

# The Excellency of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ

by Ian Paisley

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*The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is the fullness of God in a body, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the transforming effects it has on the lives of those who are partakers of its truth.*

**Duration:** 18:49

**Scripture:** Philippians 3:8

**Topics:** "The Cross", "Knowing Christ"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of glorying only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and the knowledge of Christ Jesus, highlighting that true excellence lies in knowing Him. It stresses that the world may take away material things, but the knowledge of Christ remains eternal and transformative, reversing the effects of sin. The sermon encourages believers to focus on the glory of God found in Jesus Christ and the profound impact of His knowledge on their lives.

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## Transcript

Oh, here is something to glory in. God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. God forbid that I should glory, save in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.

God forbid the free Presbyterian church should ever glory in anything else. You can take your pine building, you can take your congregation, you can take everything that would attract the natural man to the movement, forget about it. There's only one thing that counts, the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

The world can take the building from you. The world can take the congregation from you. The world can take your standing.

And if you're looking for accreditation, thank God some of us never had any, so we don't need to lose it. But let me say this to you, the world can't take from you the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord. I may be in a prison cell.

I may not be able to read because of the darkness. There may be a campaign, a vilification against me outside that I cannot even answer. It doesn't matter.

The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, at last the world, at last all created things, see those stars you'll see at night, they'll all go out someday. See this blazing sun that warms us, God will snuff it out someday. See the moon that shines its glimmering light, and the night sees it and shows us the way to go.

One day it'll bleat to death into heaven. See all created things, they're stamped with temporality. The things that are seen are temporal.

Let me show you this afternoon something that's eternal. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord. For in him dwelleth all the fullness in the Godhead bodily.

The fullness of God, it's in the body of Christ. No wonder that body had to be virgin-born. No wonder that body had to be produced differently.

From anybody else's body. And let me take another step that needs to be taken. No wonder the blood of that body is different from anybody else's blood.

I'm sick, sore, and tired of so-called medical man postulating on how the blood of Jesus was produced. Shut up, you ignoramus. You'll never know that.

Your knowledge is limited. You can't explain the virgin birth, and you'll never explain the virgin blood. But I've wasted it, and it's made me whiter than the snow.

It's given me a virgin pardon that'll take me to heaven. Thomas Boston was right. The old preachers were right.

He says Scotland is filled with learned ignorance. Ignorance. That's a good name for apostates.

Learned ignorance. It's all there. They don't know.

The fullness of God in a body. You can't explain that, but it's true. You want to look at the glory of God.

Where will I find the glory of God? In some great cathedral? Will I go to Canterbury and see that old apostate that Brother Green has been talking about? You'll not see the glory of God in him. You'll see the shame of apostasy in him. That's what you'll see in him.

But you turn over to 1 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 6, and I'll show you where you can see the glory of Christ. The light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them. Verse 6, the glory of God in, where will I find it? Show me thy glory.

Show me the glory of God, said Moses. I'll show you it. In the face of Jesus Christ.

In the face of Jesus Christ. That's where you'll find the glory of God. Do you want to find the express image of God? You'll find it in the person of Christ.

You needn't look at these scriptures. I'll give them Hebrews 2, 3. Do you want to find the mind of God? You'll find it in the wisdom of God. You'll find it in the mind of Christ, Philipians 2, 11.

Do you want to find the word of God? You'll find it in the mouth of Christ, Revelation 1, 16. Do you want to find the fire of God? You'll find it in the eyes of Christ, Revelation 1, 14. Do you want to find the purity of God? You'll find it in the head of Christ, Revelation 1, 14.

Do you want to find the judgment of Christ? You'll find it on the judgment of God. You'll find it under the feet of Christ, Revelation 1, 15. Do you want to find where the ministers of God are? They're in the hands of Christ.

I'm glad I'm not in the hands of the Presbyterian. I'm glad I'm not in the hands of the fundamentalist. Either Baptists, Presbyterians, or Methodists.

I'm glad I'm in the hands of Christ. That's where you are, my brother. You'll be all right.

God has got his hand on you. He'll keep you. It doesn't matter what the elders say about you, or the committee man, or all the wee tattling tongues of the womanfolk.

God bless them. Doesn't matter. I want to tell you you're in the hands of God.

All is well. That's where the ministers are. Do you want to see the majestic brightness of God? Look at the countenance of Christ, Revelation 1, 16.

Do you want to see the grace of God? Look at the advent of Christ. Do you want to see the love of God? Look at the heart of Christ, John 59 and John 1 and 17 for the advent of Christ. See all the excellencies of the Godhead are in the Lord Jesus.

Listen to it. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. All those excellencies of his Godhead.

But I want to tell you something, and this is the mystery. There's not only the supreme excellency of perfect God. But there's a supreme excellencies of perfect man in the Lord Jesus.

Do you want to see all the human excellencies? Do you want to see the brightness of a perfect man? A sinless man. An unfeeling man. An impeccable man.

And have a look at Jesus. You have that over in John 17, I've already mentioned. This is, look at it, eternal life.

This knowledge brings eternal life. This knowledge is a shaft of the eternal vitality of God himself. It is a spark from the very divine nature of God.

And it enters into a sinner's heart. And you know what it does? It reverses in a split second all the terrible results of man's fall in the garden of Eden. It reverses it.

It puts the whole machinery of sin into total and absolute reverse. I don't understand. I'm a fallen man.

I have all the characteristics, the base, obnoxious characteristics of a totally depraved sinner. And then there comes into my life the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. And that divine shaft, that spark of God's nature, that wonderful illumination of God reverses in a split second the centuries of sin piled up in Adam's transgression of the earth.

And all the vileness of the transgressions of all my ancestors and ancestors. All of it. And it's all reversed.

And I, a child of hell, in a split second of time become a child of God. You can't explain that. One day, Hill Street Baptist Church, on the 29th day of May 1926, God said, We'll see him pay his way and let him go.

And the boy was seen and he was seen forever. And he'll be in heaven. And no matter all the old apostates stand up and say, You'll never make it.

I'm making it all right. I shall be there. And when I get there, Martin Luther and me are going to write up on the walls, No pope here, for there will be no popes in heaven.

Thank God for that. I don't have any righteousness. My righteousnesses are as filthy rats.

I don't have any righteousness. The knowledge that Christ is my substitute, my surety and my satisfaction for my sin is excellent knowledge indeed. Because Christ has taken my sin and paid to the uttermost farthing my guilty debt.

And I want to tell you today, the law that called for my condemnation, that same law now is calling for my justification. It screamed, send them to hell and now it shouts, send them to heaven. What happened? The excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.

The very laws of God that condemn those gods, those very laws now justify me. I remember being in a prayer meeting with Mr. Nicholson one night of prayer. If you were ever in a prayer meeting like that, well, you would laugh and you would cry.

And you'd go out and say, that's an experience. And there was a fellow got up to pray and he started to tell God all his past sins that he had committed before God saved him. And I opened my eyes and Mr. Nicholson's face was getting like a beetroot.

And he was getting more and more angry. And as a man went on reliving his dirty old life as a child of the devil, Nicholson shouted at him as only Nicholson could shout. He said, shut up, you fool.

God has forgotten them. And he doesn't know what you're blathering about. Well, that brought him to a standstill.

I'll tell you, he was right. Immediately you confess a sin that God has forgiven. You make God a liar.

That's the first thing you do. You give ground to the devil. And before you know, the songs have stopped in your heart.

I don't confess past sins that I've already confessed. For I believe God has forgiven. And God says, who is he that condemned? It is Christ that died.

God says, there is therefore now no just. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, is seen in this justifying operation on the sinner's standing.

My state can change, but my standing can never change. I have a standing with God that cannot be changed. I'm an heir of heaven.

My name's engraved in the palms of Jesus. Nobody else take those engravings off. They're engraved forever.

My name from the palms of his hand, eternity will not erase. Impressed in his heart, it remains in marks of untellable grace. Yes, I to the end shall endure, as sure as the earnest is given.

More happy, but not more secure, when glorified with him in heaven. That's the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord. And lastly, will you be saying amen to this? You know, I made a moving sermon today.

A lot of fellas have moved out. Well, I understand. I wouldn't go across the road to hear myself preach, but I'm glad some people come to hear me preach.

The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, is manifested in its transforming effects on the lives of those who are partakers of its truth. One final verse. Mark it in your Bible and go home and look at it and pray it into your soul.

It's the third chapter of second Corinthians. It's the verse 18. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

Oh, this knowledge changes me from glory to glory. This knowledge makes the impure, pure, the unclean, clean, the ungodly, godly, the carnal, spiritual, the worldly, other worldly, the vile, virtuous. If that's what this free Presbyterian church is about, God will bless it.

But once we deteriorate into squabbles about church building, looking for nice, easy, comfortable living, once we deteriorate into the place when we're more interested in the party than in the person, then God will raise up of the stones voices to magnify the Lord. Listen, you as a free Presbyterian, you have no monopoly of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is given to those that obey Him.

God has used this church, but never have been only God has used it. And God will use it if every one of us do the calculation of Saul today and say, I count everything else but dumb that I might win Christ. Isn't He worth winning? Isn't He worth loving? Isn't He worth serving? Isn't He worth leaving your life down for? You're a blessed Savior.

Oh, men and women, if this is the last time I'll ever preach at an Easter convention, if this is the last sermon you ever heard from my lips, then let it be said it was a word about Jesus. Man Spurgeon, when he was stood at the ordination of a son, he looked down over the pulpit at his son Charles, and he said, son, preach Jesus up. Preach Jesus up.

Let's live Jesus up as free Presbyterians. Let's preach Him up, preachers of the gospel. Let the world see that we have the blessed Son of God.

And this knowledge will wrack apostasy. It'll split potpourri. It'll be, you know, the Roman church recently had a meeting to see how it could stop fundamentalists in the world.

And they said fundamentalists are the greatest menace to potpourri. I said, hallelujah. That's exactly what we intend to be.

The greatest menace to potpourri. This is the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Nothing can stop this message.

It'll pull down temples. It'll destroy synagogues of Satan. This message will make redundant preachers that don't preach the gospel.

May God help us all to dedicate our lives this day to the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.

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