



GracePoint: A Weekly Sermon Discussion

16 – Knowing and Being

10/22 @6:30
Grace Group at
3513 Northpointe Dr

10/24 @6:00
Grace Group at
2070 Corley Dr

10/24 @6:30
Grace Group at
1710 Mariposa Dr

ICE BREAKER: Do you know any fun and interesting facts? (About anything!)

REVIEW: Was there anything covered or said on Sunday that you had any questions or comments about?

READ: Philippians 3:1-11

While we have spent the last three weeks looking in detail at this section of Scripture, in reality this is one thought that Paul is trying to get across, and it is one of the most important thoughts that we could ever wrestle with. It is, in effect, Paul's argument against legalism and self-righteousness, and an attempt to get the Philippian church (and by extension, us!) to trust in Jesus, his goodness, righteousness and salvation. As Gordon Fee says: "*One should return to the text and read it again and again. Here is quintessential Paul, and a quintessential expression of the New Testament view of Christian life. Such life means to be finished with one's religious past as having value before God or as a means of a right relationship with God; it means to wholly trust in Christ as God's means to righteousness. But such "righteousness" has as its ultimate aim "the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus our Lord"... so that all of Christian life is stamped with the divine imprint of the cross as we live out the gospel in the present age, while we await the hope of the resurrection.*" To attempt to boil this down as much as I can: all of Christian life can be boiled down to knowing Christ, and being like him!

We start with knowing Christ. Verse ten tells us that to know him is to know him in the power of the resurrection. I would like to look at this in two parts: knowing *Christ* and knowing his *resurrection*. We need to be careful because Paul warns us in 2 Corinthians 11:4 that there will be some who come preaching a "different Jesus". Thus christian life is not just following "a" Jesus, but rather it is following the second person of the Trinity who is shown and taught to us throughout all of the Holy Scriptures, in particular in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). There is a temptation to make a Jesus in our own image, a tame savior, one who is only "loving and good" while conveniently leaving out that he is also holy and righteous. One who told us to turn the other cheek while leaving out that he also is coming to wage war and will rule with a rod of iron and will tread out the winepress of the wrath of God Almighty. Knowing Jesus means that we have to know the Jesus who really was, is and will be. Knowing Jesus means that we must be sure that we are not bringing our own thoughts and trying to make a Savior-God in our own image (which is idolatry), but rather we look to the far surpassing worth of truly knowing who he is and what he has done.

DISCUSS: *Why* are we so willing to trust "A" Jesus rather than in Jesus Christ? What steps must we take to guard these thoughts?

But now, for the second week in a row, we see that for Paul the center of knowing Jesus is knowing him in the resurrection. Most of us are (sadly) desensitized to the resurrection, because we have heard about it our whole lives. We celebrate it yearly at Easter, it is a part of who we are. But let's stop for a second and just say: Jesus was dead. Like, dead dead. He bled out -- they stabbed him and blood and water flowed. He was buried. But this was not hasty. His body was prepared, he was lying in grave clothes, tightly and securely fastened and prepared with fragrances (because dead bodies stink, and Jesus was dead!). He was placed in a grave, and a heavy stone was rolled over that grave. So he was dead, his dead body was prepared for burial, and he was buried. But everything here is not necessarily unique to Jesus. Jesus was dead -- Just like every other person who has ever, and will ever live. But with Jesus something different happens. Everyone else who has ever died has stayed that way, not Jesus. Jesus was so powerful (because he is God) that the grave could not hold him. I couldn't say it any better than my favorite easter song: "*Up from the grave he arose, with a mighty triumph over his foes! He arose a victor from that dark domain and his lives forever with his saints to reign! He arose, He arose, Hallelujah Christ arose!*" And Paul's all important part here is that to know Christ, and to know him in the power of his resurrection, means that we will be like him and we too will "attain the resurrection from the dead." We know Christ and then we get to be like Christ, this is the promise of eternal life!

DISCUSS: Why is the resurrection so important to our confidence? How can we live in light of the resurrection?