

Knowing Christ Is Something Deep

Foundational Understandings in Philippians 3:4b-14

We want to understand these truths and how they relate to each other:

Knowing Christ

v8—I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ.

v10—I want to know Christ.

- How could Paul say this? He had already known Christ for more than 25 years.
- Knowing Christ is something deep—and grows increasingly deeper.
- Knowing Christ became Paul’s life mission—a mission of “being” not of “doing.”
- Knowing Christ is a process. It transforms the person. It happens in discipleship.

Righteousness

v9—And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own.

- Righteousness is part of the package that comes as a result of knowing Christ.
- Other parts of the package: forgiveness, cleansing, healing, peace, maturity, etc.
- All of these, and much more, come to the one who knows Christ.
- Knowing Christ comes through faith; hence righteousness comes through faith.

Faith

v9—It [righteousness] comes through faith in Christ.

- Faith is not just intellectually agreeing with a concept.
- Biblical faith is “to rely upon” Christ—in everything.
- I might want to say, “I trust Christ for salvation” but not in all the other things.
- This is not what the New Testament is offering. Faith is expressed by obedience.

Discipleship

permeates the passage—like a building’s foundations are unseen but assumed

v7—Whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ.

v10—I want to know Christ...power of his resurrection...sharing of his sufferings.

- Jesus came into a world that rejected him. He calls us to follow him there.

v11—If somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. (Formation)

v14—I press toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ.

- Righteousness is not just a theological concept
 - It is a lifestyle
 - Formed in discipleship to Jesus

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote *Cost of Discipleship* in 1937

- Nazi power was growing in momentum in his native Germany
- The German title of the book is *Nachfolge*—“Discipleship”
- Bonhoeffer was not writing about a special kind of discipleship that is costly. He was writing about the only discipleship Jesus ever taught.

- The first chapter is titled "Cheap Grace." Here are a few quotations:

1 - **Cheap grace => the deadly enemy of the Church.**

We are fighting today for costly grace.

2 - **Grace is *costly* because it calls us to follow.**

It is *grace* because it calls us to follow *Jesus*.

3 - **Cheap grace => grace as a doctrine.**

Intellectual assent to a concept is seen as being sufficient to address sin.

4 - **Grace is *costly* because it costs us our life.**

It is *grace* because it gives us the only true life.

5 - **Cheap grace => justifies sin without changing the sinner.** Grace does everything, so the Christian lives like the world does.

6 - **Cheap grace => forgiveness of sin that does not free us from the experience of sin.** It is grace we bestow on ourselves.

7 - **Cheap grace => grace without discipleship.** We must understand the relationship between grace and discipleship. **The most urgent issue facing our church**=>How to live as Jesus' disciples in today's world