

I'd like to call your attention to the book of Philippians. Let us turn to the third chapter and I'd like to start with verse 7 and read a few verses. (reading text).

I'd like to look with you particularly for a few minutes at the tenth verse. It begins with the words "that I may know him." I'd like to stress the fact that far more important than any service you can render to the Lord, far more important than anything we can do in making Him known, important as that is, far more important than anything like this is this ambition that Paul had, that I may know Him.

This year if you learn a great deal about languages, if you learn a great deal about history, about theology, about other subjects and do not learn to know Christ better than you ever did before, I will feel that it is a wasted year. "That I may know Him" is the ambition Paul expressed for himself. Paul who had for so many years been so active, Paul who had gone throughout the Roman empire preaching the Gospel of Christ, Paul who had established churches in so many different places, Paul who had led so many souls to the knowledge of the Lord, Paul who had written so many books as part of the NT, here when he was in prison in Rome looking back on all of this instead of saying, How wonderful the way God has been using me for all this, he said, that I desire that I may know Him. And that is something we need to work at all our lives.

It is something that is vital for us. That we may know Him. So I hope that this year that everyone of you will be learning to know Christ definitely all the time.

But know there is a difference between knowing Him and knowing about Him. A person can know about Christ. He can know all the theology. He can have a thorough understanding of the correct teaching of Scripture. He can know a great deal about Him and not know Him. If he does it is worthless.

On the other hand a person cannot know Christ without knowing something about Him. A person cannot know Christ thoroughly without knowing a great deal about him. There are many today --not from circles from which probably many of you have come-- but in circles which have a tremendous influence in the religious world today, who talk constantly about we want to do what Christ wants and we want to follow Christ. And the Christ they talk about and the ideals they present before them, are utterly different from that of the Christ taught in the Bible and the ideas contained in the Bible. Such people do not know Christ, because they do not know about Him.

The word Christ is bandied about in many religious circles today as simply a general term for progress or ethical value or something like that. If we are going to know Christ we have to know about Him. How are you going to know about Him? Well, you can hear a few facts about Him, and you have enough knowledge to know Him to a slight extent.