

Walk Worthy

of the calling with which you were called. – Eph. 4:1

EPHESIANS 4:1-5:21

LESSON 12 – DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE? – EPH. 4:16

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To Know Christ

- ▶ Ephesians 4:15-16 ...but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.
- ▶ As the church grows the Body is *growing up* in Christ. This means of course that church growth starts with people coming to know Christ. To “know Christ” – as I look back through the lessons over the last few weeks I keep seeing this phrase appearing in our studies, and I think that before we move on, we need to make a point very clear. It is not enough to know *about* Christ. We must know Him. This is a personal, intimate relationship based on trust (faith) and love (obedience).

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ Often people today think that it is enough to know about God or about Christ or about the Bible. But those who only know about do not really know Jesus! Do you know the difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus?
- ▶ AW Tozer wrote in his book *The Pursuit of Man: The Divine Conquest of the Human Heart*, “In religion more than in any other field of human experience a sharp distinction must always be made between knowing about and knowing. The distinction is the same as between knowing about food and actually eating it. A man can die of starvation knowing all about bread, and a man can remain spiritually dead while knowing all the historic facts of Christianity. ‘This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.’ (John 17:3)”

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ “God made man in His own image and placed within him an organ by means of which he could know spiritual things. When man sinned that part of him died. ‘Dead in sin’ is a description not of the body nor yet the intellect, but of the organ of God-knowledge within the human soul. Now men are forced to depend upon another and inferior organ and one furthermore which is wholly inadequate to the purpose. I mean of course, the mind as the seat of his powers of reason and understanding.”

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ “Man by reason cannot know God; he can only know about God. Through the light of reason certain important facts about God may be discovered.”
- ▶ Romans 1:19-20 - Because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.
- ▶ “Through the light of nature man’s moral reason may be enlightened, but the deeper mysteries of God remain hidden to him until he has received illumination from above.
- ▶ 1 Cor. 2:14 - But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ Tozer continues, “‘A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven’ (John 3:27). ‘A man can receive nothing.’ That is the burden of the Bible. Whatever men may think of human reason, God takes a low view of it. ‘Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? (1 Corinthians 1:20).”
- ▶ “The doctrine of the inability of the human mind and the need for divine illumination is so fully developed in the New Testament that it is nothing short of astonishing that we should have gone so far astray from the whole thing.”

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ We have come to believe that because we think we understand something then that means we possess the truth. We convince ourselves that what we believe is true and right. But Tozer writes, “For a man to understand revealed truth requires an act of God equal to the original act which inspired the text.”

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ John 16:13 - However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.
- ▶ 1 Cor. 2:9-12 - But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ Tozer says, “The passage just quoted is taken from Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians and is not lifted out of context nor placed in a setting which would distort its meaning. Indeed, it expresses the very essence of Paul’s spiritual philosophy and fully accords with the rest of the epistle, and I might add, with the rest of Paul’s writings as we have them preserved in the New Testament. That type of theological rationalism which is so popular today would have been wholly foreign to the mind of the great apostle. He had no faith in man’s ability to comprehend truth apart from the direct illumination of the Holy Spirit.”

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ “I have just used the word rationalism. Otherwise stated, rationalism is confidence in the ability of the human mind to do that which the Bible declares that it was never created to do and consequently is wholly incapable of doing. Philosophical rationalism is honest enough to reject the Bible flatly. Theological rationalism rejects the Bible while pretending to accept it, and in so doing puts out both its eyes!”
- ▶ “From this mortal error fundamentalism is slowly dying. We have forgotten that the essence of spiritual truth cannot come to the one who knows the external shell of truth in his mind unless there is first a miraculous operation of the Spirit within the heart. Those overtones of religious delight which accompany truth when the Spirit illuminates it are all but missing from the church today.”

Knowing About vs. Knowing

- ▶ “Consequently, we have been forced to look elsewhere for our delights. We have tried to secure spiritual pleasures by working upon fleshly emotions and whipping up synthetic feeling by means that are wholly carnal. And the total effect has been evil.”
- ▶ “Conservative Christians in this day are stumbling over this truth. We need to reexamine the whole thing. We need to learn that truth consists not in correct doctrine, but in correct doctrine plus the inward enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. We must declare again the mystery of wisdom from above. A re-preachment of this vital truth could result in a fresh breath from God upon a stale and suffocating orthodoxy.”

Modern Spirituality and Your Mind

- ▶ Voddie Baucham preached this:
- ▶ “There are churches all around us who are absolutely and grossly unbiblical but they're common. You have people who grow up in environments where the Gospel is absolutely perverted and they don't know any different and, hey, it's inside a church, right?”
- ▶ “Listen to this: when the church accommodates itself uncritically to this age, the Christian must resist that conformity as well not only out of obedience to Christ but for the purpose of reforming the church to its rightful calling. But we don't even know when the church has begun to capitulate to the spirit of the age if we ourselves don't know the difference between the spirit of the age and the word of God.”

Modern Spirituality and Your Mind

- ▶ “So where do we start? We start with **knowing the difference**. We start with identifying the spirit of the age and it's important that we identify the spirit of the age because we belong to Christ, we run to Christ, we're baptized into Christ, not the spirit of the age. We do not want to be an adulteress generation. We want to cling without wavering to the one who has purchased us for himself and so we learn to see the counterfeit so that we do not love and accept and embrace the counterfeit. That's where we start.”
- ▶ “Then there is the affirmative command, “be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” I love that phrase because, again, modern American Christianity is extremely anti-intellectual.”

Modern Spirituality and Your Mind

- ▶ “Most Christians believe that you are either intellectual or you're spiritual but you can't be both. I have this picture in my mind I've talked to you about before, two young men who walk up to each other, "Hey man, how you doing?" I'm doing great, how about yourself? "Man, I'm doing better now but for a while there it was pretty messed up." Really? "Yeah." What happened? "I was getting some head knowledge." What? "Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's okay though. I went to church, they gave me a shot, I'm dumb and in love with Jesus. Everything's fine. I don't think about doctrine anymore. I don't think about theology anymore. Just close my eyes and love the Lord.”
- ▶ The renewing of your mind, listen, Christianity is the most intellectual religion the world has ever known. Christianity does not despise the mind, that's paganism.

The Gospel

- ▶ “Folks, do you know why you desperately need a Gospel-centered, Gospel-preaching church? Because the renewal of your mind even by the tense of the verb here, is an ongoing, never-ending process. It's the Gospel. It's the Gospel. It's always the Gospel.”
- ▶ “Biblical discipleship is important. We need to be taught specifically and intentionally how it is that we follow Christ. We need mature believers to help us examine our lives. Catechism is important not just for your children, for you. You need to be catechized. The overwhelming majority of us were not catechized. There are huge holes in our worldview, huge holes in our theology. You need to be catechized. Trust me, you do. I promise you, you do. You need to do this so that your mind can be renewed.”

Knowing Jesus

- ▶ Ephesians 4:20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.
- ▶ Do you know about Jesus? Or do you KNOW Jesus?