



*The Podcast Focused on
Revitalizing Conventional Christianity
—One Person at a Time*

Inside Jimbo's Head™

Series 1, Cultural Christianity Versus Kingdom
Christianity

Episode 17, Getting Down to the Nitty-Gritty: The
Radical Attitude and Actions of Kingdom Christian-
ity, Part Three: Philippians 3:7-10©

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Introduction

Here it comes! Are you ready?

Sound Effects: Opening Jimbo's Head

Wow! Well, I guess this old head of mine is open one more time. Let's see what flies out this time, huh? You know, I think one of these days those old hinges are going to rust completely off.

Today my goal is to finish up our look at Paul's radical attitude and actions, which he described in Philippians chapter three, verses seven through ten. There is one reason I want to move past this passage, as critical as it is to our studies and our lives. I am extremely excited to get into the specifics of this section of Cultural Christianity Versus Kingdom Christianity that I call "Getting Down to the Nitty-Gritty."

Opening—Where We Have Been

But first, I think it would be expeditious for all of us if I share with you a summary of where we have been. Remember, this scripture passage is a lead-in to the Nitty-Gritty segment, *and* the

first issue we will take up in that segment. That first issue will be the difference between the way cultural Christianity and kingdom Christianity deal with becoming a disciple of Jesus and growing in Him. That's right! We are going to take on the whole idea of salvation and Christian growth. "What could be radical about that?" you ask. After all this time together, do you think I am stuck in culturalized conventional Christianity with its Easy Believism and I'll Fly Away Mentality? Guess where all that starts!

But first, let's do a quick overview of the background I shared with you in episode fifteen and sixteen for Philippians chapter three, verses seven through ten.

Always remember that when the scriptures teach us through example, it is never a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. We can not say any of the people used as examples, including Jesus, were so unique we cannot live as they lived. Nor can we use cultural differences as an excuse. This form of teaching is just as binding on us as didactic teaching and direct commands. If that doesn't do it for you, there is always the fact that Paul clarifies how the passages we are considering and those that follow are paramount to our lives in Christ. How? He commands the Philippians, and thus us, to imitate him and his co-workers. There it is—a command to live out these passages made up of an example. He also tells the Philippians, and again, us, to keep their eyes on those who live as they live. There is a reason he says eyes and not ears. Do you remember this from the last episode? Don't worry. We will be taking a long look at the answer to that question in the next upcoming lessons when we get down to the nitty-gritty of becoming a disciple and growing disciples.

We also saw that this whole scripture section shows Paul as a person who gives up one thing, in Paul's case, all things, for something of a far greater value. This key fact must be kept in mind if we are to understand, let alone live these passages' truths. So what have you given up to live for Christ? Hmmm! If you are the typical centralized conventional Christian . . . Well, you answer that question for yourself.

I also introduced you to my intensified version of this passage. You should be getting far more comfortable with it by now. Again, make sure you have downloaded the transcript of Inside Jimbo's Head from episode fifteen from the jimbo-speaking.org website. Here I attached both this intensified version and the work I did in developing this tool. Without that, you will get lost.

Now let's remember what we saw as we studied verses seven and eight. I want to remind you of several key elements coming out of these verses. Paul accounted for and took authority over some key elements in his life.

First, we learned he accounted for and took authority over his entire religious and cultural way of life and its advantages. This action was a past action that was completed successfully and effectively in the past. Its results continued into the present day of Paul's writing to the Philippians.

Second, we learned he accounted for and took authority over what he called the whole of every kind and variety of things in their totality. In other words, everything. We all must remember

that "everything" means "every" "thing." Every kind of variety of things and in their totality—you can't get any more unambiguous than that statement. Paul added the whole of every kind and variety of things in their totality to his past religious and cultural realities in an accumulative way. He then told us, in the present tense, that these are things he continuously, habitually, as a lifestyle takes account of and authority over. He also informs us that an outside force caused him to forfeit all these things. This took place in the past and was completely and effectively accomplished. This transformation took place, more than likely, as part of his conversion process.

Third, Paul had a radically different attitude toward all these things in their entirety, including his old religious and cultural background. First, he saw them as a damaged loss and a detriment to what he now held as supreme in his life. However, he took this even further. Paul called all these things, DUNG! What things? His past religion, his past culture, and the whole of all things in their entirety.

Next, we saw what caused, what drove Paul to have this new attitude. First, he tells us it is because of a partnership relationship with Messiah Jesus and His kingdom. Then, he describes this relational partnership as the supreme, superior, surpassing worth of a full, complete, intimate, experiential knowledge of Messiah Jesus as his Lord. By having a relationship with Messiah Jesus as his Lord, he speaks of the kingdom which Messiah Jesus established. Finally, Paul tells us of the results of his new attitude, actions and focus on such a supreme partnership with his Lord, the Messiah Jesus, and his Lord's kingdom.

In the last phrase of verse eight, we saw the first part of the results from Paul doing these things and allowing them to happen to him. These things took place in Paul's life so that he might gain, once and for all, the Messiah Jesus and His kingdom as the dominating power over his entire being and every circumstance. Have you ever wanted to impact the world for the kingdom of God in the way we see Paul impacting the world for the kingdom? Here is the prerequisite for such a ministry, actually, for any authentic impactful ministry with eternal consequences.

In this episode, we will see the second of the two results of Paul's new attitude and actions.

Section I—Mining the Gold From Verse Nine

Wow! Think about those things and what your life would look like if you had the same attitude driving your actions. What would happen if you took Paul's command to "join in imitating me" as seriously as you took Jesus' command to "repent and believe"? What if Paul's attitude had been your attitude from that first decision to follow Jesus? Actually, "wow" is such a weak word. How about "Wham!" or "Pow!" or "Zowie!" Ok, ok, most of you may be too young, but I did spend many hours watching the Batman TV show! But hey! As I have said before, if these things do not blow your socks off, call the undertaker. Better yet, if they don't drive you to your knees crying out to the Lord in repentance for taking your relationship with him too lightly . . . Well, call the exorcist!

I know, I know. Many times I speak in hyperboles but not this time! What we see exemplified in Paul, what Paul demands the Philippians and us to imitate, is far beyond how most of us live right now! It is the normal, authentic life of a disciple of Jesus. Remember our friends from Iran? What's stopping us?" My prayer is that these things rock your world, shake you up, and bring about a decision to stop playing the games of culturalized conventional Christianity. Do I need to say, "No More Excuses!" What scripture commands us to do, even through example, the Holy Spirit enables us to accomplish. If that has not sunk into your inner person yet, you have been smoking the wrong kind of theology. Remember, if the New Covenant commands you to do it, you do not have to grow into it. Just Do It!

You see, my friends, this is why I added some counting the cost questions at the end of the last episode. If you did not take them seriously as I shared them with you, please go back and take those questions before the Lord. This whole attitude starting with the counting the cost questions, is a serious business. It has eternal consequences for you and others.

Even in writing these episodes on Philippians chapter three, I have had to return to my quiet place for introspection and confession. In all actuality, these are the kind of questions Jesus would have asked us when He was here if we came to Him and asked to follow Him. Why would Jesus say these kinds of things to people who wanted to follow Him back then and not demand them of us now? Frankly, if these are not the result of our active faith and its new obedient mindset . . . Well, Houston, We Have a Problem! And not just any problem. We have a problem that will cause us to abort the mission and many to lose their lives! Was that radical enough for you?

Oh, and for you theological wonks who are pulling out your hair right now. It is only by grace produced faith that we can answer those questions and live in them. We will deal with this in verse nine. This is why the call of the kingdom is to repent and believe. In other words, take a new direction in your life, set a new purpose in your life through active faith, which produces obedience. The kingdom of God has arrived!!! It's time for a new world order. It's time to rejoice and work in the kingdom of God, bringing that new world order to others! Jesus never explained grace produced faith to those to whom He asked His counting the cost questions. He saw it in those who responded in a positive way to His radical questions and statements. Trying to give the theological realities behind the question would only confuse the power of the question!

Oh, and just one more item for you theological wonks. Why, I mean, why, do you never teach, let alone train, people to live and walk in the Spirit. It is only as we take our eyes off the things of this world, the flesh, and put them squarely on the things of the Spirit, that God's grace allows us to live in obedience to all the New Covenant commands. It is not our ability to obey by implementing the scriptures. As we will soon see in upcoming episodes, it is only through a life lived in and walking in the Spirit that we can fulfill the Law's righteous demands.

With all that said, it's time for us to get down with verse nine.

Remember, verse nine follows verse eight. Hey, I think I should become a seminary professor. No thanks! However, I needed to remind you that verse nine is a continuation of what Paul saw

as the result of his new attitude and actions. In the last phrase of verse eight, he tells us that he would gain Christ. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words tells us that this carried with it the concept of so practically appropriating Christ to oneself that He, Christ, becomes the dominating power in and over one's whole being and every circumstance. And in the last episode, you thought I just pulled that definition of "gain" out of my hat. Right?

Again I want you to remember how this whole section of scripture has a sense of building one facet upon another. In episode sixteen, I likened this to an orchestra conductor building the intensity of his symphony through an ever-increasing crescendo as he brings in the voices of different instrument groups. The majestic melodies soared with each added instrument group's voice. I also likened this section to the increasing dramatic flair of the artist's brush as he allowed newer, more brilliant, vibrant colors to erupt upon his canvas.

Now, in verse nine, the vibrant colors begin to erupt on the artist's canvas with such intensity one would think he is losing control. The maestro is increasingly animated as he brings his orchestra to a fevered pitch as more and more instruments join the overwhelming sounds filling, incising, and impregnating our hearts and minds.

Here it comes. Here is the next level of intensity. Here is the second result of Paul's new attitude and actions. Can you hear it? Ready? ". . . *and be found in Him* . . ."

What did Paul mean by that first phrase of verse nine, "and be found in Him"? For years, most people who have been in the church and have studied the Bible often look right past this phrase. The idea of being in Christ is so common in scripture that we think we understand it because we have heard or read it so many times before.

Let's first look at the depths waiting to be discovered in the word translated "found." It is Thayer's Lexicon that gives us our best understanding. Thayer tells us this word carries with it the idea of being discovered, being recognized, being detected by others, and showing oneself to others. Again, if we never take the time to discover this robust nature of the Greek word, we could just read over one more familiar concept. You should check yourself for how often you just read over such familiar words, like "found."

Yet this word goes deeper. It is a verb constructed in the aorist tense with a subjunctive mood. This construction is the same as the word "gain" in the final phrase of verse eight, "that I may gain Christ." In fact, let's look at both of these phrases as found in the English Standard Version. ". . . in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him . . ." As I said, both the words "gain" and "found" are aorist subjunctive verbs.

The aorist subjunctive points to a time in the future when this may or may not happen. However, do not fall into the trap of so many infected with the "I'll fly away" mentality and the confusion it brings in understanding Christian growth. Here Paul is not indicating that this would only happen when Christ returned. Neither is he indicating that this is something into which he needed to grow. What we have here is a clause. There is a first part that must be fulfilled, and then the second can take place.

This verb's construction is similar to me telling my wife, "When I go to the store, I will pick up coffee." I have to go to the store before I can buy coffee. If I don't go to the store, I can't pick up the coffee. So there is an implicit question as to whether or not I will pick up the coffee. Why? I may or may not choose to go to the store. This concept is what is meant by the subjunctive mood.

Do you have any idea what would happen to me if my wife had to wait for Jesus to return for me to bring the coffee home? Or what if I would tell her, "Oh, honey, I know you need coffee right now, but this is something I need to grow into. You're going to have to wait for me to mature before you can have your coffee." It would not be happy times in the Warren household, I can assure you! By the way, I just read this to my wife. She told me to add that the doctor would not be removing the body cast for quite a few months if that happened.

For these things to happen in his life, Paul had to take into account both his religious and cultural background and the whole of every kind and variety of things in their totality. He had to consider them as worthless and detestable refuse like the excrement of animals. But what gave Paul the ability to do this. It was his partnership relationship with Messiah Jesus and His kingdom. This partnership relationship was what Paul describes as the supreme, superior, surpassing worth of a full, complete, intimate, experiential, relational knowledge of Messiah Jesus his Lord, and Jesus' messianic kingdom.

Thus everything depends upon and circles around the supreme, superior, surpassing worth of his new relationship with Christ. And that, we know, was brought about by grace produced active faith expressing itself in obedience. Now, I could say more about this verb, yet I believe that is enough for you to maul around in your head for now. And anyway, that old clock keeps tic-tic-ticking away.

The next phrase we need to look at is "in him." Now, if you have been around the church for any time, the phrase "in him" or "in Christ" will sound very familiar to you. Everything Paul sees of our relationship with God as His New Covenant people hinges on us being "in Christ." But what does it mean to be "in Christ?" Again, Thayer's Lexicon breaks this down for us. To be in someone or something is "to be wholly joined in such a way that the one in whom one finds themselves is the place one lives and moves and the one to whom one's powers and influence are subject." You will discover that living and moving in Christ is analogous to living/walking in the Spirit in future episodes. Yet get this, my friends. I have been very involved in the church for nearly fifty years, and I have never heard "in Christ," explained according to Thayer's definition.

Maybe this is because this carries with it a mystical sense. In the West and the Western conventional culturalized church, mystical things are not given as much credence as rationally understood things. Either that or they are dismissed by saying, "Well, that's just a mystery. We won't understand that until we reach heaven." No! We will not understand the mystical parts of Christianity until we begin to experience them as we take our eyes off the things of the flesh (the world) and keep them on the things of the Spirit (the kingdom of God).

Now I do not have the time to get into this here, but let me clarify that spiritual or mystical things are even more real and far more powerful than the physical and rationally explained things. Don't believe me. Put it in this context. What is God but a mystical Spirit who can only be understood in the supreme, superior, surpassing worth of a full, complete, intimate, experiential knowledge of Him? That's Paul's point in his first prayer for the Ephesians in chapter one of his letter to them.

With all that said, let me share with you the last phrase of verse eight and this first part of the initial phrase from verse nine in my intensified version.

In fact, I am now continuously, habitually, as a lifestyle taking into account and having authority over them, considering them as worthless and detestable refuse, like the excrement of animals. I do this continuously and habitually, as a lifestyle to the end that I might gain, once and for all, The Messiah and His kingdom as the dominating power over my entire being and every circumstance. ⁹I also am, in all certainty, as a lifestyle, continuously and habitually taking into account and having authority over and considering all, and I mean the whole of every kind and variety of things in their totality to be continuously habitually damaged, a detriment and a loss and as worthless and detestable scraps to be thrown out to the dogs so that I might, once and for all, be discovered, be recognized, and show myself as being in Him, The Messiah, and His kingdom. In other words, so that I might be discovered and recognized and show myself as wholly joined in such a way that He is the place where I live and move and the one to whom my power and influence are subject.

Now I know that is a mouthful compared to a traditional translation. However, now you can see this intensified version's power in bringing the Greek language's robust nature into view.

As I have said before, the maestro has not finished with this symphony. The artist has not laid down his brushes. The next phrases in verse nine ring like clarion bells in the ears of all evangelicals. Here is where the conductor brings the chimes into the symphonic sounds wafting through our hearts and minds. Listen to how the ESV translates all of verse nine. ". . . and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith . . ."

I can hear it now, "Ahh, this one I know. Now your teaching truth Jimbo." I'm glad I'm sharing something that sounds familiar to you, but remember, understanding is often lost in familiarity. Experiencing what is actually said finds no home in familiar-sounding verses. You see, here we find very familiar words such as righteousness, the Law, and faith in Christ. However, these words' vibrant colors are often missed even as they erupt on the artist's canvas because of familiarity. So let's look at each of these richly packed words.

". . . not having a righteousness of my own . . ." One of the biggest problems that exist in the conventional culturalized church is a thing called positional theology. Basically, it says that you can hold a position before God with little if any, outward effect. Now no reputable Bible teacher would say such a thing, but that is how most Christians sucked into the vortex of easy believism

hear their teaching. Now teachers will say it is the hearer's fault. But the fault falls far deeper than such a blame-shifting game. I have mentioned this before in passing and will not go into it here, but soon we will study the difference between teaching and training.

Thayer gives us the clearest and fullest definition of the Greek word translated righteousness. In his lexicon, he states the following about this word: "broadly the state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God; integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling and acting." That is a great explanation, and I'm sure you understand we are made righteous by the blood of Jesus shed on the cross.

Yet His death on the cross also sets us free from the power of sin, so we are no longer slaves to sin but slaves to righteousness. You find this in Romans chapter six. We cannot have one without the other, for they come as a packaged deal.

Sorry, purveyors of easy believeism, but you need to restudy the book of Romans within the entire book's context. You cannot just pull snippets out and present them as the "gospel," such as the so-called "Roman Road to Salvation." Thus being righteous is more than a position. It is a transformation that empowered every new person of active faith in a new way of living. Righteousness causes us to set our eyes on the things of the Spirit, not the flesh, so we can live/walk in the Spirit and thus fulfill the righteous demands of the Law. Remember how Paul defines the true people of God in the first few verses of Philippians chapter three? He said they put no confidence in the flesh! If that doesn't work out for you, check out Romans chapter eight and take it before the Lord if you do not live this way.

Now let's look at the word Law. Obviously, Paul is speaking about the Old Covenant law and how the Jews interacted through obedience. Yes, they had faith, but the primary way a Jew looked at the Law was the same way most modern people look at laws. We have to obey them or suffer the consequences. And boy did the Jews of Jesus' day understand the consequences of disobedience as they looked back down through their history. Because they did not keep the Law, they lost the kingdom. God promised He would send Messiah to save them from their sins, allowing them to be a part of the new kingdom, God's kingdom, the Messiah's kingdom established on this earth.

I translate "Law" as "legalistic consciousness." I do this because this is how most, who are interested in obedience in any way, size, shape, or form, approach living out the New Covenant's commands. However, as I have indicated before, easy believism has taken the teeth out of God's New Covenant commands.

But there is another side to the coin. This way of legalistic consciousness in approaching God's commands in the New Covenant is what underpins legalism in the modern church today. Most Western people deal with scripture's truth by defining truth, defending truth, and implementing truth. That is how the Jews dealt with the Law. And guess what? This approach leads to complete frustration by causing more sin to take place in our lives. You will find this in Romans, chapter seven.

There is a far more powerful, God-honoring way to handle all the truths, especially the New Covenant's commands. But I am teasing you right now because we will get into that in the second area we look at in the Nitty-Gritty section of our study of Cultural Christianity Versus Kingdom Christianity.

That brings us to the word "faith." There have been as many definitions of faith as there have been theologians, teachers, and preachers. My definition is, obviously, the one I like the best. I developed it while writing an intensified version of Hebrews chapter eleven, verse one. By God's grace, I did not stop there. I began to consider the examples given to us by the writer of Hebrews (more than likely, Luke). I then began to pull together everything I had read and meditated upon concerning faith over the past decades. I do not have the time to get into the technicalities, but here is my definition. I believe you will find it compelling, complete, and cohesive.

Faith is produced by God's grace enabling a foundational conviction that all God said and did, says and does, and promises to do is true and truthful, propelling one into a lifestyle of obedience.

Ok, let's pull this together. I am going to share with you my intensified version of verse nine. I could not get into all the words in this verse. However, I want to remind you that you will find it in the add-on to the transcript of "Inside Jimbo's Head" found in episode fifteen. Sorry but the clock is ticking, so let's move forward. Oh, yes, this is a mouthful like none other we have seen so far. Why? As I told you in episode fifteen, I have brought in as many of the clauses already used by Paul in previous verses that have a direct bearing on this verse and give clarity to each point. So, with that understanding . . . Here we go.

⁹I also am, in all certainty, as a lifestyle, continuously and habitually taking into account and having authority over and considering all, and I mean the whole of every kind and variety of things in their totality to be continuously habitually damaged, a detriment and a loss and as worthless and detestable scraps to be thrown out to the dogs so that I might, once and for all, be discovered, be recognized, and show myself as being in Him, The Messiah, and His kingdom. In other words, so that I might be discovered and recognized and show myself as wholly joined in such a way that He is the place where I live and move and the one to whom my power and influence are subject. However, *I am not* continuously and habitually as a lifestyle wearing, possessing, or owning a righteous condition that yields feelings, thinking, and actions in conformity to the character of God, which emanates from myself or my own legalistic consciousness, that is, my own ability to be obedient to the commands of God. However, *I am* continuously and habitually as a lifestyle wearing and possessing a righteous condition that yields feelings, thinking, and actions in conformity to the character of God that is acceptable to God, which is through a firm foundational conviction that all God said and did, says and does and promises to do is true and truthful leading to a life of obedience. This righteous condition, which I continuously, habitually as a lifestyle wear and possess, is in and through The Messiah

and His kingdom, for He is the one in whom I live and move and the one to whom my power and influence are subject. This righteous condition, acceptable to God, that yields feelings, thinking, and actions in conformity to the character of God finds its origin and emanates from God based on faith, that is, a firm foundational conviction that all God said and did, says and does and promises to do is true and truthful leading to a lifestyle of obedience.

Hmm, Hmm, Hmm. Boy, my eyes well up every time I read that verse in my intensified version as my heart cries out to God, "I will! I will! By Your grace, I will!" I hope you have the same reaction. I will not say anything harsh as I have in the past if your reaction is not something similar. But I do ask you to pull quietly away and enter the conscious presence of the persons of the Trinity. Open your heart to them. Their holy light will shine on anything amiss in your inner person, as well as in your attitude and actions.

Section II—Mining the Gold From Verse Ten

Well, friends, we now reach the last verse of our prestudy to the Nitty-Gritty section of Series One, Cultural Christianity Versus Kingdom Christianity.

Once again, I must point out how the more I meditate upon these verses, the more I can see how they are best represented by a symphony orchestra developing and building in intensity until they hit the masterpiece's final movement. Using that analogy, we can now say we have reached the final movement of Paul's symphony, representing how the attitude of Christ has played itself out in his attitude and actions. This final movement actually forms three pillars on which the life of Paul found its solid foundation. Here, with articulate acclamation, while showing off his virtuosic prowess as a composer, Paul fully sets forth the ultimate conclusion to each part of his symphony. Again, each segment is pulled together in an accumulative way leading to this fast, furious, rollicking finale.

The key to Paul's finale's composition is how he uses phrases around which this final symphonic movement resounds with one repetitive theme tying them together. These three phrases are:

- Know Him
- (Know) the power of His resurrection
- (Know) sharing His suffering, becoming like Him in His death.

Now, just in case you think I made a mistake, the verb "know," the repetitive theme, is understood in both the second and third phrases of this finale. So, let's take a look at Paul's repetitive connecting theme, the verb translated "know." Actually, it will be a review, not something new. Why? It is the same word used in verse eight for "knowing" Christ Jesus my Lord. However, this time it is the verb form of the Greek word I spoke of when we discussed verse eight, where it appeared in its noun form. It is imperative to remember that this word is not indicating an intellectual understanding in and of itself. It is a full, complete, intimate, experiential, relational

knowledge. As I said before, to be sure, this kind of knowing includes intellectual comprehension. However, this is dwarfed by the fullness and completeness of this type of knowing. This "knowing" involves the whole of the inner person, not just the intellect.

I should also point out that this verb is in its aorist active infinitive form. Whenever we find the aorist infinitive,ⁱ what the author emphasizes beyond any other verb form is the verb's aspect, not its timing. In other words, Paul is not saying anything about whether this took place in the past, is happening in the present or will happen in the future. He is simply telling us the "knowing" is an effective, successful, single, one-time action instead of an ongoing action. Paul is not saying these things are continuously happening, but something that is effectively known once it is known. Thus Paul was not growing in these things, but the "knowing of them" took place as a one-time action bringing about a knowing that was effective and successful.

So, let's look at the three parts of this symphonic finale, which builds exponentially, filling our inner persons' symphony hall. The first thing that Paul says is effectively, successfully known is "Him," meaning Messiah Jesus, who Paul already said he knew as Lord. From this, we can conclude that all three results have already taken place. Remember, this entire section of scripture is predicated upon the attitude of Jesus explained in chapter two. In other words, Paul already lives in the state of a full, complete, intimate, experiential relationship and partnership with the Messiah Jesus as Lord and His kingdom. This sense of a relationship already held, obviously then passes through to the other two essential results. We have already had an extensive discussion of "Knowing Him (or Christ)," so I have little more to add at this juncture.

I want to take a small amount of time to share the other two results' rich, robust sense.

First, as Paul has a full, complete, intimate, experiential relational knowledge of Messiah Jesus, he also has a full, complete, intimate, experiential relational knowledge of the power of the Messiah's resurrection. Two important things you must understand about the power of the Messiah's resurrection. Strong's Definitions defines the word in Greek translated "power" as "force, miraculous power, mighty work." Thayer defines it as "strength, ability, power, inherent power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature which a person or thing puts forth."

We get a perfect picture of what Paul refers to when he speaks of "knowing the power of His resurrection" when we look at his first prayer for the Ephesians. You can find this in chapter one of that epistle. Remember the epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon were all written within the same two-year span. So we find recurring themes that may be simply stated in one letter but explained in another. These letters were to be passed between the communities of God's New Covenant people. Thus disciples in each of these communities would become familiar with the truths in each epistle.

In his first prayer for the Ephesians, Paul prays a series of things, each building upon another. Does this sound familiar? This building upon concepts is similar to the passages we are now studying. First, Paul prays that the Father of all glory would give the Ephesians the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full, complete, intimate, experiential, relational knowledge of Himself. Do those words describing this relationship sound like what we just discussed? They should!

He then prays that this kind of knowledge of Father would lite up and illuminate their inner persons so that they may be able to comprehend (a different kind of knowledge) three key aspects of the Christian life. These three aspects were the destiny to which they were all called, Father's glorious inheritance in the people He both set aside as holy and called to live holy lives, and the immeasurable greatness of Father's power toward all God's people. This third aspect helps us understand the second pillar of Paul's life in Christ we find in verse ten of Philippians chapter three, which we are studying. Remember, Paul speaks to these things and later commands the Philippians, and thus us, to imitate his attitude and actions.

Now back to the Ephesian chapter one prayer. The word that gives us our first hint of "the power of His (Jesus') resurrection" is the word translated as "power." Why? It is the same Greek word as we find in our Philippian's passage. However, in Ephesians, Paul goes into depth about the power of the resurrection. First, he tells us that this power is focused on us. Next, he tells us it is the same power Father used to raise Jesus from the dead. What was that power? Any person familiar with the concept of God's power as it relates to His people will know this is speaking about the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Right after this, Paul tells us how not only was this power used to raise Christ from the dead but to seat Him in heavenly places with the ultimate of all authority over all things. Yes, again, even here, "all things" means "all things." Notice Jesus has authority over all things, and Paul takes authority over all things that affect his life! Finally, Paul tells us in this prayer that this authority given to Jesus is now also invested in the church.

Thus we learn that to know the "power of the resurrection" listed in our Philippines passage is to know the person of the Holy Spirit. However, it speaks beyond simply having a full, complete, intimate, experiential, and relational knowledge of the Spirit. Here Paul speaks of having a full complete intimate, experiential, relational knowledge of the dynamic power that Father focuses on those of us who are in Christ.

We can also draw from this first of Paul's Ephesian prayers that this "power of His resurrection" carries not only the idea of a mighty, miraculous, innate force *but the results* of Christ's resurrection. These results of Jesus' resurrection includes the new resurrected life of Christ we have as those born of God. Thus this life is being renewed in us continuously as we have a full, complete, intimate, experiential, relational knowledge of the "power of His resurrection."

Second, we can see from Paul's Ephesian prayer that this also refers to the authority invested in Christ when He was seated at the right hand of the Father. Remember, in Ephesians, Paul immediately tells us that this authority is invested in the church. Thus as we work together in communities of communion, working together and in harmony, we have the dominating authority of Jesus over all things.

Again, that should not only blow your socks off but blow out of your life anything, other than the Holy Spirit, that dominates your life. It kind of fits together doesn't it.

We now come to the full, complete, intimate, experiential, and relational knowledge of "sharing (or having a partnership with) His sufferings, continuously, habitually, as a lifestyle becoming

like Him in His death." To fully go into this would take another full episode of this podcast. As a part of this section, *Getting Down to the Nitty-Gritty*, there will be at least one episode dedicated to this subject. In my two-volume book entitled "Communing with the Trinity, A Doctrine Experienced in Reality," I explore this subject in some depth. For now, allow me to point out two aspects of "sharing His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death" that summarizes what I write in that book.

First, we must realize that the conventional, culturalized church in American does speak to the subject of suffering. However, when we do, we do not speak about Paul's meaning of suffering in this passage. We may talk about the natural suffering that comes from living in a fallen world, including the areas of sickness or the death of a loved one. However, here Paul speaks of the suffering promised by Jesus. This suffering is redemptive suffering based on persecution and our battle in expanding the kingdom of God. In any battle, there is always suffering when moving into the enemy's territory. This kind of suffering is especially true in what I call "the battle of the ages." The expansion of God's kingdom.

The second thing we must understand concerning this type of suffering is how it is fundamental to the number one thing all people from the conventional, culturalized church enjoy singing about and discussing. Why would Paul, or anyone "in Christ" want to live continuously, habitually, as a lifestyle in conformity to the death of Jesus? Why would they want to have a full, complete, intimate, experiential knowledge of the sufferings of Christ? Why would anyone in their right minds want to live in the communion of a partnership with suffering and death?

Because we will get into this in much more detail in an upcoming episode, I will answer those questions with one word. Yes, believe it or not, only one word. Are you ready? Are you sure? Here it is—LOVE! Suffering and communion with the suffering and death of Jesus are the very things through which LOVE operates and the very things that produce authentic LOVE. Anything else is a cheap substitute and a challenging counterfeit.

I bet you can't wait until we get to the episode when we get into the nitty-gritty of this issue. Right?

Section III

Concluding Thoughts

Now, I must give you a quick, simple summary of the last three episodes and ask you some pointed questions. Think I can do it? Here goes . . .

Paul's attitude, which was driven by the attitude of Christ and became his at his conversion, drove him to take authority over his past religious expressions, his past cultural realities, as well as the whole of every kind and variety of things in their totality. He saw all these things as damaged and a loss and detrimental to his relationship and purpose as one "in Christ." Are you ready to take authority over the conventional, culturalized Christianity that has permeated your life? Do you see this as damaged, as loss, and detrimental to your relationship and purpose as a Jesus follower? Are you ready to take authority over your native culture with its rationalism,

individualism, pragmatism, and independence that undermines the culture of the kingdom of God? Do you see these as damaged, as loss, and detrimental to your relationship and purpose as a Jesus follower? Are you ready to take authority over the whole everything in its entirety?

Paul saw all these things as the excrement of animals. Do you see them in the same way? Do you see your involvement in culturalized conventional Christianity, the American culture, and the whole of everything in its totality as doggy dew to be scraped off your shoe?

Paul did this because of the supreme, superior, surpassing worth of the full, complete, intimate experiential relationship he had with Jesus and His kingdom. Does your relationship with Jesus and His kingdom surpass the worth of your past conventional culturalized religious experiences, your American culture, and the whole of everything in its totality? If not, maybe your relationship with Jesus is not as important as you have deluded yourself into believing it to be?

Here is the bottom line. If your "conversion" did not start this way and if you continue to ignore the reality of Paul's command, the Spirit's command, to have this same attitude, here is what is happening in your life. Jesus and His kingdom is not the dominating power over your entire being and every circumstance of your life. God or others are not discovering you, nor are you recognized and showing yourself as "In Christ." In other words, Jesus is not the one with whom you are fully joined in such a way that He is the place where you live and move and the one to whom your power and influence are subject.

Here is the main question from this point. If you are not "in Christ," who are you in?

Finally, the foundational result of Paul's righteousness gained through faith, not a legalistic consciousness, was built on three main pillars. A full, complete, intimate, experiential knowledge of Jesus, a full, complete experiential knowledge of the power of His resurrection, i.e., the Holy Spirit, and a full, complete experiential knowledge of and partnership with the sufferings of Jesus that continuously, habitually, brought him into conformity to the death of Jesus as his lifestyle. Is this the lone security and foundation of your life? Will your tombstone read: Here Lies A Person Who Lived A Life In Partnership and Communion with Suffering and Death. Here Lies A Person Who Loved!

Please, No More Excuses! Do Not Walk Away Living in the Mediocracy of A Challenging Counterfeit of Christ and His Church! The Stakes Are Too High—In Fact, They Are Eternal!

¹ This is also true for the present infinitive