

DATE: 20/4/2024

PREACHER: HELLEN MIGIDE

TOPIC: THAT I MAY KNOW HIM

LEAD SCRIPTURE: Philippians 3:10 – 12

¹⁰ That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings being conformed to His death. ¹¹ if by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹² Not that I have already attained, I am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

- Apostle Paul expresses three desires in this scriptures as he addressed the church in Philippi.
 - i) to know Jesus Christ
 - ii) to know the power of His resurrection
 - iii) to have fellowship in the suffering of Jesus and being conformed to His death.
- There are three powerful sermons in what Paul desired for. By the grace of God, I studied and noticed that the three desires are hierarchical in nature.
- First, a person gets to know Christ (that I may know Him). From here the person is endowed with the power of resurrection (that I may know the power of His resurrection), and that this power will enable the believer to partake in the suffering of Christ (that I may partake in the suffering of Jesus and be conformed to his death).
- In other words, you receive salvation first, then you are filled with the Holy Ghost Power which enables you to bear witness of the suffering of Christ as you go through various trials and temptations because of your faith.

What is the meaning of 'that I may know Him'?

- In our everyday dealings we say we know someone and this could mean many things like:
 - You know the name and the physical appearance of the person.
 - You have dealings with them either because they are your customer, client, colleague etc.
 - You have an intimate relation with them because they are your spouse, child or close relative.

- In writing this, apostle Paul prompts a deeper search for the meaning of 'That I may know Christ'. This is because studying about Christ or hearing His word is good but not sufficient for a Christian to say that he/she knows Christ.
- A majority of Christians have read or listened to messages about the life Apostle Paul led before His conversion.
- They have read about his encounter with the Lord Jesus while he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the church.
- Before he wrote this epistle, Paul had already written the books of Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians. Besides, he was already having multitudes following him and his teaching was already being followed with signs and wonders.
- So naturally anyone would expect that Paul is already a seasoned follower of Christ and by extension he already had the power of Christ. But in spite of this Paul still talks of knowing Christ and the power of His resurrection. He goes on to write in **Philippians 3:12** 'not that I have already attained or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me'.
- As much as Paul is addressing the church of Philippi, he is directly warning the Christians today against getting complacent with their current service they offer in churches in what could be termed as the 'arrival mentality' – A situation where apart from salvation and a few other spiritual results tend to blind believers from realizing the full potential laid for them by Christ.
- Paul still acknowledges that he is not yet complete. He writes that he is still pressing on to perfection; 'that I may know Him'.
- As a believer, what is your take on your service in the vineyard of our Lord Jesus? Are satisfied with your current results? I challenge you to press on to the perfection mark like Apostle Paul. As Jesus says in Matthew 5:48
Therefore, you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

To know Him (Christ)

1. Seek first his kingdom

Matt 6:33 'But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well'.

- Part of seeking His kingdom will include shifting from the comfort zone. It means working harder than we do while we seek for other necessities of our daily lives.

Let us begin doing more of evangelizing, participating more in kingdom promoting activities, committing more time to prayers, reading the word, meditating and take care of the widow and the orphan which is the pleasing religion before God our father.

- Jesus desired for His disciples to know him. Today He still desires the church to know Him – we are His disciples.

2. Love the Lord

- Jesus summarized the ten commandments thus: **Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength...** And the second is this: **'Love your neighbor as yourself'**" (Mark 12:29-31)
- The resurrected Jesus appeared on the beach near where Peter and others of his chosen disciples were fishing. Jesus called them to a breakfast he had prepared. Following breakfast, Jesus began a conversation with Peter.
- **John 21: 15 – 17**
¹⁵ When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love Me more than these?"
"Yes, Lord," he answered, "You know I love You."
Jesus replied, "Feed My lambs."
¹⁶Jesus asked a second time, "Simon son of John, do you love Me?"
"Yes, Lord," he answered, "You know I love You."
Jesus told him, "Shepherd My sheep."
¹⁷Jesus asked a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love Me?"
Peter was deeply hurt that Jesus had asked him a third time, "Do you love Me?"
"Lord, You know all things," he replied. "You know I love You."
Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep".
- The love for Christ is manifested in service to Him. It was not wrong for Peter to engage in seeking for his daily bread. Jesus was only interested in knowing Peter's level of commitment to kingdom service as compared to his fishing business.
- To know someone means you are close to them. You are concerned with what concerns them. You are there for them.
- Love is founded on four key pillars

i) Commitment

1 Kings 8:61 (NIV)

⁶¹ And may your hearts be fully committed to the Lord our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time."

- When you commit yourself it means you make certain decisions in advance of what you want to do in order to achieve your purpose in the face of unforeseen circumstances.
- Salvation is commitment to follow Jesus into the present and the unforeseen future. It is taking the risk to follow Christ and sticking with Him regardless of what will stand against our faith in the future.
- When Jesus came to earth, he had committed to his father to do his will – which was to love the world to death. This is why even when he prayed in the garden of Gethsemane 'father take away this cup from me' God did not intervene because he held him by the commitment he had made. And when he cried "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" which is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" God did not intervene.
- I challenge us to assess our levels of commitment to loving Jesus.

ii) Passion (John 15: 12-13)

- Passion is an intense desire to do something whether good or bad. When someone has passion for something they do whatever it takes to achieve their desire. Take the example of sports people, musicians or businessmen. To succeed they put in hours of practice, they stretch to the limit to win a crown or make a profit.
- Levels of passion, in other words, measurable and seen. It is possible to tell your passion from the way you worship, fellowship, give, pray fast etc.
David danced before the ark of the Lord so passionately his clothes were flying in the wind, Solomon offered 900 bulls at the completion of building the temple
The woman in the temple gave all she had into the offering basket
Do you have passion for the things of God?

iii) Pleasure

Proverbs 2:7

- Pleasure comes from the word pleasing

- God has no pleasure in fools Ecclesiastes 5:4 warns. When you vow anything to the one you love you make haste to fulfill. In the same manner. We should all desire for our Lord to find pleasure in us.
- In our everyday life when you love someone you make every effort to please him/her. This true for family members, couples etc.
- You have good thoughts towards them and wish them well.
- In Jeremiah 29:11, God has good thoughts towards us and wishes that we prosper and be in good health. Thoughts are important because as a man thinks so he is
- To have good thoughts towards the things of god is to please god.

iv) **Sacrifice**

Hebrews 13: 15-16

- To sacrifice is to give by denying yourself competing needs in order to honor someone.
- A parent will deny himself/herself good clothes or a car and instead divert all resources to pay school fees for his/her child to get a good education.
- Christ led the way by sacrificing His heavenly comfort to die on the cross to redeem man back to god again.
- A sacrifice can be expressed in many ways: time, money, sleep, food when fasting etc.
- There would be no salvation without the sacrifice of Christ.
- The first sacrifice that our God requires from us is our hearts – a broken and humble spirit god will not ignore Psalms 51:17
- In doing so you love god and in loving god you know his will.
- Jesus said we should love our God `with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

SUNDAY 28/4/24

Part 2: PHILIPPIANS 3:10-11

THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

John 10:17 **The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.**

- Jesus talks of His father loving Him because He lay down his life and took it up again. From this verse resurrection means bringing back to life that which was dead.
- Christianity is a set of beliefs centered around God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in a union of oneness – the Holy Trinity.

- Christians believe in the birth, death, resurrection, ascension and the coming again of Jesus on Earth.
- The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is enough proof that His teachings were true. What He said about Himself came to pass. Had he not resurrected no one would believe any other thing he had to tell us. And because he resurrected we believe He is coming again because He said it.
- In normal circumstances after someone is born they live and then die. This would seem to be the end of human life. But Jesus brought in another reality; that life does not end with death. He proved to us in many ways that there is resurrection of the dead. Resurrection was not limited to the prophets in the old testament. Jesus is the life and the resurrection itself.
- It is very real to be born, to live and to die but to resurrect for the normal human is not attainable. But when Jesus came, not only did he resurrect the dead. He resurrected Himself!
- He has given us this power Ephesians 1:18-19

Jesus' Power of Resurrection

Evidence of His power over death

- i) Resurrection of the daughter of Jairus Mark 5: 21-24, 35-42
 - Jairus, a leader of the synagogue, had a very sick child. Perhaps they had made every effort for her to recover but in vain. Jairus having seen, or heard about Jesus' miraculous power risked everything to save the life of his daughter. So he went to Jesus but while they were on the way some messengers came from his home to tell him not to bother because the girl was already dead.
 - Still Jesus went up to His home and was taken to the place the dead child lay. And by the power of His resurrection pronounced 'Talitha kum' and the child immediately stood up and began to walk around.
 - Of course the fault finders were not convinced and perhaps even declared the child might have been dead just a few minutes, perhaps she had fainted or maybe she was just in a short coma. But our Lord continued with the good work.
- ii) The son of the Widow of Nain Luke 7:11-17
 - While Jesus went about the work of His ministry, He met a funeral procession. The only son of a widow had died, and crowds were taking him for burial.
 - For a funeral to happen and burial arrangements made and completed, a person must have died for hours or days.

- It was the one of the most hopeless situations. A widow perhaps with no prospects of remarrying or giving birth to another child had lost her only child.
- Jesus having pity on her stopped the procession and brought the young man to life. He immediately sat up and began to speak. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.
- His critics were shocked. Here was the proof, there was no way they could deny this. Many people believed in Jesus and followed Him. Jesus had proved beyond any reasonable doubt that He had power over death.

iii) Lazarus John 11: 38-44

- To show further that God the father had given him power over death and life Christ now went for another funeral. This time around the dead man Lazarus was buried.
- Jesus received news Lazarus His friend was dead but He did not go there to heal him.
- Afterwards He knew that Lazarus was dead without anyone telling Him about it and shared the news with His disciples. But he did not go to Lazarus' home until the fourth day. Tearful Martha suggested to Him, when He finally showed up, that had He come early Lazarus would not have died.
- Jesus asked where they had laid him, amidst protests that he was already decomposing.
- Jesus raised the dead man and asked them to give him a change of clothes. Many people now believed Him. John 11: 45-46
- The Pharisees could not disapprove this miracle. They had nowhere to hide. As you know they were sad people who only knew about the Abraham but they were not aware one greater than Abraham had come. They were only interested in having people listen to them but not to their savior.

iv) Jesus Resurrected by His Own Power Matthew 28: 1-10

- While He was alive, Jesus resurrected 3 people, the daughter of Jairus, The son of the widow of Nain and Lazarus the brother of Martha and Mary. Notice that in all these cases He (Jesus) called the dead people from dead and presented them alive.
- In John 10:18 Jesus had prophesied that He would lay down His life by Himself and took it up again. Nobody called Him out of death.

- Jesus allowed His spirit to leave the body and immediately the power of His resurrection kicked in like an automatic generator locating the leaving spirit and dashing for it and partnered with it. Together they descended to hades – hell.
- Jesus in Matthew 27:50-53 loosed all the spirits held in hades by death. He redirected them to earth and they located their skeletons and their decomposing bodies, reunited and the graves were thrown open. People who had died came out and walked on the streets.
- This was the power Paul was seeking to know. He was not asking God for more power to perform miracles. He wanted to know and experience the power that operated in Jesus to the extent He was able to die and resurrect.
- In Genesis 1:26 God gave Adam power over everything in water, air and on land. This dominion was stolen by Satan when he and his wife disobeyed God. Consequently, they lost the Dominion and were chased out of the garden of Eden.
- Jesus restored this lost dominion by his death and resurrection. Ephesians 1:18-20. This promise is still valid and if anything, the world is desperately waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. People are tired of deaths, sicknesses, demonic attacks. They want a Jesus and come on church we have died and resurrected with Him.
- As long as this promise remains, and the word of God is true. We have the power.

How do we receive the power of His resurrection?

a) Believe

Mark 9:23

When we are saved, God deposits a measure of the power to live a godly life in us. He says nothing is impossible for them that believe. Mark 9:23

b) Desire

Matthew 7:7-8

If you cultivate the fruits of holiness, you can ask for anything which you desire and it will be given to you so long as you ask according to God's will. It is His will for the sick to be healed, the possessed to be set free and of course the dead to resurrect.

c) Claim the promises of God

John 14:13-17

We need to claim these promises in Jesus name. He says he will fill us with power of the Holy Ghost– claim this power.

Friend if you are sick and tired of being powerless over sickness and diseases, poverty and lack, and demonic powers of darkness, our god offers a solution. The power of His resurrection. Believe, trust and obey him. You have power take back your family, business, health. For all things are possible in our Lord Christ Jesus.