

A Glorious Process

Philippians 3:10

Theme: Like Paul, a Christian's ambition for life should be a deepening knowledge of, and identification with, Jesus.

***What is your ambition
in life?***

Paul's Ambition for this Life (3:10)

Paul makes three points.

The first is a general point.

The next two points flesh out what he means by the first.

As Paul is an example to the Philippian Christians, he is an example to Christians today.

1. To Know Christ (3:10a).

This is the general point.

Know does not mean in a purely intellectual way!

It could be paraphrased *understand and experience*.

Paul wants to know Jesus most intimately.

*Is Paul's desire
your desire?*

**For Paul, knowing Jesus means
experiencing the power of His
resurrection in participation of
Jesus' sufferings.**

These are inseparable aspects of the experience of knowing Jesus.

How are they related?

Knowing the power of Jesus' resurrection means holiness, and holiness invites suffering in a sinful world.

2a. To know the Power of Jesus' Resurrection (3:10b).

Power is *dunamis*. [*cf.* dynamite].

It means the life-giving power of God which He manifested in raising Jesus from the dead, and which He uses to bring about and sustain the new life a Christian receives from the risen Christ and shares with Him, *cf.* Ephesians 1:19-20.

2b. To know the fellowship of Sharing in Jesus' Sufferings (3:10c).

Fellowship: Paul means participation.

Sufferings: not Jesus' death.

This means a wide range of afflictions
endured by believers as a result of
identification with Christ,
cf. 2 Corinthians 4:7-12; 11:23-28.

Paul, as he encounters the sufferings of Christ, makes it his ambition to understand and experience God's power, the power manifested in Jesus' resurrection.

This has three consequences for him:

i) he would know Jesus more intimately;

ii) he would become more like Jesus;

iii) he would gain assurance of salvation, *cf.* Acts 14:22; Romans 8:17; Philippians 1:29.

Paul is giving the Philippians, **and us**, a new perspective on suffering for Christ.

Knowing the power of Jesus' resurrection provides the incentive and the strength to participate in His sufferings.

When you experience the sufferings of Christ turn 3:10 into a prayer.

3. To become like Jesus in his death (3:10d).

There are different views as to what
this means:

- Martyrdom.
- Conforming to what Jesus suffered in His earthly life.
- Inward experience of dying to sin.
- Jesus' obedience, *cf.* 2:8. This view is preferred – it fits well contextually.

Conforming to Jesus' death therefore means Christians living a life of obedience.

Conclusion—A Glorious Process

3:9 is about justification by faith—a **glorious standing** in the Lord Jesus Christ.

3:10 is about sanctification—the **glorious process** that makes a person more Christ-like.

Take 3:10 and meditate on it.

Make it your prayer.

*Then be a knowing partaker in the
glorious process of deepening in your
understanding and experience of Jesus
Christ.*