

Good morning! One of the things that drives me is the fact that I want to know Jesus. I don't just want to know things *about* Him---I want to know *Him*. When I was growing up, my family attended church regularly. Mom and Dad weren't what we sometimes unkindly call "nominal Christians"; they were absolutely committed to Jesus and they wanted us to be committed to Him too. As a result, we were involved with nearly everything that happened at our church. We attended church services every Sunday. When we travelled on vacation, we attended church in whatever place we found ourselves that Sunday. We went to Sunday School and Youth Group and Father/Son cookouts and Mother/Daughter banquets. We went to summer camp and confirmation classes. I knew a lot about Jesus---but I didn't really know Him. This morning, let's read a passage together that suddenly became meaningful to me when I was nineteen years old:

I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

Philippians 3:10-11

When Pam and I began dating I fell for her like a ton of bricks. I wanted to know her---everything about her. I wanted to know her past, her family, and her life-experiences. I wanted to know her motivation, what made her do the things she did. I knew about her---she was a friend of my friend Robert and they both went to Oakton High School---but I didn't really know her very well. In today's passage, Paul tells the Philippian congregation (and us) what the driving force in his life and ministry was---he wanted to really know Jesus. He wanted to know Jesus' supernatural power. He wanted to know and share in Jesus' suffering. He wanted to know Jesus in His resurrection. When I came to Christ in 1971, I was 19 years old and had spent a lifetime learning about Jesus but suddenly everything was different---and I wanted to really know Him. Like Paul, I want to know the power, Presence and even the suffering of Jesus, if that suffering means I can know and love Him more deeply. How about you this morning? Do you want to know Jesus more... even if it means you might experience some suffering?