

Christ is Everything.

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God in His grace has centred for us every blessing in Christ. Without Christ we have nothing, nothing but our sins; with Christ we have all things, and therefore want nothing besides Christ. As the apostle says, "All things are yours; for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Hence the saying of an old writer, "If thou knowest not Christ, it matters not if thou knowest everything besides; but if thou knowest Christ, it matters not if thou knowest nothing besides."

Now it is not every believer that knows Christ. All believers — those, that is, that have peace with God — know Christ as their Saviour. They know Him in this character or relationship; but it is another thing to know Him in Himself; to have such a knowledge of Him as to be intimately acquainted with His mind, character, and ways. Those who thus know Him find their daily delight in feasting on His beauties and perfections. They value Him for what He is, if possible more than for what He has done; albeit these two things can never be separated. The apostle John indeed teaches, that to know Him that is from the beginning is the last and highest attainment the believer makes. This knowledge is the characteristic of the fathers in the family of God. (1 John 2.)

Do any then inquire, "Where can I meet Christ — be in companionship, so to speak, with Him, so as ever to learn more of Him?" The answer to this question brings out the special thought lying on our mind. *The only place where we can come into contact with Christ is in the written word of God.* The Lord then said to the Pharisees, "You search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: *and they are they which testify of me.*" (John 5: 39.) We find Christ — Christ in every aspect, position, character, and office in the Scriptures; Christ in humiliation and rejection, and Christ in exaltation and glory. The more therefore I read and meditate on God's word, the more I shall learn of Christ.

Be it, however; remembered that Christ, though revealed in the Scriptures, cannot be apprehended by any efforts of the mind. We might read the Scriptures from morning to night without one single ray of the glory of Christ falling upon our souls. It is the Holy Spirit alone who takes of Christ, and shows it unto us. Much therefore — may we not say everything? — depends upon our state of soul. If I read carelessly or hurriedly, if I have unjudged sin within my heart, and consequently a grieved Spirit, how is it possible for me to discern Christ? Like Mary, I must be at the feet of Christ, occupied with Himself, the eye up to Him, and the ear opened to His voice, if the Holy Spirit is to reveal Him to my soul. Leisure of heart and quietness of mind are essential. But do you say, "How is it possible to have that, absorbed as we are in our daily occupations?" It is the Lord who giveth His beloved sleep. Yea, He can give our souls quietness and rest in His own presence when surrounded even by the storm and the tempest. And then, through some scripture hidden away in our hearts, He can so irradiate it with His own glory as to make it the means of an enlarged revelation of Himself to our souls.

Permit the question, "Do you desire to know more, to have more, of Christ?" There are few who would hesitate to reply, "Indeed we do." And yet it is quite true, as often said, that every one possesses as much of Christ as he desires. Of the Israelites in the wilderness we read, that they gathered of the manna every man according to his eating. The appetite determined the amount collected. So it really is with ourselves. Christ never withholds Himself from those who truly seek Him; nay, He responds to us far beyond our desires. The fact is, we want to have more of Christ, and something else besides. This cannot be. It must be Christ alone; Christ our only object, and then He will satisfy even beyond our utmost expectations. Phil. 3 will teach us the true method of pursuing after the knowledge of Christ while waiting to possess, and to be fully conformed to, Him in the glory. Everything is counted but dross, because of the excellency of Christ. For Him the apostle willingly suffers the loss of all things, in order to have Christ alone as His gain. Then two things mark him — concentration and purpose of heart. One thing only is before his soul, and that he resolutely pursues. The glorified Christ, who had been revealed to Him, acts upon his soul like a powerful magnet, draws him away from every thing else to Himself, and begets in him the intense desire to know Him ever more fully, to have fellowship in His sufferings and even to be made conformable to His death, in view of the glorious prospect of being raised from among the dead, when he would be with, possess, and be like Him for ever. May the Lord grant to each one of us to be like-minded in this respect to His servant Paul. E. D.