have not arrived yet. There's still more in your walk with the Lord.

**Abandon Your Dung.** So many things that we value and prioritize are nothing more than junk in comparison to the Lord. GROJ sale – Get Rid Of Junk

**Adjust Your Direction.** Stop tip-toeing in the shallows of Christianity. Change course. Wade out a little bit deeper. Keep going. It's worth it!

*The Cathedrals...*

*Step into the water, wade out a little bit deeper.*

*Wet your feet in the water of his love.*

*Ohh Step into the water (children), wade out a little bit deeper,*

*Come join angels singin' praises to the Lamb of God.*

*There is victory for the Christian who walks the narrow way.*

*There has been a prize appointed for the soul who does not stray.*

*Oh I want to live for Jesus, be all that I should be.*

*So that I can rest with him forever, live eternally.*

**🔊 Play song after dismissal**