

The Full Knowledge Of The Truth Pt 2
Ben Farmer
Market Street Fellowship
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Living As A New Creation

Well last time I was up here about three or four weeks ago we looked at this phrase the full knowledge of the truth. And the verse I used as a theme or anchor was out of first Timothy 2:4 which is "*God, who desires all men to be saved and to come to a full knowledge of the truth.*" So just bear with me for a little while here, we're going to recap some of what we talked about and then expand upon a few things and move on.

So last time we started off by looking at the definition of the word "know" or "knowledge" and we found that there are basically two general definitions of this word. The first we said was coming to know something because we have been told about it, much like watching television, reading the newspaper or just hearing a story or description of an event.

And then the other, which we were much more concerned with, was knowledge by experience. To have a personal experience of a thing, to know something in a way that allows it to become a part of you, a part of your history, a part of your experience and ultimately becoming a part of your life and who you are. And really that's what we'll be looking at again today, this reality of knowing by experience and coming to this full knowledge of the truth by an encounter with the Truth, an experience of Christ, an experience of the heavenly realm, the New Creation, where we are and who we are a part of.

Now the other thing we looked at, and hopefully began to establish, was the type of heart it takes to continue on in knowing Christ. And we said the type of heart that it took to continue on with the Lord was a heart that was fully set upon Him and fully set upon knowing Him as our life. We read a quote from T. Austin Sparks where he shared about being unreservedly and utterly committed to the increase of Christ and the necessity to be a people who have no alternatives to that utterness, because the only real alternative to being committed to the increase of Christ in our soul, is death. Sometimes I feel like I have a difficult time trying to communicate these things but if we can just

open our hearts and allow the Lord to show us that as believers this is the only direction for us to go in. The increase of Christ should be the supreme motivation behind everything we do; continually seeking to learn Christ should be our primary business. Because if something else takes precedence in our hearts then an alternative to utterness has just sprouted and will quickly take root in us. And just to clarify a bit, that "something else" can be anything. For some it's serving the Lord with their own strength and their own understanding and then for others it's just serving ourselves in seeking after self gain and neither are possible options in relation to spiritual increase; which is the increase of Christ in you.

A few weeks ago at one of our Friday night groups we discussed a parable in the Gospel of Luke and so I thought we would just look at it quickly in light of what we just said. It's in Luke Chapter 8 and if you want to turn there we're starting at verse 5: *"A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it, but others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop of hundredfold."* And the part of this parable that has caught my hearts attention most recently is the seed that fell among thorns and was choked. And what the Lord is saying here is no mystery because Jesus, just a few verses later, gives us the explanation and says *"now the ones that fell among the thorns are those who, when they had heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity."*

So as I started to think about this I asked myself: If I was trying to grow a plant or a flower would I mix the water I used to water the plant with something like battery acid? Is that environment I provide for the Lord and then actually expect growth? Or, this may be far fetched, but just pretend I'm a farmer... would I when knowing my livelihood depends on the success and harvest of one particular crop then spend 80% of my time harvesting a separate crop of something like dandelions or crabgrass because maybe I have a personal interest in crabgrass? No! That would supply nothing at all of value, and in fact, it would cause an environment of negligence for the crop that yields life. Growth and increase, in multiple ways, would be sacrificed. We can't dabble in Salvation like is the stock market or something; there isn't a spiritual stimulus bailout plan for unwise stewards. Hello?

The point I'm trying to drive home is that there's just one very narrow way for walking out our salvation, and it insists on abandonment to all of our most exulted desires, satisfactions and anything we have given approval to. We must be careful to never assume that we're the "good ground" that Jesus says yielded a crop a hundredfold. The reality is that the Lords Seed, in us, has been subject to the conditions mentioned in the parable of the sower, guaranteed. And we're silly to think otherwise. Thorns, rocks and dull hearing were all we new prior to the revealing of Christ, and part of this transformation and growth is the cutting away and removal of what has made a claim to what God now calls His Son. That is part of the process and we will all be subject to that course of action as long as we continue to seek Christ as our life.

I promise I'm not trying to point fingers this morning, if anything I'm pointing them at myself. I've seen in myself the seductiveness of personal satisfaction apart from God. I've encountered many ways in which the darkness that I am causes me to stumble and become a hindrance to not only myself, but also the Lord and His Body. So in the last 3 or 4 years the chore of being very watchful and suspicious of myself continues to become more and more necessary. Daily there must be a searching of our hearts, facing the judgment seat of the Lord so that what is of ourselves may be rebuked and what is out from Him may be further established. I would suspect that for most of us we have perceived this growing need to keep very close to the Cross in our lives. The Holy Spirit must be permitted to keep our natural man subject to that Cross so that everything may be without any uncertainty "out from God", and not out from ourselves. This may sound kind of silly but I kind of think of the Holy Spirit as a prison guard. Part of His role is to ensure that what has been judged and condemned to death by God is kept locked away on death row.

Anyway, it's with that man being willingly subjected to judgment that allows the Spirit to continue to lead and guide us on our journey of knowing Christ. Each and every revealing of Christ begins with some measure of an application of death. But it's right there in the applying of that death that the Lord has room to move forward. It's not like we have some unused room set aside for this special occasion, it's just not like that. It takes the fear of the Lord to work the experiential apprehension of the Lords Salvation in our consciousness.

In the first chapter of the Book of Proverb's it says "*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*" And then you skip ahead to chapter 2 and Solomon says "*my son, if you receive my words, and*

treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding."

So what is this thing called "the fear of the Lord"? Well, let me say what I think the fear of the Lord is not first. The fear the Lord is not reading scary verses in the Bible and hoping those things don't happen to you like being swallowed up in the ground or being struck with leprosy. The fear of the Lord is not a nagging anxiety throughout your day concerning good and bad decisions. The fear of the Lord is not anything produced or mustered up by the natural man and the natural world. But rather, the fear of the Lord begins with a desire to be subject to God's righteous judgment.

Just look at Abraham. He had no child and therefore no heir to his house. But then God appeared to Abraham and said you will have an heir who will come from your own body and through this heir his descendents would be as the stars in heaven. So then after some domestic issues Isaac was born, Gods son of promise. And we all know what happened after this, God said "take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." And we know Abraham listened, he took a knife, stretched out his hand to kill the kid, but at the last moment God said no, don't do it and He opened His heart and said "now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." How confusing this must've been for Abraham, here God promises him a son, and then just as the boy starts to grow up God says, "Kill him". But what you see in Abraham and what God needed to see in Abraham was a heart that was for God only, and not one that desires *things* from God. And so it will be for us too. God will be putting his finger on things and saying this too must go. But we can hardly call it a sacrifice knowing that the return is to be found more and more in Christ.

And if you find this to be your circumstance and you are truly undivided in seeking after God's Heart then He will appear to your soul, and in His appearing He will increase and you will decrease, death will be applied. But the fear of the Lord in you will grow because you will see that his judgment is truthful and righteous and that our decrease is the most basic and absolutely essential principle to His

increase. And the only reason I'm really trying to get this point across is because sometimes I think we become very complacent with the measure of Christ we've apprehended and for the Lord's sake and for our sake I don't want us to become a body that becomes smug and unworried about the continuation of the increase of Christ in His Body. Now if stopping at alters along the way and losing more and more of yourself is not something you want to do, then I don't know what to say to you. But if you do, then let's not forget the words of Paul when he confessed that, *"to live is Christ, and to die is gain."* So if we are in a place where maybe we have become complacent and smug then we really need to stop everything we're doing, fall on our face, and cry out to the Lord for understanding and seek to withhold nothing of ourselves from Him. Being complacent is an attitude that wages war with God and it creeps and lurks in our heart with no warning and spreads and anticipates that we will get lost in it.

Here is another, rather weird, way of explaining this. For those of you who don't know I have a nephew who will be two years old next month and pretty much from the time he was born he has absolutely hated getting his diaper changed. He kicks and fights and pushes and will do about anything in his power to avoid getting his diaper changed. So what this has resulted in is this unique technique where my sister or brother in law, when changing his diaper, actually has to straddle their leg around his body to keep him from moving. He literally needs restrained every time. He is clearly unaware that having his diaper changed is in his own best interest. But I think he would gladly go for days if not weeks wearing the same nasty diaper all just to avoid this process of being changed. Sound familiar to any of us? But the nature of the relationship he's in with his parents allows them to force on him what is in his best interest. They actually have the power to overrule his feelings and desires apart from him giving consent.

So what's my point? Well, the point is that the nature of our relationship with God in Christ does not allow Him to do what natural parents have the ability to do with their children. He has forever removed Himself from the realm of our disobedience. I'll say it again, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and if we're not submitting all that we are to Him and seeking out all that has been made unto us, then we will continue living as children in our own waste.

Actually, Jesus says it like this: "I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will

show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.

Okay, so I'm well off track, but it's very important for us to understand what it means to seek the Lord and what we were really asking for when we ask the Father to reveal His Son in us, because God's answer to that question is the revealing of an entirely New Creation, a Creation completely foreign to man. And additionally, the reason this New Creation can be revealed in you is because it is in this New Creation that you and I have been placed. So here we have our process of sanctification again. Having our spiritual eyes opened to the reality of being translated out from one realm and into this New Creation demands the putting away of the natural man. I don't mean physical death but what I do mean by the putting away the natural man is the putting away of all his resources for providing himself wisdom, understanding, knowledge and so on. Awakening to this New Man is also putting to death the man who thought he had life independent of God and the Cross stands as the divide that represents the end of an old creation and the coming in of a New Creation in Christ.

Ok, we're back on our way. Let's go back to Genesis again and just look at a few things. And last time I know we looked at this some and mentioned how Adam was created in a union with his environment. In Genesis 1:24 God says, "Let the earth bring forth the living creatures according to its kind." And we know this is true of mankind because later on in Chapter 3 the Lord says, "till you return to the ground, for out of that you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return." And what I'm trying to show here is that Adam was born already in union with the natural creation, he wasn't something separate from his environment. In fact, he was the embodiment of his environment and gave it expression. So going back a chapter, to chapter 2 verse 25 we have the natural man's grand finale: "*and they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*" And I can't help but see this as the pinnacle of Adam's existence in this natural creation (not because they lived naked) but for the time being I want us to see the lack of shame was because they were fully clothed, fully wearing, bearing in themselves, on the inside and the outside, the creation in which they lived. Even though they were naked and their flesh was exposed it made no difference because their entire state of being, everything they knew to be true was found in that creation, not of themselves, but they were clothed in perfect understanding, a creation without division.

And for a time Adam's awareness and consciousness was not something provided by himself but it was the awareness of something else, the awareness of *someone* else, found in the form of this natural creation of which he was fully and completely clothed. Let me say it like this: God's spiritual view was made into a creation. Adam was born into that creation. That very same creation was born into Adam's consciousness. Adam in and with the creation became the natural expression of God's spiritual fullness.

So without getting into too much detail we all pretty much know what happened in the garden. In Chapter 3 the serpent approached them and told them that they had eyes of their own, and once these eyes were opened you could be like God, knowing good and evil. And it was true. As Adam acknowledged and gave consideration to what the serpent had presented to them, he had removed from himself an entire creation, the union they had with that creation, as created by God, was now severed. Genesis 3:7 "*and the eyes of them were both opened, and they knew that they were naked.*" Now from this point on man could only know one thing, and that is self and the self-life. The creation where they were born into without fear, in rest and in peace, had been removed from them completely, and they were naked.

Now make no mistake about it, Adam was the one who detached himself from union with God's creation and Adam was the one who allowed division to enter the earth and God will have no part of division. God is One and to be a partaker of the Life of God is to be conformed to his Oneness.

So from this point on Adam no longer had dominion over the creation. Before the fall, God instructed Adam to fill the earth and subdue it, to have dominion over the fish, the birds, and every living thing that moves on the earth but no more. Adam became his own head and had lost the authority to be expressive of anything that was out from God.

Now we can still see, generally speaking, how being conformed to our environment still exists. We only submit to things that we believe are in our own personal best interest. But, again, we can see how through our natural senses we give placement (in our blinded awareness) to our surroundings, and we respond according to self.

Okay, so I think I've made my point. We couldn't be clothed in or in union with God's natural shadow of Himself, so we were left naked and dead in our state of separation from God. And immediately following

our entrance into this state of division from God, He displayed His solution: God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. This came to be fulfilled and will be forever be fulfilled in the Cross.

But we're not really talking about our natural bodies here, God never really was either. What we're talking about are the souls of men and women. And these God created souls are fashioned for a very specific purpose and intention. And in fact, our souls that He created are to be the vehicle for His plan and purpose. *"Even as He elected us in Him before the foundation of the world, for us to be holy and without blemish before Him in love" (Eph 1), "Where there is no Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, foreigner, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and in all." (Col 3)*

God created the universe as a testimony, but God created souls to be filled with the New Man, being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of the One creating him, as it says in Colossians.

Lets look at 2 Corinthians Chapter 5, God's response for what we just looked at in the Genesis story: *"For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation, which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life."*

So you see our souls have been removed from one creation and placed into Christ, Who is the New Creation. This is being saved, but to be placed there is simply not enough. We must remember for ourselves and for others that are in Christ, being saved is always unto a great end and that is to **secure conformity to the image of Him that created him**. But if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked, and this is by allowing the Lord to continue to present to us His New Creation by way of the Cross.

So this is the work of the Holy Spirit, to present the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ to us as the device in which Gods end has been met. And as we allow the Lord to continue His work in us the Holy Spirit will continue to make a presentation of the cross in our soul and this renewing will go on as long as we allow it to go on, because the Lord will never stop securing His end, but rather, we will be the ones that put a stop to God's progress. It will never be us waiting on God; God

has always been waiting on us. But the Lord is faithful for the sake of His great name, so He will continue to wait.

And as you continue on in second Corinthians Chapter 2 Paul declares, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. Now all things are of God"*

Now I can sit here and quote verses all morning long showing us that we have been born into a New Creation, not as an individual separate from the creation but generated by the same Spirit that is the substance of the creation. But apart from the revealing of the Person Who is this Creation, reading verses does absolutely nothing. You can spend your whole life reading versus, memorizing scripture, even proclaiming to yourself and to others this reality of a new creation but don't let ignorance and blindness deprive us, more so, cheat God out of His intention for even bringing you into His Son. Why again were we saved? It is unto God's great end:

2 Corinthians 4:16: Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being **renewed** day by day.

Ephesians 4:23-24: and be **renewed** in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Colossians 3:9-11: Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is **renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him**, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, **but Christ is all and in all.**

I'll start to wrap up here pretty quickly but I just want to look a little more at this 2nd letter to the Corinthians. I've been really stuck here for the last couple weeks specifically chapters 4, 5 and 6 so I encourage any of you, if you have some time to read through all three of these chapters.

Anyway, moving along down to Chapter 5 verse 20 Paul says, *"now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* You know as I read this

verse I could just feel the magnitude of spiritual reality that Paul had to cram into little natural boxes and just hope that somewhere in this church there were ears that were inclined to hear by faith. You move on down a little further into chapter 6 verse 11 and Paul says, "*Oh Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections.*" Restricted by our own affections. God desires that we participate and have a full knowledge in his New Creation but we insist in holding on to our most favorite feelings and in doing so we restrict ourselves from participation in the life of God.

Okay, well I'm not just going to read the Bible to you all morning but really though, I encourage you to seek the Lord in this letter and hear His appeal for the Church. It's amazing to hear Paul almost begging the Church to let go of what God has let go of and be found in Christ. I mean you would think this would be the easiest thing in the world to persuade men and women to do but, as it turns out, most everyone is pretty well settled in them selves and I guess allowing God to transform souls into the image of His Son is about as easy as getting a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

But I do want to wrap up by kind of making an appeal to everyone here. And I guess what I'm asking us all to do is just to be willing to come to a greater view of what God has put away in the death of His Son. And for a while that may only be past religious beliefs or old ways of thinking or old relationships or just the world around us in general; but eventually it's going to be necessary that we allow God to reject us, and we are going to have to be okay with that, we're actually going to have to need it. Jesus wasn't really joking when He said you must hate your life in this world. And I want be part of a people that are not sentimental about anything that hasn't been renewed in the image of Him who created us. We all need to be willing to allow the Lord to rebuke us, not just things about us but the very core of who we are. And just maybe if this is the direction we continue to go on, we're going to have to rely on each other a little bit more. Maybe we won't be able to hide from each other as much because the more dependent we are on the Lord, we will be equally dependent upon the Lord's body. Those realities aren't filled up independently of one another; they're done at the same time and for good reason. The other night we looked at the verse in 1st John that says, "*By this we have known the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. And on behalf of the brothers we ought to lay down our lives.*" And we looked at some of this last week too when Jason spoke and I know some of us are becoming more aware of this facet of our transformation where maybe

we started off as good friends in the earth but have now grown to depend on one another in ways that natural relationships just can't bear. And I'm glad that is happening in us and I hope we will all continue to grow up together seeking out the Lord in this way. Being a body that allows God to gather us up in the revealing of His Son, being found fully clothed in His New Creation.

Okay one last bit of scripture and then I'm done, I promise.

This is in Hebrews chapter 12, but it's taken out of Proverbs:

My son: do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him, for whom the Lord loves each chastens. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

Amen.

