


Philippians 3:8-11


More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, and how I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3:8-11

- One sentence in Greek!
- Many English Bibles
- Principles of interpretation




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- Verse 10: “I want to know Christ”
- Not Paul’s usual way of speaking of his relationship to Christ
- In Hebraic thought (and LXX), verb indicates profound, intimate knowledge: Adam “knew” Eve
- Intimate relationship, not just intellectual “knowing”

*How do we “know” Christ? How do we help others “know” Christ?*



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- Recalls 2:11--crescendo of Christ hymn
- Only time Paul uses “my” Lord
- Highlights intimacy of relationship



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- Passive--God is the actor
- Paul "saw himself as incorporated or embedded in the spiritual existence that is the presence of the Risen Christ in the church" (Osiek)
- Gal 2:20: "...it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."
- "In Christ" used 51 times in Paul's letters; usually refers to Christ's dominion

What does it mean for us to live "in Christ," to be found in that reality?



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- Objective: Faith *in* Christ
- Subjective: Faith *of* Christ
- See also Gal 2:16, Rom 3:22, 3:26

Who cares? What difference does it make?



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- In Philippians the word *dynamis* occurs only here, but in other letters Paul makes it clear that all that is accomplished in Christ is done through the power of God
- e.g., 1 Cor 1.18: "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."
- Christ's resurrection had an effect that went beyond restoring his own life



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- *koinonia*:
- 1.5: "...because of your sharing/participation in the gospel"
- 1.7: "all of you share/became partners in God's grace with me"
- 2.1: "if there is...any sharing/fellowship in the Spirit"
- here, extends beyond horizontal human relationships to communion with Christ

What would knowing the *koinwnia* of Christ's suffering entail?



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- *symmorphizomenos*: co-morphing
- Our reality is formed by the cross
- We are dead to sin, crucified with Christ, liberated from law's curse
- Passive: I do not conform my life to Jesus' death; I have been co-morphed into Jesus' death



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- Why does Paul talk about resurrection *first*?



I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

- Why does Paul talk about resurrection *first*?
- Suffering and death are enfolded in the grounding mystery of Christ's resurrection
- Romans 6.5: For since we have become co-morphed with the form of his death, we will become co-morphed with the form of his resurrection



I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection of the dead.

- If Paul can speak with such assurance about the resurrection, why does he use the phrase *ei pos*?
- The specific combination *ei pos* commonly designates uncertainty
- Some scholars say that here, Paul uses it to indicate expectation

Otto:

Acts 27:7-12:

Paul, while sailing for Rome to appeal his imprisonment to Caesar, encounters great difficulty amidst adverse winds. Paul, considering that “the voyage was already dangerous” and that there was great potential for loss of life and cargo, advises the centurion to take refuge in the Fair Havens near Lasea. The centurion, however, follows the advice of the captain and the ship’s owner to stay the course, “on the chance that somehow (*ei pos*) they could reach Phoenix.”

Otto:

Romans 1:10:

Paul assures the church in Rome of his prayers and his desire to visit them: “I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow (*ei pos*) by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.”

Given Paul’s subsequent admission of repeated failure in his efforts to visit them (verse 13), it seems more likely that *ei pos* must involve some doubt and uncertainty in Paul’s mind as to his ever actually succeeding in visiting the Roman church.

So...what is Paul uncertain about?

If this is the “if” part of the conditional, what is the “then?”

