

Spiritual Knowledge -- Obtaining Knowledge

by Stephen Kaung

Spiritual knowledge is the knowledge of God, obtained through life, by the way of the cross, and through the dying of the old and the coming out of the new.

Duration: 1:14:53

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:7

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Salvation Experience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the difficulty of explaining the spiritual experience of salvation. He uses the analogy of developing a photo to illustrate how spiritual understanding requires the renewing of the mind. The speaker emphasizes the importance of both the slaying and the living of Jesus in the believer's life, as it leads to spiritual growth and knowledge. The passage from 2 Corinthians 4:6-11 is referenced to highlight the treasure of God's light shining in the hearts of believers, even in the midst of affliction and persecution.

Transcript

Will you please turn to 2nd Corinthians. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4, we read from verse 6. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 verse 6 through verse 11. Because it is the God who spoke that out of darkness light should shine, who has shone in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassingness of the power may be of God and not from us. Every way afflicted, but not straightened. Seeing no apparent issue, but our way not entirely shut up.

Persecuted, but not abandoned. Cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, or some may say the slaying of Jesus.

That the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered unto death on account of Jesus. That the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

Same book, chapter 12, we read from verse 7 through verse 10. And that I might not be exalted by the exceeding greatness of the revelation, there was given to me a form for the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he might buffet me, that I might not be exalted. For this I thrice besought the Lord, that it might depart

from me.

And he said to me, My grace suffices thee, for my power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore would I rather boast in my weaknesses, that the power of the Christ may dwell upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in straits, for Christ.

For when I'm weak, then I'm powerful. And finally, Hebrews chapter 12. We read from verse 5 through verse 11.

Hebrews chapter 12, verse 5. And ye have quite forgotten the exhortation which speak to you as to sons. My son despised not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when reprov'd by him. For whom the Lord loves, he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives.

Ye endure for chastening. God conducts himself towards you as towards sons. For who is the son that the father chastens not? But if ye are without chastening, of which all have been made partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

Moreover, we have had the fathers of our flesh as chasteners, and we reverence them. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits and live? For they indeed chastened for a few days, as seemed good to them, but he for profits, in order to the partaking of his holiness. But no chastening at the time seems to be matter of joy, but of grief, but afterwards yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those exercised by it.

Dear Lord, how we praise and thank thee that thou dost give thyself to us. We are redeemed by thy precious blood. We are thine, and our desire is that thou should fully possess us.

We ask thee, Lord, that thou wilt through thy word again speak to our hearts. Bring us to the place where thou wants us to be. Make us what thou wants us to be.

We just offer ourselves to thee. In the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Yesterday morning we shared together on the two kinds of knowledge. One is represented by the tree of life, and the other is represented by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We call one as life knowledge, and the other as world knowledge.

We call one as spirit knowledge, and the other soul knowledge. Now brothers and sisters, the issue with us is, what knowledge do we really possess? What kind of knowledge are we filled with? How much of the knowledge that we profess to have is spirit knowledge, spiritual knowledge, life knowledge, and how much that we profess to have is but soul knowledge, world knowledge. I think if we really be in the light of God, we will discover how much that we think knowledge we have really belongs to soul knowledge, world knowledge, and not really life and spirit knowledge.

So for this reason, we really need to be before the Lord, that under his light, we may really pursue after the right kind of knowledge, and not continue on trying to accumulate more and more soul, worldly knowledge. When you read the epistles of Paul, especially his prison epistles, you find that in Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, he offered prayers for the believers, and in each letter you will find that he prayed for them on this matter of knowledge. For instance, in Philippians 1, verse 17, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, would give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of him.

The apostle Paul prayed for the believers in Ephesus, that God will grant to them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of God. Now our brother mentioned last night, one means to spiritual knowledge is through revelation. Our knowledge that we have accumulated through the years are informational, external, we gathered from outside, but there is a knowledge that comes by revelation, directly from God, and it is by revelation that we come to the true knowledge of God.

And our brother mentioned also last night, having the eyes of our heart being opened, that is our understanding. Not only we have revelation from God, that is in our spirit. Now brothers and sisters, when revelation comes, it does not come to our awkward mind.

It comes to our inward mind. It comes to our spirit. The spirit of God reveals, opens up, unveils something that is of God, and in our spirit we see it.

But often times you find even after we see it in our spirit, we are not able to explain it to people. To make a simple illustration, one day God revealed His Son in you. You see in your spirit God's Son.

You receive Him as your Savior, as your life. But after you are saved, when you try to explain what you have seen, what you have gone through, you find you cannot do that. Something has happened in your spirit, and yet you are not able to explain how it happens, what has happened.

You need the understanding, you need the renewing of your mind to explain what has transpired in your spirit. So often times we use an illustration. It is just like you are taking a photo.

When you are taking a picture, you find an impression is made upon the film. But if you show the film undeveloped to anybody, nobody can see the picture. It has to be developed, and after it is developed, then everybody will see it.

So the same thing is true in spiritual things. First we have to see it in our spirit, and then it is interpreted by our renewed mind. So we can tell people what we have seen.

And here you find in Paul's prayer. When we receive the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of God, and having the eyes of our heart being enlightened, being opened, what do we see? We see the hope of His calling. We see the calling of God.

God has called us, called us into something tremendous. And we see the glory, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. It is more than the riches of the glory of our inheritance in Christ.

But it is the glory, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. In other words, we are called with a high calling. And we will be inheritance to God.

God will inherit us. And that inheritance is full of riches and full of glory. Now how can that be? We find the surpassingness of His power.

We find that it is His power that has transformed us. That we may be able to fulfill our calling and we will be able to be a rich inheritance even to our God, to our Christ. Now that needs revelation.

That is spiritual knowledge. So here you find in Ephesians, this is His prayer. And then when you turn to Philippians, you'll find He prayed another prayer.

In Philippians 1, verses 9 and 10, And this I pray, that your love may abound more and more in full knowledge and all intelligence, that ye may judge of and approve the things that are more excellent, in order that ye may be pure and without offense for Christ's day, being complete as regards the fruit of righteousness which is by Jesus Christ to God's glory and praise. Here His prayer is that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and intelligence. Spiritual knowledge actually is love.

And by that love, with full intelligence, you're able to discern the things that differ. And you're able to be pure and blameless in the day of Christ. That is to say, when Christ shall come and we shall all appear before Him, we will be pure and without blameless.

And that comes through that spiritual knowledge, which is love. And then again you'll find in Colossians, Paul prayed for the Colossian believers from verse 9 onward. For this reason we also from the day we heard of your faith and love, do not cease praying and asking for you to the end that ye may be filled with the full knowledge of His will.

In all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so as to walk worthily of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing by the good true knowledge of God, strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, and to all endurance and long-suffering with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has made us fit for sharing the portion of the saints in light. Here you'll find He prayed for them that they may be filled with the full knowledge of His will. Now when you are filled with the full knowledge of His will, then you are able to walk worthily of the Lord unto all well-pleasing.

Now the reason why sometimes we find we cannot walk worthily of the Lord, we are not able to please Him in all things, is because we do not know His will. If we have the full knowledge of His will, we know what it is will, then we may be able to walk worthily of our Lord Jesus. So you find how important it is that we have spiritual knowledge.

Now brothers and sisters, what is spiritual knowledge? We mentioned yesterday morning that there is a knowledge that does not come from life. It is a knowledge that begins in man and it ends in man. Man have in him or in her that tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

We have that, it is soul knowledge. It begins in us, with us, and it ends up in us. But there is another knowledge we mentioned, and it is a knowledge that comes from the life of God.

This is the eternal life, that you may know the only true God and the one whom He has sent. When we believe in the Lord Jesus, something happens, we know God. You know, before we believe in the Lord Jesus, we may be brought up in a Christian home, we may be educated in a Christian school, and that is just what happened to me.

And from my childhood, I was taught of God. I was taught of the Bible. I was taught of the Gospel.

I knew all these things. And I have to say, I believe all of these things. I never doubted God.

I never doubted Jesus Christ. I never doubted the Gospel. I accept everything.

I believe in everything. But strangely, and I prayed, I read the Bible. But strangely, God is always someone distant from me.

I believe there is a God, but He is billions and billions of miles away. I prayed to Him, but my prayer only hit the ceiling. It doesn't go through to heaven.

I believe in the Gospel. I even preached the Gospel before I was saved, but it didn't save me. I believe in the Word of God.

I read the Bible every day, but it was a closed book to me, as if I was reading somebody else's family letters. I do not understand what He is talking about. But strangely, one day, when I believe in the Lord Jesus, I can remember it so vividly as if it happened not yesterday, but right now.

The moment I believe with my heart, not with my mind. I believe the Lord with my mind from my childhood. But one day, I really open my heart and believe in the Lord Jesus, something happened.

I do not need anybody to tell me there is God. I began to call Him, Abba Father. He is close to me.

He is real. He is living to me. And not only that, when I opened the Bible that afternoon that I was saved, it spoke to me.

It is different. Life brings me a knowledge that no teaching, no reading, no instruction can ever give to me. Brothers and sisters, what people can give to us is instruction, information, teaching, doctrine, tradition, but there is no life, no relationship.

But when God reveals His Son in you, it is life. It is relationship. It is real.

It is living. It is eternal. It is inward.

Life gives us a knowledge. It is heart knowledge, not head knowledge. Now, brothers and sisters, we have lots of head knowledge, especially those who are educated.

Now, people who may not be educated, as our brother already mentioned, sometimes you meet some people who are not educated, who cannot even, who are maybe illiterate, and yet you find they know God even better than we are. But those who are educated, the problem is we have too much head knowledge and too little heart knowledge. Now, that is our problem.

So what we really need to seek is heart knowledge, not head knowledge. Because head knowledge will tell us about God, but only heart knowledge will give us God. So what is spiritual knowledge? Spiritual knowledge is the knowledge of God.

We know Him. We know Him in our spirit. It has been revealed.

He has been revealed to us. We have a touch, a contact with Him. We know it is real.

It is living, vibrant, working in us. Spiritual knowledge is we know God. We know His will.

We know His mind. We know His character. We know He is holy.

He is righteous. He is light. He is love.

We know Him. Now, that is spiritual knowledge. How much do we really know God? How much is God real to us? Spiritual knowledge is love.

Love is life. And with that love we are able to discern what is of God and what is not of God. We do not live by the knowledge of good and evil.

We do not see things, well, this is right, this is wrong, this is good, this is bad. But instead you'll find with the love of God filling our hearts. Our life principle is is it of God or is it not of God? There are many things that may be good.

There are many things that may be right. But if you have spiritual knowledge, if there is love in your heart, even those things that are right, that are good, may not be of God. To you it is a matter of whether it is God and whether it is not of God.

Whether it pleases Him or it displeases Him. Now that is the principle of living. It's different.

What is spiritual knowledge? Spiritual knowledge is the knowledge of Christ. You know Christ is the wisdom of God. Spiritual knowledge is not an it.

That is to say, it is not a teaching, a doctrine, an instruction, a rule, a regulation. Now that is not spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge is not it.

It is He. It is a person. For instance, when we think of righteousness, how can we be righteous before God? We know that God is righteous and we are unrighteous.

Now how can we be righteous before God? We discover that our righteousness is not an it. It is a He. Christ is our righteousness.

You know, in the beginning we may feel, well, we are unrighteous, but thank God Christ took our sins away and if we believe in Him, our sins are forgotten, forgiven, and God calls us righteous. Now you are justified, just as if you have never sinned. Now that's true.

Brothers and sisters, if our understanding of righteousness is just that God has reckoned us righteous, that is not enough. We have to see that the reason why God has reckoned us righteous is because Christ is our righteousness. It is not that we have changed to be righteous, but we are close with Christ who is our righteousness.

God has made Christ our righteousness. Now what is spiritual knowledge? It is not a teaching. We have heard teaching about sanctification.

God is holy, therefore we must be holy, and we try very hard to be holy, to be separated from the world. But brothers and sisters, holiness is not an experience. Holiness is a person.

One day you will realize that holiness is not you, is not your work, is not your trying. Holiness is Christ. He lives in you.

That is holiness. That is spiritual knowledge, and that kind of knowledge sets you free. So brothers and sisters, what we really need is spiritual knowledge.

Now how do we obtain spiritual knowledge? I think that is a very important question. Now seeing spiritual knowledge is life knowledge. That is to say, it comes from life, from divine life, not our natural life.

Now if it comes from our natural life, that is world knowledge, that is soul knowledge. It comes from divine life, and if it comes from divine life, then the only way to obtain to more spiritual knowledge must be through life. That is to say, when your life increases, your life, divine life in you increases, then your spiritual knowledge automatically increases.

So the way to spiritual knowledge is by the way of life. How we begin is the way that we need to continue on. Now that is what our brother mentioned about pressing on.

Now we have begun, and now we need to pursue, to continue on in that way. I would like to use an illustration, and that illustration is metabolism. Metabolism.

You know, our physical life, as it grows, you'll find there is a process going on, and it is the dying of the old cells and the coming out of the new cells. It is a process of dying and living, dying and living. Now that is process of life.

Now in spiritual life you'll find the same thing. There is a spiritual metabolism going on. Daily there is a dying, and daily there is a living, and in that way you'll find you'll grow spiritually.

You'll grow in spiritual knowledge. To put it in another way, our brothers have all mentioned that because it is one message. The cross.

You'll find that the way of the increase of spiritual life is by way of the cross, and therefore the increase of spiritual knowledge is also by way of the cross. Now the cross of our Lord Jesus is more than a historical fact. Now people can believe that two thousand years ago, outside of the city of Jerusalem, there in Golgotha, Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross.

Now people may believe it as a historical fact. That is knowledge, but that is head knowledge, soul knowledge. It doesn't help you in any way.

Or you may be able to see that the cross of our Lord Jesus is more than a historical fact, because it is an eternal redemption. You know, when you look at the cross of our Lord Jesus, the cross is the foundation. When you look at the cross of our Lord Jesus, you do see two aspects of the cross.

One aspect is the objective aspect of the cross. That is, we need to see what our Lord has accomplished for us on Calvary's cross. There on the cross, our Lord Jesus accomplished something, something tremendous for us.

And what he has accomplished on Calvary's cross is eternal. Even though it happened two thousand years ago, and yet it is still living fresh as it is of today, because it is eternal. Its value never diminishes.

Its value never changes. Before God, it is eternal. So we will say, when you think of the objective aspect of the cross, it is the truth.

God's truth is fact accomplished, eternal, unaffected by environment or circumstance or time or place. That's eternal. Now, we need to see the objective aspect of the cross of our Lord Jesus.

On the cross, the Bible tells us, in Peter, he bore in his body our sins on the tree. When our Lord Jesus was crucified on the cross, he took all our sins and put our sins upon him. And he paid the penalty of sin, which is death.

The death of our Lord Jesus on the cross is more than a physical thing. People put him to death. But we find that at the last three hours, God himself crushed our Lord Jesus on the cross.

God forsook him, crushed him. Why? Because he bore our sins in his own body. The Lamb of God, as a substitute, sacrificed for us.

Because of this, he tasted eternal death for us, for that three hours on the cross. He was separated from the Father, and he cried out. Brothers and sisters, when our Lord died on the cross, he took our sins with him.

And that is the reason why, when we believe in him, that is belief that he has borne our sins in his body on the cross, your sins are remitted. The moment you lift your eyes of faith and saw Christ bearing our sins in his body, your sins are gone. That's the eternal fact.

It is true two thousand years ago. It is true. Just by faith, believing that Christ bore your sin away, and your sins are forgiven.

Now I think we have all experienced this. But also you will find that on the same cross, at the same time, our Lord has done something more. He not only bore our sins, the sins that we have committed in his body on the cross, but he also bore us in him.

He took us in him. And when he died, we died in him. In other words, he is the last Adam.

He embraced the whole Adamic race in him. And when he was put on the cross and died, the Adamic race came to an end. Our old man.

You know the old man, there is only one old man, Adam. Not many old men, one Adam. And Romans 6, it says, knowing that our old man, and every one of us are in that old man, no matter how young you are.

We are all in that old man. Old creation. Everything old.

Our old man was crucified with Christ. Why? Because that old man was in him. In Christ.

And because we were crucified, therefore, no longer live we. It is Christ now who lives in us. So brothers and sisters, you will find that he not only took our sins away, he took us sinners.

This old creation, our old man, he took away with him on the cross. So when he is raised from the dead, we are raised with him in newness of life. So that's the reason why Paul can say, I am crucified with Christ.

No longer live I. It is Christ who lives in me. And now I live in the flesh. I live by faith.

The faith of the Son of God who loves me and gave himself for me. So brothers and sisters, when you see the cross, you can see not only your sins bearing away, you can see you taken away. Every time by faith you look at the cross, you saw you were there.

Crucified. In Christ. Not in yourselves.

It is a matter that we have to believe, taken by faith. For instance, if you look within yourself, you may not be able to see that all your sins are forgiven. Now, recently, in recent years, you will find among Christian circles, there is a teaching, you know, trying to bring you back to your childhood and look within yourself, bring you back to your childhood to see what has happened and then hopefully can be dealt with.

But brothers and sisters, if you do not see Christ, and you try to look within yourself and see all the days from your childhood up until you know Christ, you may find so many sins there. They are still there. But thank God, we do not need to look within ourselves.

We look to Christ and we know our sins are all forgiven. There is no need to heal the memory. It is already healed.

Now, the same thing is true. If we look within ourselves, we will find our old man, our flesh, very living, very active. Every time you look within yourself, you will find yourself there.

But every time you look up unto Jesus, you will see you are on the cross. And now, who lives in you? Christ lives in you. So, brothers and sisters, these are the objective truth.

These are things that you have nothing to do with it. In other words, you do not contribute anything to it. You do not make it work.

It is already done. It is finished. Try not to add anything to it.

If you try to add anything to it, you destroy it. It is absolute truth that you receive by faith. You believe as it is done.

Now, that is the objective truth of the cross. But you find the cross has another aspect, which is the subjective aspect. And when you come to the subjective aspect, it is experience, our daily experience.

Now, this morning, we would like to emphasize on our daily experience. Objectively, truthfully speaking, you are already dead. The one who lives in you is Christ, no longer you.

But subjectively speaking, you will find yourselves still living, very active. And you will find within yourself as if there are two persons living there, the two trees there, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You will find that Christ is there, but yourself is also there.

And these two are always struggling against each other. There is a civil war going on within yourself. Now, that is experience.

Now, remember, your experience does not change or affect that objective truth that Christ has done for you. In other words, no matter how you feel, what God has done in Christ on the cross stands. It never changes.

Now, what changes is within yourself. You experience something there, something there. And that is the reason why the Bible said we need to know the subjective aspect of the cross.

Knowing the objective truth of the cross is not enough. We have also to know the subjective aspect of the cross in our lives. Now, what is the subjective aspect of the cross? To put it simply, it is the Holy Spirit who makes real in your life, daily life, what has been already done on Calvary's cross two thousand years ago.

The Holy Spirit is making real to you what is real on Calvary's cross. The cross has to be planted within you. So, that is the reason why you will find in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, Paul said, I bear in my body the dying of Jesus.

Or, to translate it more accurately, the slaying of Jesus. In other words, you will find that there is a slaying going on within you. It slays everything that is of the old creation.

It slays everything that is of you. Everything that is of the old nature. Everything that is of the tree, of the knowledge of good and evil.

It slays these things. And on the other hand, you will find living. The slaying of Jesus and the life of Jesus.

The more the slaying, the more the life of Jesus. And that is the way that life grows. And that is the way that spiritual knowledge, the Apostle Paul said, it is God who spoke out of darkness to light.

And that light shines in our heart. For the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. You know, the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ shines upon us.

And when that light shines upon us, it enters into us. And becomes a light within us. In Him was life.

And the life was the light of man. If we walk in the light, as God is in the light, we have fellowship one way or another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin. Now, brothers and sisters, because life is in you, so light is also within you.

There is a divine life in you. There is a divine light in you. Now, you do not have that before you believe in the Lord Jesus.

In mysticism, people believe that everybody has a divine spark in him or in her. Now, that is unscriptural. But, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, there is a divine spark there.

There is a divine life there. A divine light there. And that light will shine upon our path.

Now, when that light begins to shine upon your path, what happens? You will find the cross begins to work within you. Because when the light shines, it exposes, it reveals darkness. Anything that is within you that is still dark will be exposed.

And it requires, as our brother mentioned, it commands, it demands that this be killed. Now, that is the cross. Because our old man, our flesh, likes old habits.

You know, when you have an old shoe or an old hat, you won't throw it away. So, there is a cross working there. Working against your natural life, your soul life.

And it has to be slain. And that comes to what our brother has said, obedience. In subjective experience, obedience is the way.

Objective truth, faith. Subjective experience, obedience. Obedience to the light of life.

To the light that comes by the Spirit of God. He enlightens you. He enlightens you from within.

And then, plus to that, the Holy Spirit will also, without you, arrange your circumstances. And we call it the discipline of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would arrange our circumstances.

Now believe, brothers and sisters, we who are the Lord's, He loves us so much. He cares for us so much, that even our very hair, He has numbered. And can you believe that our circumstances come by chance? Accidental? No.

He arranges our circumstances. And by the working together of the light that shines from within, the light of life shines from within. And the circumstances that the Holy Spirit arranges around us, He breaks us.

He slays us, in order that we may live in newness of life. And in going through that process, you gain spiritual knowledge. So the Apostle Paul said, we are earthen vessels.

But there is a treasure within us. So far as we are concerned, we are earthen vessels. Opaque.

Not transparent. Fragile. Easily broken.

Common. But there in us is a treasure. Christ, His life, is in us.

A treasure. Now for the radiancy of the treasure, the power of the treasure to be manifested, you need a breaking. A cracking.

You know? And when there is a breaking, a cracking, then the light within shines forth. Sometimes the Lord allows us to come to our wit's end. We come to our wit's end.

We do not know what to do. But this is not the end. As a matter of fact, it is the beginning.

And I like Philip's translation. You may be knocked down, but you are never knocked out. Now this is Christian experience.

It is the working of the cross. The slaying and the living. And as you go through that process, what happens? You obtain spiritual knowledge.

It is not a head knowledge. It is working knowledge, as our brother said. Experiential knowledge.

You know Him in a real way. Not to put it again in a different way. It is dealings.

Now brothers and sisters, spiritual knowledge comes through dealings. God will deal with you, and you will deal with God. Now through that mutual dealings, you come into spiritual knowledge.

God loves us so much. You know, once He puts His hand on you, He will never let you go. Do you know that? But on our side, will we let Him go? God will not let us go.

He will work upon us, in us, until He will transform us and conform us to the image of His beloved Son. That is His will. That is His love.

He will never give up. He will never let go. But oftentimes, we let go.

Now that is our problem. When God deals with us, sometimes we despise His chastening, His dealings. That is to say, when God is really working in us, we ignore it.

We despise it. We do not take it to heart. We allow circumstances to come and go, trials to come and go, never learn a lesson.

We despise His training, His dealings. And on the other hand, we may faint under His chastening. When the Lord touches us a little bit, we faint.

So He can do very little with us. He cannot say a word. If He says something hard, we say it is too hard, and we quit following Him.

You know, that happened to many disciples. When our Lord was on earth, many followed Him. And the Bible says they were disciples.

But when our Lord began to tell them, now do not seek for the food that perishes, but seek for the food that is to eternal life. I am the bread of life that comes to heaven. Eat me, drink me.

And people said, what are you talking about? That is too hard. Even His disciples said, that is too hard. And many left Him.

And the Lord turned to the twelve and said, do you want to go too? Feel free to do that. You know, the Lord is so loving. He never forces us in any way.

If you want to go, go. Even though it breaks His heart, thank God for Peter. You have the word of eternal life.

We know you are the Son of God. Where should we go? You are the only one that we can come to. Now brothers and sisters, when the Lord is dealing with you, do you welcome it? Or you faint under it? Or you reject it? Despise it? To those who deal with God, and let God deal with them, they grow in spiritual knowledge.

They know God in a real way. And that is the only way. If you are careless, you miss lots of opportunities.

Spiritual knowledge is for the diligent. You have to be diligent. Brothers and sisters, how many dealings you have gone through since you believe in the Lord Jesus? When the Spirit of God is dealing with your sins, what is your response? Do you experience what Paul experienced in Romans 7? He wants to please God, to keep the commandment.

He finds himself unable to do that, but he wills to do that. He tried, and tried, and tried. He is dealing with his sin, until he discovers that sin is a law.

It is more than he can cope with. And the only thing he can see is, in me that is in my flesh, there is no good. Now where is the deliverance? Thank God through Jesus Christ.

He saw that the deliverance is in Christ. Christ is his deliverance. Not only his deliverer, but also his deliverance.

Now do we have these experiences, dealings? Do we have dealings with the world? I believe that when you believe in the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of God will shine upon you, and show you what the world is. In the beginning, maybe the things of the world. Maybe there is something that represents the world to you.

It may be a small thing, or it may be a person. But the Lord began to deal with you. And are you willing to let go, in order that you may be holy? Yes.

Do you have any dealing with the Lord in this matter of your flesh? You used to live by your own flesh, your own will, your own mind, your own emotion, your own energy, even in serving the Lord. But the light of life began to shine. And God began to give you an environment to show that this is you.

This is not Christ. Now when you are revealed of these things, God is dealing with you. Now what do you do? Do you continue on stubbornly? Keep your integrity? Keep yourself intact? Will not allow God to break you? Or you yield and be delivered? We can go on and on.

How about this matter of mammon? The Lord certainly has touched you on this matter of mammon. Whom are you serving? Are you serving God or serving mammon? When God is dealing with you, what is the result? You faint or you despise. And you go on as usual.

Brothers and sisters, how about God's dealing in your family life? Now I often feel strange. You know, when you believe in the Lord Jesus, or after you believe in the Lord Jesus, there is bound to be change, not only in your life, personal life, but in your family life. But strangely you find that after we are saved, we still live our family life in the usual natural way.

The husband or the wife, or the father or the mother, children, we are still trying to fulfill our functions naturally. There is no change. The husband does not seek the Lord as to the matter of whether how he could be the head of the family.

The wife does not seek the Lord as to how she should submit herself to her husband. The children, when you believe in the Lord Jesus, you do not seek the Lord how to honour and respect your parents. Brothers and sisters, why is it the scripture has so much instruction on these things? Because you have a new life.

And the light of the life ought to shine upon your family life. There needs to be some transformation there, dealings. The Lord must be dealing with you.

And in the church life, the same thing. God has put us together, brothers and sisters, when we are serving the Lord together, you find there are many, many problems coming up. It demands forgiving, demands humility, submission, all these things.

Now are we learning through dealings? Or do we want to have our own way in every aspect of our life? Even in our service, serving the Lord. Brothers and sisters, when we first believe in the Lord Jesus, we feel we need to serve. But we usually serve God according to our will.

That's what God ought to love. And that is the way we are serving Him. But the Spirit of God began to speak to us, to deal with us.

Do we accept the cross? Are we brought to a point where we see without Him we can do nothing? My time is up. And let me conclude just with this. If you read the Word of God, if you read the biographies in the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, our brother has mentioned several already, Paul, Peter, Jacob, all these people.

And it is really even today, you find that those who have gained spiritual knowledge, they gain through dealings. Jacob wrestled with God, or God wrestled with him, and transformed him from Jacob to Israel. David knew the Lord so well.

Why? Because in everything he inquired of the Lord. He brought it to the Lord. In Psalm 27, one thing I seek before Him, to dwell in His temple, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire before Him.

You know, when David did not inquire, he failed. He did not inquire when he first brought the ark to the city of David, and God's judgment came. He did not inquire when he numbered the people, and God's judgment came.

But every time when he inquired, bring it to the Lord, and the Lord revealed His mind, and you will find there is blessing. So brothers and sisters, do we inquire? When things happen to us, do we go bring them

to the Lord, and inquire of Him? That is dealing. You know, prayer.

Do we bring everything to Him in prayer? So if you read, you will find that everyone who really knows the Lord, really has spiritual knowledge, are those who have much dealing with the Lord. And the Lord has much dealing with them. That is the only way.

And we should see this. Don't faint under His discipline. Do not despise Him, because He is trying to train us that we may be partakers of His holiness.

So may the Lord help us. Let us pray. Dear Lord, do deliver us from anything that is superficial, that is counterfeit.

Lord, we want to be real. We want to be real with Thee, and real with ourselves. We pray that Thou will enlighten us, that we may see when Thy love comes to us in dealings, that we may embrace them, and cooperate, and yield, and believe.

We pray, Lord, that by Thy grace, we may grow in life, we may grow in spiritual knowledge. We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.

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