

peripheral things, but if you think about, though these other peripheral things are important, these other aspects have their vital place, if you can believe in the resurrection of Christ surely you can believe in everything God tells in His word. The great miracle that Paul stressed here -- the power of His resurrection. We were dead in sin, lost, far from the knowledge of God and the wonderful power of Christ's resurrection raised us into newness of life, raised us up from our lost condition through what Jesus did on calvary's cross -- the power of His resurrection. But Oh how ready we are to live lives that drag along at a poor dying rate. Failing to accomplish what God wants us to accomplish. Failing to step out and make our energies and our efforts count for the Lord. Failing to make the progress in our studies, in our understanding, in our different ways that we should, becoming cowed by the different problems and situations that arise. If we truly belong to Christ we have access to the power of His resurrection, the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and God wants us to avail ourselves of this power. He wants us to step out with full confidences as those through whom He wants to use this mighty power, the power that raised Him from the dead, in order to use us for His purposes. "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. "And Paul might well have said, mighten he, Oh, I know the power of His resurrection. I'm proud of what he's done through me. Oh, God protect us -- me from becoming proud, keep me humble when I'm so proud of what I'm accomplishing make me not, make me realise that it is God that has done it and not me. And I'm sure that Paul did have that attitude and that feeling. But right here he jumps to something entirely different. "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection -- this tremendous power, and yet, "the fellowship of His suffering". "Being made conformable to His death." Oh we want to know the power of His resurrection and we need to. We are all anxious to know the power of His resurrection, but are we anxious to know the fellowship of suffering? Do we not rather cringe from the thought of the fellowship of His suffering? Do we not draw back from the things that are disagreeable? Now I don't mean that like the Medieval monks we should go out and ~~scourge~~ scourge ourselves and think that maybe we are doing good, or we are advancing God's work by simply making ourselves hurt with no purpose? That's not what he means by the "fellowship of His sufferings." But he wants us to realize that Jesus Christ came down to this earth and suffered on the cross, lived in the imperfections of human life,