

# **Sermon on Empower yourself by Knowing Christ**

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## **Text:**

Ephesians 1:17-21 <sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, <sup>20</sup> which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

## **1 Introduction**

We continue with the epistle from Paul to the churches in Ephesus and Asia Minor. We look at Ephesians 1:15-23. The major theme of this passage is empowerment of the believer through knowing Christ.

When you are friends with a powerful man some of the power rubs off. As a friend you can influence him to do certain things using his power. People come to you to favor them with some of your friend's power. When you are in the company of a strong man you also feel strong because you know you can leverage his strength.

In a similar way, we are empowered by knowing Christ who then becomes our friend and constant companion.

To know someone is not to have book knowledge of the person, but it is to experience the person personally so as to know instinctively know his thoughts, habits and his being. Albert Einstein once said, "I want to know all God's thoughts; all the rest are just details." Blaise Pascal, (1623-1662) also said, "Jesus Christ is end of all, and the centre to which all tends. Whoever knows Him knows the reason of everything."

If we know Christ in this way then we will know our rights, privileges and authority. I call upon you to empower yourself by getting to know Christ.

*But how can you know Christ?*

## **2 To know Christ you need the Holy Spirit to be planted in you**

As I said in our last discussion on Ephesians after believing, you are marked with the Holy Spirit. When Jesus had finished the work on Calvary, on the eve of his ascension he appeared to his disciples and “breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (John 20:22) thus marking them with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit then will endue you with some qualities that when you exercise you will enable you to get to know Christ.

To know Christ then, you need the Spirit of Wisdom given to you by the Holy Spirit as stated in 1 Corinthians 1:20-21.

1 Corinthians 1:20-21 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

To know Christ, you also need the Spirit of Revelation given to you by the Holy Spirit as stated in Ephesians 3:4-5, “the mystery of Christ, ... was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.” Colossians 2:2 states that the mystery of God is Christ. And Paul further elaborates in 1 Corinthians 1:23-24 saying, “we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

Unless you have received the Spirit of Revelation the message of the cross is foolishness and so you can never acknowledge that Christ is the power of God and Christ is the wisdom of God. Harry A. Ironside wrote, “Scripture nowhere condemns the acquisition of knowledge. It is the wisdom of this world, not its knowledge, that is foolishness with God... The history of philosophy is a story of contradictory, discarded hypotheses... Many of them have failed to avail themselves of that which would unravel every knot and solve every problem, namely, the revelation of God in Christ as given in the Holy Scriptures”

To know Christ you also need the eyes of your heart to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. This is necessary because Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4:4 that “The god of this age has blinded

the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

*What does it mean to know Christ?*

### **3 To know Christ is to know his hope, inheritance, and power for you**

To know Christ is to know the hope to which he has called you. Paul says in Titus 3:7 that our hope is eternal life and also says in 1 Corinthians 15:19 that, “If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.” It is hope that engenders perseverance to go through life’s trials.

To know Christ is to know the nature of the inheritance awaiting the saints, which is rich and glorious. We will inherit many mansions and we “will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and ... like the stars for ever and ever. (Daniel 12:3) This type of inheritance engenders confidence to deal with life’s situations.

To know Christ is to know his great power for you that has no comparison in heaven or on earth or under the earth.

*What is the nature of this power that we get as a result of knowing Christ?*

### **4 If you know Christ then you are empowered by God’s mighty strength**

If you know Christ then you are empowered by God’s mighty strength according to our passage. It is God’s mighty strength that raised Jesus from the dead. You have the power in you to be raised above any dead situation in your life in a similar way in which Sarah’s dead womb (Romans 4:19-21) came to life. That is why Paul says in Philippians 3:10, “I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection.” So, I call upon you to empower yourself by getting to know Christ.

God’s mighty strength that empowers you is the strength that seated Jesus at the right hand of God. This means Jesus was given an honored position in a way similar to how Joseph

and Daniel became prime ministers. You are therefore positioned by God's mighty strength to rise up to a higher level than you are today. So, I call upon you to empower yourself by getting to know Christ.

God's mighty strength that empowers you is the strength that placed Jesus far above all rule, authority, power and dominion. We are empowered to win the struggle against the rulers, authorities, and powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. So, I call upon you to empower yourself by getting to know Christ.

God's mighty strength that empowers you is the strength that placed Jesus far above every title that can be given now and forever. The name of Jesus supercedes all situations that can be named, whether sickness, problems, trials, troubles, or difficulties. And that is why Philippians 2:9-11 says, "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." So, I call upon you to empower yourself by getting to know Christ.

## **5 Conclusion**

Beloved in Christ, to know Christ you need the Holy Spirit to be planted in you by accepting Jesus Christ as your personal savior and lord. To know Christ means to know his hope, inheritance, and power for you. If you know Christ then you are empowered by God's mighty strength.

I call upon you to empower yourself by getting to know Christ.