

# Perspectives

## I Want to Know!

The *National Enquirer* is a tabloid magazine that centers on Hollywood gossip, crime news, and other so-called investigative reporting. This magazine touts that it provides stories that “inquiring minds want to know.” Stories include secrets of celebrity couples, crime conspiracy theories, and uncovering clues that might indicate Elvis is still alive—with a circulation of tens of thousands, apparently these are stories that some people want to know. But what’s worth knowing?

Paul writes in Philippians 3:10, “I want to know Christ.” Paul had encountered the risen Christ on the Damascus Road, and it changed his life. From that point forward, his life was spent preaching the gospel, establishing churches, and pursuing a deeper relationship with Christ. Before meeting Christ, Paul had impressive Jewish credentials. He had been a Hebrew of Hebrews—circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the tribe of Benjamin, and a Pharisee (Philippians 3:5-6). Yet, after meeting the Savior, his focus changed. Rather than building his religious resume, he sought to “know Christ and the power of his resurrection.”

Paul considered “everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ” (Philippians 3:8, emphasis added). For Paul, “gaining Christ goes hand in glove with knowing Christ.”<sup>1</sup> New Testament scholar Dean Flemming points out, “On one hand, Paul has already gained Christ through coming to know him in his conversion. On the other, he is still on a journey, which will only be completed when he gains Christ in a full and final sense on the last day.”<sup>2</sup>

Knowing Christ is not about just knowing how He lived or what He taught, although those things are important. Knowing means being in relationship with Him—dedicating our lives to Him. It means identifying with Christ—sharing in His sufferings (see 1 Peter 4:13). That is, “Knowing Christ intensely involves a profound identification with the Christ who suffered—a sharing of his very life and experience.”<sup>3</sup>

During your study of Philippians, Ephesians, and Jude, consider what it means to really know Christ. As you do, I pray “the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

May God bless you as you study His Word this quarter!

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1. *NBBC: Philippians* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2009), 168.

2. *Ibid*, 168.

3. *Ibid*, 175.