

I Know Whom I Have Believed

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[0 : 0 0] Let's now turn to the chapter in God's Word which we read. Second Timothy chapter one and as God would help me like to concentrate on most of verse 12. Second Timothy chapter one verse 12 which is why I suffer as I do but I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me but I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed. Prisons in general condemned cells in particular are just about the last place in this world where you would expect a letter of inspiration.

Am I right? Condemned cells. According to chapter 4 verse 6 Paul has just heard he will never get out of prison. According to secular history which we have no reason to question. A few days after writing this very letter Paul was executed on a road outside Rome. Now when people get such information that they've only a few days to live it normally debilitates them doesn't it? I mean they get weakened they're heartened at the very least low key. But here's Paul he's so vibrant. He's stirring actually is stirring up Timothy his successor I think we can say. He's stirring him up here to be diligent to do precisely what is costing Paul his life. The very thing that put him in prison the very reason why he's going to lose his head he encourages Timothy who's a weak kind of character but there's no one left to carry on the work. You ask Paul how can you be so positive? You've just had the worst news one can get. How are you so strong so reassuring? How are you so optimistic? Answer because I am not ashamed of the gospel. I know whom I have believed. That's the explanation. You see he just said in verse 6 Timothy I want you to fan into a flame the gift that

God's given you. He just says in chapter 4 Timothy preach the word. The very reason Paul is going to lose his life. Why is this confidence he has in the gospel which he's pleading with Timothy who's timid by nature by disposition he's stirring him up be bold and preach this gospel. So let's look more closely at his reasons. I know whom I have believed. Note carefully he does not say I know what I believe. He says I know whom I have believed. That's important. Christianity is not a system of rules and regulations of course they're naturally involved but essentially Christianity is a relationship. It's a relationship with

Christ. I know whom I'm depending on. Paul you see did more than believe Christ.

He knew Christ. Paul didn't just know about Christ. Very few intelligent people do not believe about Christ. The key is believing in Christ. We all know about Boris Johnson. Do we all believe in Boris Johnson? It's the same with Christ.

[5 : 5 3] How well do you know Christ? How well do you know Christ? Do you know him well enough to speak freely with him and tell him about everything you've done wrong? I don't think there'll be anyone. I don't know you but I don't think there's anyone here that would have the boldness to say I've never done anything wrong.

Have you told Jesus that? Have you told Jesus you're ashamed of your behavior? How well do you know Christ? Paul knew Christ well enough to confess everything to him. Do you know Christ well enough to tell him, confess everything you've done wrong? All your sins, all the things you're ashamed of.

Don't be frightened to tell Christ about them. He knows all about them. He's paid for them if you're a Christian. He's paid for them. He knows precisely what's wrong with them. And we Christians are to confess our sins to him.

Do you know him well enough to ask him for forgiveness? For nothing. Remember Christ spoke about the Beatitudes. His first sermon and the first thing he says is, blessed are the poor in spirit. And you say, oh come on, poor, blessed, yes, poor in spirit, spiritually poor. What's the key? You see that word that's translated poor, blessed are the poor in spirit. It's exactly the same word that's used for Lazarus the beggar. You see, if you're a Christian, you know how to beg. You know it's your only hope that God, that Christ will forgive you your sins for nothing. For years I thought I knew what it was to beg. But when I look over my life now as a Nocturnarian, look over my life, I think only once in my life had I to beg. What is it to beg? It's to ask. You see, supposing I'm running out of money and I get paid enough for, I get paid enough

Friday and I say to somebody, look, look, look, I need to spend some money tonight. I've run out, look, can you, can you give me 20 quid till tomorrow? I get paid tomorrow, I'll pay you tomorrow. I beg it, please, can you give me money? Give me a 20 pound note and I'll give it you back tomorrow. That's not begging. I'm gonna give it back on the Friday. That's not begging, that's borrowing. Begging is asking something for nothing. I can't pay you back. Have you done that to Christ?

[9 : 30] Have you said to Christ, I am nothing spiritually. I have nothing spiritually. I can do nothing spiritually. Please, forgive me all my sins. Give me your righteousness for nothing. I can never pay you back. Paul knew Christ that well. Do you? That's the key, that's the key. Believing is one thing. Knowing is a further dimension of the relationship we have with Christ. The moment you believe that Christ was on that cross, paying God for the sins of genuine believers in Him, the moment you believe that all your sins are instantly, permanently, forever forgiven. Forever. The moment you believe, but knowing Christ goes further.

Knowing Christ helps us to live on a different level down here on earth. I probably have said it before, but I actually can't tell you. Within five years when I was converted, I was brought up Christianly. So did what was right, or at least did my best to do what was right. Never achieved it. But when I over crossed that line, I can't tell you and it doesn't matter. That doesn't matter.

You don't know when. What does matter is that you are in Christ, that you've committed your sins to Him, that you believe He died and paid God for them, and before God you're pure, but only because you're connected to Christ by faith. Well, that's one thing. I was probably that for a year and didn't know it.

Knowing it, recognizing it, makes you live differently. And we're not living as we should because we don't realize the blessings we have simply by believing in Jesus. Here we have the apostle Paul. After hearing devastating news, he seems to get spiritually stronger. I know whom I've believed and that's enough for me, Paul says. But do note, Paul knows who he believes, but that does not mean he knows everything. And it doesn't mean he knows the future. Paul, you know, was forever changing his plans. Romans chapter 1 verse 13. He said, I want you to know I planned many times to visit you, but was forbidden. I was prevented from doing it in Providence. Romans 1 13. You had to change these plans often. You love wanting to go to Rome and preach there, made plans, never achieved, never accomplished.

The second letter to the currentians is a defense of his apostleship, because the currentians are saying, hey, wait a minute, this guy Paul, we don't think he's a real apostle. I mean, the number of times he said he's going to come and he doesn't come. He was prevented from Providence and they began to question, look, if he's an apostle, he surely should have a wee bit, a wee bit better organized and know what's happening. They began to question, he's not the same level as Peter, James and John. And he's to write the whole letter of second currentians who have written to defend, I am a real apostle. I know it might not look like he got times, but I am. And he tells them why. So he knows Christ, but he doesn't know the future. He doesn't know everything. And you take heart if you've made mistakes in the Christian life. Take heart. We don't know everything, but you know Christ. You can trust Christ. That's great. That's all you need to know for this life is to know Christ and to trust Christ and to have the peace of God in your life. All my plans are ruined, but God's in charge. That's what's important.

[14 : 40] And it is important in these days when so much is going wrong, so much confusion God's in charge. Christ is building his church. Maybe not right in front of your nose and most death almost certainly not the way you expect it to happen, but he's building this church. The gospel is thriving in the below the equator, thriving. Not in the West at the moment, perhaps, but his ways are not our ways.

I know whom I have believed. And I am convinced. This word translated convinced.

The original word means a change of mind. It actually means persuaded by words.

You see, it's important to remember that one time Paul was absolutely convinced Christ was an imposter. And Paul at one time was convinced it was his duty to destroy this Christian religion. Absolutely convinced of it. But it's all different now. It's all different now. And Paul is a pains to point out. He wasn't coerced. Important to grasp that. Christians should never twist people's arms to be believers. They should persuade them, convince them. Paul is telling us here he was convinced of the truth of Christ, the love of Christ, the atonement for Christ, for anyone sins, through sheer evidence, through sheer reasoning, through pure logic. And you see, that's a great thing about

Christianity. The religions of the world are prepared to take our arms to make you belong to the Christians forbidden. They've done so out of error in the past, but they're prohibited by the Savior. You do it by sheer persuasion of logic and reasoning and evidence. Christ died for our sins according to the gospel.

[17 : 34] According to the scriptures which teaches the blessed good news of the gospel, Christ died for our sins. Our sins have been paid for. That's a great Christian. That's what's unique about Christianity. We have a Savior. We don't have to be good enough for the simple reason we can't be. We have a Savior.

Christ died for our sins. I know that. Do you? Do you? It'll change your life. It'll change your life. It will make you a new person. And sorry, a new creation of the same person, more accurately. I am convinced. Well, I'm convinced that he is able to guard until that day what's been entrusted to me. To guard, to keep. He's able to keep and guard what has been entrusted to me. Now, those who know the Greek better than I do tell us that the literal word is he is able to keep, to guard the entrustment. The entrustment. So really, it could refer to what Paul has committed to Christ and what Christ has committed to Paul. Both. Don't tell me

Paul didn't commit his soul to Christ. Of course he did. So it can mean that. And you can be sure if you're a Christian, Christ can keep your soul. He doesn't as it were, wipe your slate clean and say, now I've rubbed out every sin you've ever committed. Now keep the slate clean yourself. That's not the Christian gospel.

I will keep you all until the heaven arrives. Until I say, come you blessed of my father, enter the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world. He guards, he keeps the Christian soul, the person who's depending on Christ's death to atone for their sins before God. He keeps them until the day he says, come into my kingdom and enjoy life. But in context, as your version rightly, I think the context likely refers to the entrustment is what has been entrusted to me. You see, he just tells us later on.

Demus has gone to Thessalonica. Crescent has gone to Galatia. Titus has gone to Dalmatia. There's nobody left but Timothy. You see the whole Christian church was saying, hey, hey, Paul, you're in prison and you're gonna die. What's gonna happen in the church? I thought Christ, I thought Christ was gonna do it all for Paul. But when Paul's gone, what's gonna happen in the church? Paul was entrusted with building the church, which he's done. But at the end of the day, it's not Paul that's building the church. It's Christ that's building the church. And Christ can do without Paul. Oh, he's probably the greatest missionary there ever was, probably. But he can do without him. He doesn't need him. And you see, the next time someone says to you, yeah, church is finished. The church is dead. There's no future for the church. You tell them they've been saying that for over 2,000 years, friend. They've been saying it for over 2,000 years and here it was. But here's Paul says, I know. I believe. I know who's building the church. It's not me.

[22 : 18] Christ can do without me. He's building the church despite everything that's going wrong. This term is a lovely term. I love it. I'm convinced that he is able.

He is a what? Terrific term. It's all through the Bible actually. Remember Shadrach Meshach and Abednego put into the fiery furnace. Remember what they said to the King, our God is able. He's able to deliver us. But if not, we're not bowing down to your idol. You see, we're back again. They know God, but they don't know the future.

They don't know if God's going to deliver them. Daniel 3, 17 and 18. Check it up. Our God is able to deliver us. But if He doesn't deliver us, we're still not bowing down to you. You see, there are such things as fair weather Christians. Oh, I'm worshiping God as long as He performs the miracles all the time. But once He stops performing the miracles, I'm off. That's not Christianity. Our God is able. We're not sure what He's going to do. We're absolutely convinced He's got the power to do anything. But we don't know what He's going to do. But we're going to leave it with Him as faith. Trusting in Christ.

Hebrews 2, 18. When tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted. Hebrews 2, 18. Hebrews 7, 25. He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him. He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him. And then there's that wonderful, wonderful text in Ephesians 3, 20. Able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think. That is a fantastic verse. He is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask. Anything you can ask. I asked this earlier, didn't I? Can you ask God,

Christ for forgiveness? You've got to do that. Whatever you do, do that. Is it hard? Tell me. Is it hard to ask Christ, forgive me all my sins? It's all you have to do.

[25 : 46] If you can ask for that, you'll be forgiven. But here's the promise. He's able to do more than anything you ask or think. Can you think about something? Christ can do it. See, there's some things you can think about, but you haven't the nerve to ask. If you can think about it, Christ can do it. Is that what the text is? No. He's able to do all that you ask or think.

Is that what the text is saying? No. He's saying he's able to do more than you can ask or think. Ephesians 320. Have we got it now? No. He's able to do more abundantly more.

Abundantly more. And even then, friend, abundantly more than all you can ask or think were still not biblical. What's the Bible say? Ephesians 320. Far more abundantly than all that you can ask or think. That's the power of God. That's the power of Christ. And that power is working within you if you're a Christian. That power is working within you if you're a Christian. Already working as the original. It's already working in those who believe.

Well, that's the Gospel. That's why Paul believes with such conviction. And that's why he's got such a wonderful relationship with Christ. Paul can say what he said because he knows Christ. Well, reminded of that verse in Jeremiah 9, let him who boasts, boast in this, that he understands and knows me. Now listen, Paul was pretty smart. He was very, very efficient and sufficient. Very highly equipped and very highly educated, very intelligent. But I think that's not the key. The key is he knows God and he knows Christ and he has a relationship with Him. So as we close, how can we know Christ like Paul knew Christ? Have you heard of Manasseh? Have you heard of Manasseh? What a wicked king he was. He was the son of godly

King Hezekiah. And Manasseh became king after him. The first thing he did, the son of a godly father, King Manasseh was the son of godly King Hezekiah. The first thing Manasseh did when he got to the throne was what? To undo the godly reforms of his father. What a disgrace. Going down in history, his kingship spent undoing the godly reforms of his father.

[30 : 04] And then he gave up worshiping God and turned to worship the sun, the moon and the stars.

And then he turned to witchcraft. And then he gave that up. And in allegiance to the pagan god Molech, he burnt his own child or children in the fire of the rubbish tip outside Jerusalem. What an evil wicked man. But one day he got into terrible, terrible trouble, terrible trouble. And he prayed to God for help him to deliver him from the trouble. Did God turn round and say, Manasseh, you gave me up for Molech. You gave me up to worship the sun and the moon and the stars. You gave me up for these wizards and witches. Ask him to deliver you. Don't come back to me. Go and ask him. Did God say that? Listen, God cannot do that to anyone who turns to him and asks for mercy and blessing. What you read is, the Lord heard him and answered him and forgave him. And here's the verse. Second Chronicles 33, 13. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord, he was God. Then, then, what's the key? You can't begin to know God. You can't begin to know Christ. You can't begin to know forgiveness until you're first forgiven. You can't... The first... There's a verse in... Oh, what's

Sam? Sam... 130 verse 4. Forgotten. Sam 130 verse 4. Wonderful gospel in the Old Testament.

Some people say there's no gospel in the Old Testament because I haven't read it. But with you there is forgiveness that you may be feared, or as it could be translated, with you there is forgiveness in order that you may be feared. See, if you're here and you're not a Christian, isn't this the way you think? Well, I've done some wrong things. I want to be forgiven.

I better sort myself out first before I ask for mercy. Am I right? Isn't that the way unconverted people think? I better sort myself out first to see if God will forgive me. That's works. Salvation is by faith, not by works. We can't earn and be good enough for salvation if to take God at His word. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Set your love on Christ. That's how to know Christ. Test Him to see if He'll forgive you everything you profess to Him and He will. Sam 91 verse 14 says, because He holds fast to me in love,

[34 : 20] I will deliver Him. I will protect Him because He knows my name. Sam 91 verse 14, because He holds fast to me in love, I will deliver Him. I will protect Him because He knows my name. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Know Christ, know Christ and you'll live on a different level altogether. May God, the Holy Spirit, make His word, His truth, effectual to every one of us. Let's pray.