

To Know Him

by H.J. Vine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ and growing in the knowledge of Him for spiritual prosperity and a deeper relationship with God.

Scripture: Jeremiah 9:23, Romans 5:9, Ephesians 4:11, Philippians 3:10, 2 Peter 1:2, 1 John 2:1, 1 John 3:2

Topics: "Knowing Christ", "Intimate Relationship"

Description

H.J. Vine emphasizes the importance for believers to not only know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior but to continually seek to deepen their knowledge of Him. The Apostle Paul's pursuit of knowing Christ is highlighted as he considered all worldly achievements as loss compared to the excellency of knowing Jesus. The gifts given by the ascended Christ are intended to lead believers to a deeper knowledge of Him, not just to urge knowledge as a necessity. The sermon also delves into the multifaceted role of Jesus as our Saviour, Advocate, and High Priest, emphasizing the intimate relationship believers have with Him and the importance of growing in this knowledge.

Transcript

Answer to Correspondence--Why is it so often urged upon believers that they should know the Lord? Do not all true believers know Him?

All true believers know our Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour most surely; but it is, nevertheless, of the utmost importance that we should all go on to know Him better. Our spiritual prosperity will be ensured thereby. Indeed, we are exhorted, as those who are beloved of God, to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." It is as we thus increase in the knowledge of Him, that grace and peace are multiplied to us (2 Peter 1:2). Grace has justified and saved us; peace is ours; but an abundant multiplication of grace and peace is open to us in the knowledge of Him.

The Apostle Paul was a devoted servant of our Lord Jesus Christ. He had known Him as his Lord and Saviour for many years when he wrote to the believers at Philippi. Of his own present purpose he says to them (chap. 3:10), "That I may know Him." Before he trusted Christ there were many things connected with him--as Saul the scholar, Saul of Tarsus, Saul the Pharisee--of which most men would boast; things which bring fame to men. He counted them all loss on account of Christ. "Yea, doubtless," he says, "I count all things but loss for THE EXCELLENCY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST JESUS MY LORD" (v. 8). Having believed on Him, Christ Jesus became the governing Object of his heart and mind. He knew

Him in whom he had believed, and still he diligently pursued the precious knowledge of Him, with which there was no knowledge to compare. Choosing one of the choicest of expressions, he calls it, "the excellency of the knowledge."

A friend says to you, "Do you know So-and-so?" "Yes," you reply; "but only slightly." "Ah" says your friend, "If you knew him intimately, you would say there is none to compare with him." Much more is this true as to our Lord Jesus Christ; infinitely more so. As we increase in the excellency of the knowledge of Himself (not simply to know about Him, but to know Him), we shall sing:

"Fairer than all the earth-born race,

Perfect in comeliness Thou art."

Why the Ascended Christ Gave the Gifts

Having triumphed over Satan, our Lord Jesus Christ went up on high, and gave gifts to men; that, being brought to God, they might come to the knowledge of Himself, the Son of God. He that ascended first descended into the lower parts of the earth. He is the same who has ascended up above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.

The true exercise of gift, therefore, is to lead saints on to know Him. But the mere urging of this upon souls is not what is meant. It is one thing to press that this is necessary; it is another thing to really minister Christ to souls. For this we must grow ourselves. As He is precious and excellent to our own hearts, others will be benefited by the overflow.

Christ gave apostles and prophets for the foundations of the faith (Eph. 2:20). He also gave the evangelist, and the double gift of shepherd and teacher, that the work of the ministry might be carried on (Eph. 4:11-12); until the end in view is reached: "until we all arrive at the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God." Then is seen the full-grown man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ. No organization of men can produce this. No special school of teaching can bring it about. As long as we are spiritual babes, we are liable to be affected by systematized error, whether calling itself "new light," or "advanced teaching"; but as we hold the truth in love, we shall grow up to Him in all things, who is the Head, the Christ, and holding in faith and affection every member of His body, as dear to Him, we shall seek in every right way the benefit of all.

Our Saviour

As we have said, each one begins with the knowledge of Christ as a personal Saviour. And it is a most blessed moment, when we first come to know Him thus. This secures all else. Without this, eternal woe is sure. Salvation is in Him alone. Through faith in Him, forgiveness, justification, and a heavenly inheritance are ours. We shall not come into judgment, for He has borne the judgment which we deserved on account of our sins. He came not to judge, but to save. He has put away sin by His sacrifice. He died to save us; and now, raised from among the dead, He is in the glory of God. The darkness of the cross has passed away for ever; and He is in the unclouded sunshine of God's favour. He is our righteousness. His place is ours. By grace we are saved.

We have been reconciled to God by His death; and He now lives to save us daily, from all that would hinder our joy in the blessed God, who provided such a Saviour.

And more. He is coming for us as Saviour from Heaven. We look for Him thus. In the twinkling of an eye; by the same great power which he has to subdue all things He will change our bodies of humiliation, and transform them, so that they shall be like His own body of glory. Our blessed Lord will do this. He will do it too, before "the wrath to come" sweeps over this world. Before the hour strikes for that awful time He will take us hence. He is our Deliverer from the coming wrath. Being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved by Him from wrath (Rom. 5:9).

We praise the grace which "has saved us"; we trust the living One who "is able to save us"; we look for Him who will save us. But whether past, present, or future, all our "salvation is in Christ Jesus."

"Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him,

Who can tell how much we owe Him?"

Our Advocate

Having received Christ, the Spirit of God's Son is given to us, and the cry "Abba, Father," rises to God from our hearts. "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God." This perfect love and this unchanging relationship are ours now to rejoice in. "Behold, now are we the children of God" (1 John 3:2).

We have been taken out of the darkness of this world. We have been brought to God's marvellous light. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin; and we can now walk happily in the light as God is in the light. But if we presumptuously say we are without sin, that would only prove the truth is not in us; for that very truth would give us to recognize and hate the sin that is there; and enable us to walk in self-judgment. The precious truth is made known to us in order that we may not sin, and to maintain us walking in the enjoyment of the love of the Father, and in the nearness which belongs to the blessed relationship which is ours; a relationship, thank God, which can never be broken.

We may, however, lose the joy of it all through sin. It is just here that our Advocate prevails on our behalf. The advocacy of our Lord Jesus Christ with the Father is provided for this very thing. "If any one sin we have an Advocate ["Patron," or "Comforter," as in John 14:16, etc.) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). The tender sensibilities which are ours as the children of God, in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, give us a painful sense of the demerit of sin, and causes us to seek the Father's presence in confession. How comforting to know at such a distressful time that the righteous One, our Saviour, is our Advocate with the Father.

We confess; the Father forgives. He is faithful and righteous in so doing. Our present Advocate is also the One who is the propitiation for our sins. So, not only does the Father restore us to the fullness of joy before Him, which He would always have to be our portion; but He undertakes, as we thus come to Him, to "cleanse us from all [or every] unrighteousness."

The grace and love and tenderness belonging to the family of the Father; the communion and joy of that relationship, with its deep divine intimacy, might easily be spoiled for us as we pass through a cold, quarrelling, sinful world like this, had we not a prevailing Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. It is because of Him that we are kept in any true sense of the Father's love at all. Blessed be His holy name for ever.

Our High Priest

We have spoken of Him as our Saviour in glory; as our Advocate with the Father; He is also our High Priest before God. Time and space would fail us now to speak of Him as our Lord, our Head, our Shepherd. To tell of His glory as the Son of David, the Son of Man, the Son of God, is beyond our present purpose. So great is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word, the Creator Son, over all God blessed for ever, the One who loves us and came near to us to bless us, that the Father alone can fully comprehend the infinite perfection of our adorable Saviour. The Holy Spirit would teach the delivered saint much--yea, very much--concerning His glory; but in the impenetrable depths of His divine being, "No man knows the Son but the Father." We rejoice that this is so; our Saviour is so great.

But His greatness is not such that it puts Him away far beyond us altogether. Nay, it does but enhance the love which brought him near to us in our need. When sinful and guilty He became our Saviour; and when erring as the children of God, our Advocate; when weak and weary through infirmity, our High Priest. All this endears Him to the believing heart. We have not an High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our infirmities, for when He was a man upon earth He was in like manner tempted in all things--sin apart; and now, having gone into heaven, He is still a Man; Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever, able to help those who are tempted.

"With joy we meditate the grace

Of our High Priest above;

His heart is filled with tenderness,

His very name is Love."

Oh, that we may indeed be led on to know Him better, to grow in the knowledge of Himself! Then our happy hearts shall be kept in the freshness of first love. How He values this we see in His tender pleadings through Jeremiah, with His people of old. Some may call it sentiment. Well, it is truly divine sentiment. They may have forgotten, but He says, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after ME" (Jer. 2:2). Then, sorrowfully, it is said, "It is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God" (v. 19). To the highly favoured assembly at Ephesus it is said, "Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4).

Where love is active, the heart grows in appreciation of its object. May this be so with us, through God's rich grace. "'Tis eternal life to know Him."

"Thus says the Lord: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glories glory in this, that he understandeth and knows me" (Jer. 9:23-24).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/hj-vine/to-know-him/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net