

Knowing Jesus

by Major Ian Thomas

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing Jesus and letting Him be the redeemer in our experience, and it highlights the need for faith in Him to have a deep and intimate acquaintance with Him.

Duration: 46:15

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 13:53, Acts 17:11, Romans 10:17, Ephesians 1:7, 2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 9:22

Topics: "Knowing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the idea that many people have been 'house trained' or 'brainwashed' into thinking that once they make a decision to follow God and attend church on Sundays, that is all that is required of them. However, the preacher emphasizes that true Christian faith goes beyond just attending church and making a decision. He encourages those who are truly interested in the Christian life to seek a deeper understanding of their faith and to let God work through them to impact the lives of others. The preacher also highlights the importance of trusting in Jesus Christ and allowing Him to guide every aspect of our lives. He warns that there may be some who will not continue on this journey and will never return, but he is hopeful to meet those who are genuinely seeking to know Jesus and live out their faith fully.

Transcript

Certainly a great joy for me to be with you this morning. I'd like to say how I appreciate the kindly welcome that has been extended to me by your pastor, as also to Paul Christensen, who I know will enjoy this week amongst you as much as I will. I look forward to seeing you again this evening and then as often as possible throughout the week.

I shall share with you the concern that was expressed by the Apostle Paul. Let me read these two verses to you because this in a sense comprehends what will be the end target of our explorations together in the Word of God. I'm reading this from the Amplified New Testament.

It's in the third chapter of Paul's epistle to the Philippians in the tenth verse. My determined purpose, said the Apostle, is that I may know him, a person, somebody, Jesus Christ, that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of his person more strongly and more clearly, and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from his resurrection, a power which it exerts over believers, that I may so share his sufferings, that is to say be identified with the Lord Jesus in his death, as to be continually transformed in

spirit into his likeness. That recognizes Paul the Apostle is going to be the progressive consequence of a deeper and ever more intimate acquaintanceship with the Lord Jesus, identifying himself with his death and inevitably through his death identifying himself with his resurrection, continually being transformed in fuller and ever broader measure in spirit into his likeness.

That if possible, he then goes on to say in the eleventh verse, I may attain to the spiritual and moral resurrection, and notice there is a double resurrection there, that spiritual resurrection that takes place when the introduction of life by the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell the humanity of the forgiven sinner abolishes death. That's that spiritual resurrection that takes place when you and I are born again and become alive in Christ. When reconciled to God, we become inhabited by the God who created us.

But that spiritual resurrection, attests the Apostle Paul here, is designed to bring about a moral resurrection. It's calculated to invade our personalities in such a way that we become an entirely different race of people. So that if any man be in Christ, he's actually, literally, a new creation.

He's been made over. He's a new creature. All things that were characteristic of the old Adamic character have passed away.

And all things, the all things which the next verse tells us there in that passage, come from God, the all things have replaced the old things. All things have passed away and all things have become new. That's the moral resurrection that inevitably is the consequence of a spiritual resurrection that if possible I may attain to the spiritual and moral resurrection that lifts me out from among the dead, even while in the body.

Even while in the body. In other words, this spiritual resurrection is to characterize me by virtue of the fact that I have an entirely different way of life as opposed to that which was mine when I was still spiritually destitute and bankrupt, alienated from the life of God and dead in trespasses and sins. It's going to lift me out from among the dead even while in the body.

And it will be patently obvious to everybody in my presence that something radical has happened in my experience. That somebody has invaded my soul to whom I have yielded the right to exercise total sovereignty who monopolizes now every area of my being so that my personality is transformed by his presence and advertises to the world in which I was born dead that I've come alive. Now that will be the purpose really of our meeting together so that we may discover more adequately the real spiritual content of our relationship to the Lord Jesus into which we entered in the day that convicted of our sins repenting toward God we first put our trust in him as Redeemer.

That initial baby act which is called conversion which introduces us to the thrilling, hilarious adventure of sharing the life of Jesus Christ on earth on the way to heaven. I don't have to tell you that just to accept Christ as your Redeemer doesn't mean you're saved. I'm sure I don't have to tell you just to know that your sins of ego doesn't constitute your salvation.

The fact that you happen to be on the way to hell and don't now happen on the way to heaven and you don't now happen to be on the way to hell that doesn't constitute your salvation. Your salvation of course derives from the fact that as a redeemed sinner no longer on the way to hell but already on the way to heaven Jesus Christ as God creator has come to invade your humanity to play that role in you for which you were created. To give him the right 24 hours a day in your business, in your home in your school, on your college campus whether you're on recreation in vacation, in business no matter at any time under any circumstance 24 hours in every day 7 days in every week you give Jesus Christ as God the right to be

God in you without reserve.

Then you're beginning to get saved. That's what it means to become a Christian. We've conveniently reduced salvation to a moment in time when we raise a hand walk down the front or get baptized or have our name put upon a church roll and we call that salvation.

Nothing of course is farther from the truth. That's totally divorced from the revelation given to us in the word of God which is our sole guide in every matter of faith. Salvation involves the reoccupation by God of a guilty sinner in such a way that Jesus Christ has the unchallenged absolute perpetual right to take the terms whereby that individual henceforth will run his life.

For instance where he's going to buy his new home what vocation he's going to study for as a student where he's going to go next year on vacation how he's actually going to spend his money who's really going to run the church that he goes to all this is embraced in his salvation. And nothing less than that of course will do. Anything less than that short changes Jesus Christ and cheats him of that for which his blood was shed.

And I believe that I'll be ministering this week to a group of men and women who want to discover with me more fully what's involved in not becoming a Christian all of us know that what's involved in being the Christian you've become which is a million times more important. And of course if I'm to discover what the Christian life is all about there's really only one person whom I can turn the only person that ever lived on earth since Adam fell into sin to his father's satisfaction Jesus Christ. There's only one person that's ever been capable of living the Christian life since Adam fell Jesus Christ.

And he came very graciously for 33 years to demonstrate the principles involved. And having demonstrated those principles involved to his father's total complete and absolute satisfaction for the perfect man he was he offered himself to the father as your substitute and mine so that the father in his person could execute in him the judgment that you and I deserve. And that laid the foundations of our reconciliation to God so that now he risen from the dead might come and perpetuate the life that he lived then in us now.

So the Christian life of course is the life that Jesus Christ lived then and lived now by him in us. There is no other. And if your Christian life does not derive from the fact that Jesus Christ risen from the dead has come to take up occupation of your humanity and become in you the origin of his own image and the source of his own activity and the dynamic of his own demands and the cause of his own effect you've become a Christian but you haven't yet learned to be one.

Anything that you may produce in the name of Christianity is a cheap imitation of the real thing and cannot but be a caricature. And certainly everything less than satisfactory to God. Now all of us want to know how to be to his holy satisfaction what in his infinite mercy we have become a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

So let's turn our attention at the very outset this morning to the one from whom everything derives if it is to be legitimate if it is to be healthy if it is to be wholesome and if it is to be real. Turn with me to the thirteenth chapter of Matthew's gospel. Thirteenth of Matthew came to pass the fifty-third verse that when Jesus had finished these parables he departed hence and when he was coming to his own country he taught them in their synagogue.

He went to the normal public place of worship and there he began to instruct them. And this was in his own home territory. This is where he had been born rather than born in Bethlehem this is where he had been reared.

This is where they had known him as a little child. This is where they had known him as a school kid. This is where they had known him grow up in his trade.

He taught them in their synagogue insomuch that they were astonished. And this is what they said. This was their reaction.

They said whence hath this man this wisdom whence hath this man these mighty words. Now what did they mean by that? This man. Well this man whom we knew as a helpless baby in his mother's arms.

This man whom we knew as the little child who clung to his mother's skirt. This man whom we knew as a school boy romping around chasing his friends in the street. This man whom we knew when he was still learning his trade.

This man whom we called when our window jammed. Who put the new door in the barn as a carpenter. Whence hath this man whence hath this man.

And you see their question was filled with incredulity. They were astonished. They racked their brains and they could discover absolutely no human explanation for the things they heard and saw.

Is not this verse 55 is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary and his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Judas and his sisters are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. In other words because they could find no tangible human explanation for the quality of the things he said and did they said he must be a phony. This man.

Why were they astonished at Jesus Christ? Well of course the most natural answer that you might come up with almost instinctively they did not know that he was God. But if that is what you think you are wrong. It is true of course that they did not know that he was God but that is not why they were astonished.

They were astonished because they did not know that he was man. Not man as they were as men. But man as he as God created man to be.

That is why they were astonished. Because there he was ministering in the midst of a people who had never come to grips with the reality of what God demands in a man's humanity. And for the first time they were in the presence of a man who was being man according to those principles that should govern man's humanity.

As he Christ as God had created man to be. For the first time they were in the presence of a real man. You see when God created man when our Lord Jesus in co-equality with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the triune Godhead when he as God made man he created man so that man should function exclusively by virtue of the fact that God through the Holy Spirit inhabits his humanity.

In other words God to a man is as imperative as oil is to a lamp. God to a man is as imperative as gas is to a car. If you have an oil lamp and it's got no oil you've got an oil lamp but it won't behave like one.

And for all the light you'll get you might as well put it in the trash can. If you've got a car and you detach it for the gas and some of you have tried that to your embarrassment especially if it's on the freeway take a

car and detach it from gas and you've still got a car in your hand but for all the good it will do to you you might as well just keep chickens in it. It just won't behave like one.

And of course if you detach man from God which is exactly what happened when Adam fell into sin you've still got a man in your hand but he won't behave like one. And as I trust we shall discover during the week he won't even be able to behave like an animal. He won't be that competent.

He'll neither be able to behave like an animal nor will he be able to behave like a man. You see, no animal as God created animals to be is as stupid as man. Have you ever seen an alcoholic horse? Ever seen a drug addicted dog except some evil man has injected him so that he'll win the race? No, animals aren't that stupid.

And when man lost God he could neither behave as intelligently as an animal nor could he behave as intelligently as man because he lost what it takes to be a man. The only thing that you can do for an oil lamp that hasn't got oil is put oil in it. And the only thing you can do for a car that hasn't got gas is to put gas in it.

And the only thing you can do for a man that hasn't got God is to put God in it. Then you'll have a lamp that shines. Then you'll have a car that goes.

Then you'll have a man that behaves. He'll behave as God intended man to behave. And when you put the oil in the lamp it isn't so that the lamp can try harder.

And when you put gas in the car it isn't so that the car can try harder. And when through spiritual new birth God gets back into the man it isn't that the man might try harder. You put oil in the lamp so that the oil can be oil functionally.

You put gas in a car so that the gas can be gas functionally. And you put God in the man so that God can be God functionally. In other words, spiritual new birth is designed to let God be God in a man's human experience.

Once more, from his human spirit to which he is restored, invading his soul, recapturing his mind, recapturing his emotions, recapturing his will, so finally through mind and emotion and capturing his will, recapturing his behavior, so that everybody in that man's presence recognizes that God is in residence and God is in business. And for the first time in this village these people listened to a man preaching and saw a man behaving who was man as he as God created man to be. A man who was prepared to let God be God.

That's why they were forced on him and they were offended. Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor save in his own country and in his own house. And it says, He did not many mighty works there.

Why? Because of their unbelief. He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. He didn't get into action because they didn't get into faith.

He did not act because they did not believe. Because, you see, for him to get into action demanded of them the same disposition towards him as that disposition that allowed the Father to get into action in the Son. Now, this is the mystery of the Gospel.

That is, the Lord Jesus in the perfection of his humanity was in the Father and the Father as God was in the Son. So there is to be reestablished that relationship that existed between the Son and the Father and the Father and the Son. There is to be restored that relationship between you and me and Jesus Christ and between Jesus Christ and you and me.

That by our disposition toward the Lord Jesus he will be able to be in action in and through us as by his disposition towards the Father the Father as God was able to be in action in and through him. Now, this is the theme that runs right the way through the New Testament and that is so marvelously illustrated right the way through the Old Testament. It simply governs the principles that relate man to God and God to man.

That it takes God actually God himself not what God has to say not God's example not God's precepts not God as a far away ah object of our emulation or worship. It takes God himself in a man to be a man. And that's why as we shall discover it will take Jesus Christ not his teachings not his preaching not his sublime example not the beautiful life that he lived not the doctrines that he promulgated it will take Jesus Christ himself a person to be a Christian.

It takes God to be a man it takes Christ to be a Christian. We shall discover that it is Christ himself in the Christian that puts God himself back into the man. And that's exactly what it takes and that's what the gospel is all about.

That's why the Lord Jesus died upon the cross. As I was telling some folk earlier this morning in the earlier service the Lord Jesus died upon the cross not so that you might have the convenience of escaping hell and getting to heaven. That is gloriously true but it's purely incidental.

The Lord Jesus did not shed his blood so that you could have a release from a guilt complex so that you might escape the punitive consequence of your sin. The Lord Jesus died upon the cross not just to get you out of hell and into heaven he died upon the cross to get God out of heaven and into you. And the measure in which you are saved is the measure in which God out of heaven in you is in function.

Actually calling the shots. Actually controlling what you do with your hands. Actually controlling where you go with your feet.

Actually controlling what you say with your lips. Actually controlling what you think with your mind. Actually controlling the decisions that you make.

That is the measure in which you are saved. So don't kid yourself that because ten years or fifteen years ago you walked down the aisle or raised your hand and you've been playing your tithe and you've been through the tub don't fancy that constitutes your salvation. There are hundreds of thousands of men and women who troop to church every Sunday who've gone through all of that and they're not even regenerated.

They're unsaved believers. They're conforming to denominational patterns that have become a substitute for a personal spiritual relationship to Jesus Christ and they know nothing nothing really of the life that is the birthright of the newborn. And there are going to be some tragic surprises.

In the day the dust has settled said the Lord Jesus I cannot get into action until you get into faith. He did nothing there. Because the nature of faith is that it is a disposition towards God that lets God get into action.

That's the nature of faith. Faith is not believing verses in the Bible. Faith is not saying the Bible says it I believe it that settles it.

That isn't faith. Faith is an attitude toward God that allows God to get into action. The simplest definition of faith is this faith lets lets lets somebody something get into action on your behalf.

Faith does not involve in the first instance activity on your part. We've been brainwashed into that idea but it isn't true. Faith if it is faith invokes the activity of a second party somebody else something else.

That's the nature of faith. In other words faith is not demonstrated in you by what you are doing. Faith is demonstrated in you only by what God is doing.

Because God gets into action in response to faith. So faith will elicit not your activity faith will elicit God's activity. Faith lets Christ be the redeemer that He is in action in your experience.

Faith doesn't let Christ be the redeemer because He is the redeemer whether you believe it or whether you don't. He's the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Faith simply lets Him be the redeemer that He is in your experience because you've let Him.

If you don't believe that Jesus Christ is the redeemer He is still the redeemer whether you believe it or whether you don't but you won't know it that's all in your experience. Faith lets the Lord Jesus Christ risen from the dead moved by His Holy Spirit into your experience regeneratively. Faith lets Him come and share His life with you on earth.

And whether you let Jesus Christ move into your experience and share His life with you on earth or not He's still alive. It's simply that if you don't let Him share that life with you on earth He is still alive but you won't know it in your experience. That's all.

Faith invokes His activity. Faith is like the clutch in a gearshift car. It relates the engine under the hood to the power of the engine under the hood to the wheels on the road.

Don't tell me the clutch is making the car go. No it isn't. All that the clutch does in a gearshift car is to allow the power under the hood to be translated into action on the road.

That's all. Now there's all the power under the hood in the world maybe and there are wheels on the road but there'll be no action invoked of the engine unless the clutch is engaged. That's all.

And if you don't engage the clutch you can put it into first gear and you can rev the engine until every window in the district vibrates and the city is lost in a cloud of dust. But when you take your foot off the gas and the dust is settled you'll be exactly where you started. Right? Now that's faith.

All the power in eternity is vested in the person of God's own dear son redemptively and regeneratively and you and I have been given a moral option whereby we may adopt a disposition toward Jesus Christ called faith that allows him to demonstrate his redemptive efficacy and that allows him to demonstrate his regenerative efficacy. That is to say his power to reconcile you to God and having reconciled you to God his power to enable you for service. But all in response to faith.

It doesn't bring you into action on his behalf it brings him into action on your behalf. That's the nature of faith. You see here's a young fellow he's got a new gear shift European sports car and he invites his chum to come for a run he drives down the road wind streaming through their hair 60, 70, 80 if nobody's looking

90 miles an hour 100 miles an hour and you can imagine the excited boy turning to his friend and said boys, boys man! He said what a clutch! Is that what he'd say? Well of course he wouldn't.

The clutch isn't giving him motion. He'd say man! He'd say what an engine! What an engine! He doesn't congratulate the clutch. It's the engine that's putting power behind the wheels.

Now that's the nature of faith. That's why you can never be congratulated on your faith and you should never under any circumstances congratulate anybody else on their faith. The clutch is imperative to motion as faith is imperative to God's activity in your experience and mine.

But it isn't faith that saves you. Nobody was ever saved at any time or ever will be by faith. Only Christ saves.

If faith can save you then you have every right to congratulate yourself on your faith that saved you. And there's only one person to be rewarded when you get to heaven yourself because you had faith that saved you. Dimetrically opposed to the revelation of God's Word but we've become accustomed to that kind of talk that is so loose and so untidy that we've almost settled for it.

The only person that can save a sinner is the Savior, Jesus Christ and that's why His Father God sent Him into this world. All that faith does is let Him be the Savior in your experience and mine that He came to be. That's all.

So you don't congratulate yourself on your faith like anybody else because faith didn't save you only Jesus Christ. You see, although faith is as imperative to the activity of God in your experience and mine as the clutch is to bring the activity of the engine onto the road and translate it into action although it is imperative and without faith nobody can please God we've got to avoid the error of deifying faith and making faith itself the object of our idolatry so that we congratulate ourselves because we are believers. Because we are good sound, conservative Bible believing believers.

So we congratulate ourselves and consider ourselves very superior to anybody else who doesn't believe what we believe as if our beliefs did anything for us. Our beliefs do nothing for us only God. That's why there is only one person to be congratulated God.

Never congratulate another person on their faith in God. Please don't talk about my what a man of faith. God doesn't deserve that kind of an insult.

If you were to tell me that you were going on vacation in your car around the United States and you were going to travel some 10,000 miles and I say well that's going to be very exciting let me see the car you're going in and you point at a car a battered thing on the side of the road with dents all over it smooth tires I say I congratulate you on your faith. I say what am I telling you about your car a whole mouthful I congratulate you on your faith. If you can go on vacation in that man you're a man of faith.

Right. When you congratulate a man on believing in God when you say my what faith you've got in God what are you saying about God? Just as much about just about as much as I would be saying about your car you'd say if you can trust God I want to congratulate you. How small is God that we have to be congratulated because we trust him.

God doesn't deserve that kind of an insult. Faith recognizes that God is as big as God is and lets him be that big to move redemptively to reconcile us to himself to move regeneratively and to restore his

presence to ourselves. I didn't see all of you coming to this church in fact I hardly saw any you saw me come but I didn't see you come.

But had I been here and watched you coming I don't think in all probability I don't think I'd have seen one boy one girl one man or woman get down on their hands and knees and examine the bench you're sitting on. Did you? Why didn't you? How did you know it was strong enough? Oh well you say I've got faith in that bench. I've sat on it many many weeks and many many months and perhaps many many years.

It would have been a sheer insult if you'd got down on your hands and knees and tried to examine the strength of the bench. Supposing you invited me to your homes maybe perhaps you will or maybe you won't now but supposing you will so to do. And you say please come here and take a seat and I get down on my hands and knees and test all the chairs that's where I sit.

I want to be absolutely certain I don't land on the floor. Now you didn't test the strength of the bench because you have become acquainted with the bench and you are adequately convinced now that it is strong enough. But you see that bench is only being a bench in your experience by virtue of the fact that you're letting it now support your weight.

The moment you came in without a moment's thought you sat down. Because you see the more confident you are in the object of your faith listen carefully the more confident you are in the object of your faith the less conscious you are of the faith you're exercising in that object. That's why when you came to the church you didn't even give a thought as to whether or not you should sit down on that bench.

It never dawned on you if I hadn't mentioned it it would never have passed your mind. You came in and you sat down and you exercised faith and you let the bench support your weight. And some of you exercise more faith than others.

But that's the only way you can let a bench be a bench in your experience. I believe in benches I'm absolutely orthodox about benches. I'm perfectly certain I could stand here and talk to you for ten minutes about a bench and examine it and with you and explain it and just explain the principles that governs it.

I'm a believer. But at this moment I'm not exercising any faith in any bench in this chair for a very good reason. You can't exercise faith in a bench standing up.

I can only exercise faith sitting down. But the moment you see I exercise faith and sit down on that bench my faith does nothing more for me. Absolutely nothing.

The bench comes into action because I have invoked its activity. And if I don't land on the floor don't congratulate me on my faith because it is not my faith it is sustaining my weight. Have you ever tried to sit down on faith? It is the bench that is sustaining my weight.

That is all. And if I sit on it by faith and the bench sustains my weight and I do not land on the floor that does not demonstrate the strength of my faith it demonstrates simply the strength of the bench. And if I sit on a chair and I land on the floor surrounded by the little bits of chair that does not demonstrate the weakness of my faith it simply demonstrates that my faith strong as it may have been was exercised in the wrong object.

It simply demonstrates the weakness of the chair. This is the nature of faith. Faith simply lets something or somebody demonstrate the truth of what you might otherwise not be inclined to believe.

Faith invokes the activity of a second party brings somebody else or something else into action which demonstrates not the strength of your faith it demonstrates the strength of that other party that other person or that other object. You might say to me where do you live? I say I live in England. As you may well have gathered.

Are you married? Yes. Is your wife travelling with you? I'm sorry to say she isn't. I wish she were.

When did you leave home? Well effectively apart from just two or three hours in the middle of the night I left home on the 5th of September to go to Sweden and then later to the United States. When are you going to be back? Well, middle of December. You mean over three months away? Yes.

Do you often do this? Quite often. At least two sometimes three times a year. And you mean she lives in England and you are here in the United States? Yes.

You mean about 5000 miles apart from each other? Yes. And then you say three months? Yes. Can you trust your wife that long? I'd like to congratulate you on your faith in your wife.

Do you think she'd be flattered? Do you think I am? And if you went and said I wish I could trust my wife as long as that you'd be saying to me about your wife a whole lot. I think probably if you talked to me like that I'd say, excuse me I think you need to get acquainted with my wife. Then you wouldn't congratulate me on my faith you'd congratulate me on my wife.

Don't you think it's time we stopped congratulating each other on our faith and began to lift up our hearts in worship and congratulate God on being as big as he is. If you're still preoccupied with your faith how much faith you've got if you're still preoccupied with other people's faith how much faith they've got you need to get acquainted you need to get acquainted with Jesus Christ. You need to come to know him more deeply and more intimately because you see the more confident you are in the object of your faith the less conscious you are of the faith you're exercising that object.

I have to fly a very great deal constantly every week I'm in the air thousands, tens, hundreds of thousands of miles and I've now developed a strong confidence in the planes that have taken me literally all over and all around the world again and again and I'm not quite frankly I'm not conscious of the faith that I'm exercising when I get on board I am obviously exercising faith when I get on board a plane as I did in San Antonio yesterday with Paul to come here I bet my life on it literally I bet my life on it I exercised faith in the competence of the pilot in the adequacy of the equipment in the ground crews the radar if anything had gone wrong with anything of that I would have paid with my life don't tell me I wasn't exercising faith but I wasn't conscious of it because I've become

so accustomed to flying in those jet liners I've become so accustomed to the competency of your pilots I've become so convinced to the adequacy of the ground control and radar aids that I'm no longer aware of the faith I'm exercising is this your relationship to Jesus Christ or are you busy all the time digging up your faith and seeing if it's still there some time ago I had to fly from Chicago no it was from Toronto in Canada to Boston in Massachusetts because I had a series of meetings in Nashua in New Hampshire Boston was the nearest airport and I booked on an American Airlines four engine jet never gave it a thought just made the reservation that was it but I got a letter I got a letter just a day or two before I was due to take that flight from the pastor of the church and it filled

me with horror do you know what he said he said I've just got my pilot's license wouldn't that have filled you with horror I knew exactly what he was going to write after that I could hardly dare dare read the letter do you know having just got his pilot's license he went on to say he'd be so very happy if he knew when I was going to arrive to meet me in Boston and fly me to Nashua and he had just got his pilot's license the ink wasn't even dry on the paper and he was going to come in one of those potty little Cessnas that goes by elastic and goes pop pop pop pop and any time it'll stop popping and he was going to come to Boston and pick me up and fly me to Nashua I changed my flight plan I took a later flight and arrived after dark that kept him on the ground terra firma and the firmer

the less terror now I was quite wrong in my attitude towards that man I discovered later I'd been twice to that church and he's an excellent pilot he's still alive and the chances are that if I'd flown with him that day I'd be alive still too well why wasn't I prepared for it because I had no confidence in the object of my faith I didn't know him well enough I hadn't got adequately acquainted I wasn't deeply personally acquainted with him if I had known then what I know now I'd probably have said fine, great, be delightful now my dear Christian friends this is the nature of faith and if you're not converted if you're not yet a Christian this is the nature of the quality of faith that will bring the Lord Jesus redemptively into your experience if you're a boy or a girl or a man or a woman

and you don't know the inner assurance that their sins are forgiven I'll tell you you can do absolutely nothing whatever about your redemption it's already been accomplished nearly two thousand years ago upon the cross the Lord Jesus said it's finished it's all over I'm simply waiting for any boy any girl any man any woman anywhere at any time to look to me and by a disposition towards me that exposes their guilt and is unquestioningly satisfied about my adequacy to redeem all I'm looking for is that boy that girl that man that woman who'll look at me and say Lord Jesus I can't but you can that's all I need to know and I trust you now by my disposition of dependence on you to move into my experience come into my heart cleanse me from sin reconcile me to God and then in fulfillment of your

marvelous promise by the gift of your Holy Spirit come and live within me and clothe your life on earth with my humanity then I'll know that no situation to which any step can ever take me at any time will be a situation for which you as God in me as man will be less than big enough now that's the Christian mind a disposition that allows Christ to move redemptively into your experience and reconcile you to God a disposition toward the Lord Jesus that allows him having redeemed you to come by his Holy Spirit and dwell your human spirit invade your soul capture your personality and every moment of every day demonstrate in terms of your flesh and blood that Jesus Christ is alive he's in very good health and he's very much in business saying where do you get that quality of faith that lets

the more confident you are in the object of your faith the more conscious the less conscious you are of the faith you're exercising in that object when you get confident in the object of your faith by acquaintanceship getting to know it where do you get the quality of faith that takes Jesus Christ for granted that refuses to be congratulated because you trust him because you would look almost defiantly into a person's face and say don't you dare ever, ever again congratulate me because I trust in Jesus he is God how do you get to know Jesus Christ like that I'll tell you faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God that's where you get acquainted that's why we're having this Bible week and I'll tell you those who'll be participating throughout the days of the week those who want

to get acquainted those who want their Christian life to be something more than a procedure and I'll tell you something because I don't kid myself though it's a delight for me to be here with you this morning it's

going to be a delight for me to be here with you tonight and it's going to be a sheer delight for me to be with you every night of this week to share with you the things of our wonderful Saviour as we turn to the book and get acquainted with Him so that it'll become the most natural thing in the world as natural as breathing to trust Him I'm going to say goodbye to some of you today and you're never coming back that's a fact in my experience in a normal Sunday service I may anticipate to see about 10% of the congregation throughout the week we've been house trained that way

we've been brainwashed that way brainwashed into the idea that once you've registered a decision and been to the house of God on Sunday that's it so I'm saying farewell to some of you it's been lovely to meet you I shall never see you again but to those of you who are interested in the Christian life who want to know the real spiritual content of your faith who are going to let God loose so that some boy, some girl some man or woman into all eternity will thank God they ever passed you away it's going to be great to meet you as we turn to this book together and listening to what he has to say through it we get to know Jesus Christ in such a way that as naturally as breathing we shall trust him and every day will become the sheer adventure of letting God be God in all we do and say now now

let's pray thank you Lord Jesus for what you did upon the cross to make all this possible I thank you for those whom I've met this morning whom I'll never see again I trust that your hand may be in blessing upon them to lead them into that fullness of life that derives from your presence as God within their humanity thank you Lord Jesus for that boy, that girl that man or woman who this week is going to come alive be born of the Holy Spirit cleansed in your blood and has begun to begin begin the adventure of sharing your life on earth thank you for those hungry hearted men and women who have a deep love and concern for you and a deep hungry appetite to grow in spiritual things and allow you to be as big as God is in their daily experience thank you for the marvelous things you've got

wrapped up for each one of us though none of us deserve it in these days that we're going to spend together keep us each with an open receptive heart that will yield obedience to the truth that will allow the Holy Spirit to translate it into the flesh and blood of our humanity we ask Lord Jesus for your name's sake
Amen

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