

## Teaching for 9-12-07

### It Is Who You Know!

“It’s who you know that counts.” From the world’s perspective, that means if you know the right people, walk in influential circles, and can call in the right favors—you have a much greater chance of being successful. Leverage and power are available through relationships with people of influence and authority.

So it should follow that if the Church truly knows the right Person—Jesus Christ—then we should walk in limitless power and godly authority. The Apostle Peter makes that case in 2 Peter 2:3 when he declares that “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our *knowledge of him* who called us by his own glory and goodness.” This comes through grace and peace in “*the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord*” (vs. 2). Peter also says that growing in faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness, and love will be keep us from being ineffective and unproductive in our “*knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (vs. 8).

So how are you doing? ***Do you know Jesus so intimately that the world around you can immediately identify His power and authority within you?*** Or is your lifestyle indistinguishable from the worldly culture that surrounds you? Jesus’ divine power is available—that is not the problem. The issue is whether you truly know Him well enough to walk in that power, and therefore influence the culture and world around you.

### Missing the Point

In a Christian setting that is filled with “how-to” seminars, books, and workshops on everything from evangelism to financial success, the question still remains: “Why is the Church so ineffective?” Let’s face it: We make very little impact on the culture around us, except for those disheartening moments when our sin and faults get exposed through the media. Our churches are full of activity and ministry opportunity, yet it does not seem we are making a truly discernable difference in society.

Drawing from Peter’s writings, perhaps it might be that we don’t really know Jesus. We have come to equate being a Christian with all the things we *do* instead of a *relationship* with the living Son of God—and therefore we’ve missed the point! The disciples were known for one glaring characteristic: *that they had been with Jesus!* It was obvious they were ordinary men with no schooling, yet they walked in courage and power because they knew Jesus intimately (Acts. 4:13).

### A Passionate Pursuit

Are you passionately pursuing Jesus? This does not mean giving a casual intellectual assent to theological facts. This means a consuming passion that saturates your heart and your life. Most of us have given ourselves to the pursuit of a career, hobby, or personal ambition. But have you given yourself equally or more so to a passionate pursuit of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?

We’ve rarely seen this modeled for us, as our tendency is to be passionate about so many things besides Christ. Peter understood this when he encourage us to *make every effort* and *be all the more eager* (2 Peter 1:5, 10). The pursuit of Jesus Christ requires great diligence. It is not a casual pastime. It is the same passion expressed by Paul in Philippians 3:10 when he says: *I gave up all that inferior stuff so I could know Christ personally, experience his resurrection power, be a partner in his suffering, and go all the way with him to death itself (The Message).*

### What Is It For You?

What consumes you most in your life? Is it the desire for success or to have fame and recognition? Do you passionately pursue leisure and pleasure every chance you get? Or is the greatest passion of your life to grow in knowledge and intimacy with the Savior. He bought you with the price of His life, so this is not a question to

toss around casually.

Knowing the right answers is not the same as truly knowing Jesus. If someone were to come into your home and examine your checkbook, calendar, books on your shelf, magazines on your coffee table, and your favorite Internet sites, could they easily ascertain that you are a passionate pursuer of Jesus Christ? We can so easily say that we are in relationship with Jesus, but the fruit of our lives should scream out: ***I want to know Jesus!***

### **Something Worth Pursing**

Peter leaves us with a fascinating promise, given under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: *So, dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away. Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.* (2 Peter 1:10-11; NLT).