***Full Knowledge, No. 4

Colossians 1:1-2

COL-084***

We are studying Colossians 1:9-14. Our subject is "Prayer for the Colossians," number 18.

**Full Knowledge**

The apostle Paul, in speaking to the Colossian Christians, tells them that he wants them to fill their human spirits with God's full knowledge of Bible doctrine. Full knowledge doctrine is the principles which one has received in the instruction of the Word of God, and to which he is positive. We have taught you the Greek word "epignosis" (ep-ig'-no-sis). That means knowledge which is usable. Plain information knowledge of doctrine, which we learn from the teaching of the pastor in the local church service is believed. When it's believed, then it becomes a power in his life. When you say "Amen" to what you learn in church, then it becomes, in your human spirit, part of the mind of God. And I think some of you are beginning to catch to on what we've been hammering away at now for many weeks – that the greatest moment in a human being's life is when he accumulates a powerful expression of the mind of Christ in his human spirit. And then, as long as he is on temporal fellowship, he is on automatic pilot so that his mind is what God thinks. And his feelings are what God feels. And his attitudes; his decisions; and, his will is the will of God. And that's what this is all about.

The apostle Paul says that he does not want these people to blow it now. They operate on the "agape" (ag-ah'-pay) love. They have no mental-attitude, bitterness reservations. They are open to God. And they have been receptive to the Word of God. Now he says, "Go for it. Go for the winning. Get all the doctrine you can. Be receptive to it. Stay in temporal fellowship, and God is going to do great things with your life. He's not always going to make it easy, but when you find yourselves in a hard spot; in the crises; and, in the disappointing times, you'll have great and enormous grace to carry you through.

This is what the apostle Paul said in a different way when he said, in 1 Corinthians 15:10, "I am what I am by the grace of God." What did he mean by that? He meant, "I have the mind of Christ, and therefore that gracious provision for me enables me to function under the most difficult circumstances. And at the end of my life," he said," and this concerns me," but he says, "at the end of my life I'm glad to say that I'll be able to say that I fought the good fight and I have run the course. I have run my course."

Multiple millions of Christians will someday stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and they will not be able to say, "I've run the course." Many of them never even got on the course, let alone to be able to stay on it, because many of them were never informed about how to do that.

So, we are dealing with some of the most significant bits of knowledge that God has ever presented in His Word: full knowledge – "epignosis" knowledge – doctrinal principles to which you have said "Amen." Now that you know that, you understand what the explanation is for somebody who is a Christian; who's been around; who has been informed; and, who has been taught, and all of a sudden, that person goes off the deep end into some evil activity. And you shake your head and say, "How can that be?" Don't shake your head. Just say, "Aha. The person sat there; they heard the instruction; they heard the Word of God; they heard the principle enunciated from the Scripture (not some preachers saying, 'I think this is what I believe, and this is the way it looks to me'), but actual, exposition of the Word of God, and that person sat there and said, "I don't know about that." And in their mind, there was the reservation that God has spoken. That is the kiss of death spiritually. And when you want to know why in God's name did I ever do such a thing, it's because you sat, and you looked out at the world, and you said, "Gee, Barbara Streisand doesn't think that. Can she be wrong? She knows all about alar on apples. Wow, look at this big dude. He's really famous. He can't be wrong, can he, or he wouldn't be so famous. People wouldn't love him. Look at the high position this person holds. That person does these very things that the Bible says that you shouldn't do. In fact, the Bible calls him an abomination. That can't be wrong."

It's like one lady told me not so long ago, "Homosexuals are some of the nicest people you'll ever meet." And suddenly, personality determines reality and truth. And what God says is zilch. Well, immediately, that's the concept in the back of the mind. You hear from the Word of God, the pastor-teacher enunciating a truth. And in your mind there is: "Gee, I don't know if that's the way it is. I'm not sure about that." And we're always wanting to do one thing because Satan is always driving us away from the Word – away from the Word, and the Word, and the Word.

For Douglas MacArthur, the epitome of his life was the army: his service in the army; and, his lifestyle in the army. And in his final speech to the long gray line at West Point, he told those cadets, "And when it is my time to cross the river, my final thoughts, as I cross over, will always be the army, and the army, and the army.

For Jesus Christ, as He hung on that cross, his final thoughts as He was about to cross over the river into death was doctrine, doctrine, doctrine. How do we know? Because He kept quoting it, while He was hanging on the cross. The great 22nd Psalm tells us exactly how He could stand all that abuse; all that shame; and, all that contempt that was thrown against the One Really Good Guy in the whole place. And it was doctrine that carried Him through, and most specifically, when He would remind Himself of what the result was going to be after all this was over.

So, don't be surprised when the devil comes up to you and says, "Hey, the way you reach people is with entertainment. The way you reach people is to give them a clicking good time. Get them in a church service, and get them clapping their hand and singing songs. Get some jumping jiving in there, and boy, they're going to do great." No they're not. The first chance they get to have an opportunity of isolation for sinning, the sin nature's going to click in, and they're gone. If you do not have the mind of Christ built into your human spirit, you're never going to make it.

So, plain information that you learned of doctrine is just plain "gnosis" knowledge. It's not worth anything until you have said "Amen" to it, and now it becomes part of your being. So, mere "gnosis" knowledge of doctrine is, in a wonderful way, transformed into usable full ~"epignosis" knowledge of doctrine, which is then stored in the believer's human spirit. This is what we have referred to as "epignosis" knowledge. And a couple of Sunday nights ago, I led you through the 20 times that this specific "epignosis" full knowledge word is used in the Bible, and it blew you to your seats, because it revealed so much of the consequence of having that kind of insight from the Word of God.

The indwelling Holy Spirit uses this full kind of knowledge from the human spirit to form the mind of Christ in the mentality of the spiritual Christian who is in temporal fellowship, and thus he is a teachable person. 2 Corinthians 2:16 puts it this way: "For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him." Does anybody here want to volunteer that you know as much as God knows; that you know the mind of God; and, that you can explain to God to make some things clear. Well, there are a lot of people out there, and Christians among them, who do exactly that. That's what it means to have mental reservations about a doctrinal principle: "Well, I don't know if that's the way it should be. I'm not sure that that's what that really means." But those who are positive to the word (see the last line?), "but we have the mind of Christ." If you have that, you have everything.

It is the mind of Christ which guides the believer into the steps of Jesus Christ in His will and emotions. The sin nature has been neutralized. And what a great thing it is, as the apostle said: "We have brought you to suffer (to experience the sufferings of Christ) as He did, in order that you may follow in His steps." That's what having the mind of Christ will do. It will cause you to walk like Him. And if you don't think that's going to make you a magnificent man and a magnificent woman, then you don't know what the Word of God is talking about.

The purpose of the mind of Christ controlling the believer is that the Christian might know the will of God at any point (any time) in his life. So, we have read in Colossians 1:9: "For this reason also, since the day we heard of your love, we have not ceased to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the full knowledge (the "epignosis" knowledge) of His will." That is the purpose– to know the will of God in your life.

Evil thinking and evil conduct will be repulsed, as it was with Joseph in Egypt. When Joseph was propositioned by Potiphar's wife, this was great opportunity; great isolation; and, great information that he had been taught at home about this subject. But in Joseph's case, as in contrast to some of his brothers, he said "Amen" to the truth. So, his grand statement to Potiphar's wife, at that moment of great opportunity, if he wanted to take it, said, "How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?" Now, you're not about to say that if what operates in you is the mind of the sin nature. You're not about to say that. But if your mind is operating, at that particular point in time, on the mind of Christ, that is exactly what you're going to say, because that's exactly what He would say in His humanity.

Now, without the mind of Christ, the Christian can never know the will of God that is the mission of God for him. So, that believer loses the rewards in heaven. He loses the value of his life in terms of his spiritual gift. And the Judgment Seat of Christ, instead of a moment of great victory and happiness, becomes a moment of great sadness for him.

It is the "epignosis" knowledge in the human spirit that builds a frame of reference for the believer for further growth and spiritual insights. And we taught you last week the frame of reference that develops from having the mind of Christ (as you develop that through the Word of God) is so critically important. That frame of reference is one of the most valuable things you have as a Christian. This is important in your praying; in your witnessing; in your church offerings; in your moral integrity; in your functioning as a priest of God; in your choice of friends; and, in your view of human government. All of that is a direct result of the fact that you have a frame of reference of comparison. Without a mature divine viewpoint frame of reference, a Christian can be easily intimidated by the world of Satan functioning on its human viewpoint.

Please remember that, if the devil cannot get you to go the evil route to begin with, if you're a Christian who is open to the Word of God, the next thing he's going to do is try to intimidate you by the world. He's going to try to get you to collapse on your convictions by the liberal world system that he has developed.

**Mean-Spirited**

I have noticed recently, in popular conversation, two words that the liberal world is using that I think illustrate this point of a Christian's vulnerability in doing the will of God without a solid divine viewpoint frame of reference. Have you heard this word: "mean-spirited?" Is anybody knocking that word around in the public media today?

The state of Colorado passed a law recently that homosexuals will not be treated as a minority with special privileges and favoritism above the civil rights which are possessed by all citizens. The United States Supreme Court came along, and declared the law unconstitutional, because the judges said that it came from an "animus" – that means a mean-spiritedness toward homosexuals.

So, suddenly, here are these infinitely wise people that make up the Supreme Court of the United States. And the woman who wrote on the Supreme Court, the Lady Justice who wrote the justification for denying the sovereign state of Colorado to do what its people wanted to do in this respect, said that the people of Colorado were doing that because they were mean-spirited. They had an animus toward homosexuality. And with the back of their hand, they brushed aside all the realities that are associated with homosexuality. And the people of Colorado were the ones who were demeaned.

What homosexuals deliberately choose to do is at great danger to their health, and at great danger to the health of society in general. What they do is not something over which there is an uncertainty concerning the mind of God, because God Himself has spoken on this subject. In Leviticus 18:22, for example (among other passages), God made this declaration: "You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female. It is an abomination." And there is the strongest, most loathing word in the Hebrew language that God ever uses. Well, the frame of reference of the sin nature tells you that God has an animus toward homosexuals, and God is mean-spirited. But those of us who had the frame of reference of the divine viewpoint of the Word of God with "epignosis" knowledge know that we are not mean-spirited. And when they give us that title, it doesn't bug us. It doesn't bother us.

Notice Leviticus 20:13, once more: "If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable and abominable act. They shall surely be put to death, and their blood guiltiness is upon them." In the Old Testament, under the theocracy of Israel, this was a capital crime. And those who are guilty of it had the problem solved by execution.

However, you might say, "Well that's the Old Testament. No, Sodom and Gomorrah were not the judgment of God upon homosexuality. It was because they had some other bad attitudes." You couldn't believe the ridiculous excuses that are made, and I won't burden you with those now. But make no doubt about this – that when we come to the order of the New Testament, the new covenant comes down just as hard on this matter, because it is a law of God. Romans 1:26-27: "For this reason, God gave them over." "For this reason" refers back to the fact that they had a knowledge of God; they had access to doctrine; they could build a mind of God in their spirits; and, they could receive what He said, but they rejected it. Consequently, God said, "Fine. For this reason, God gave them over to degrading passions." He gave over to the sin nature. "For their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural. And in the same way also, the men abandoned the natural function of the woman, and burned in their desire toward one another: men with men, committing indecent acts, and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error."

The so-called homosexual Christians take this verse and say, "Well, what Paul was saying was that we homosexuals, if we do not act the way we are inclined to act, we're acting in an unnatural way, and therefore God condemns us if we act in an unnatural way and try to be heterosexual. Our natural way is to be homosexuals." Well it's no more natural to be that than it is to be an adulterer or a fornicator. The sin nature wants to do that. But it's a sin like anything else . . . such that we say, "No, it is against the mind of God, and, therefore, with our minds we reject it."

So, the Supreme Court seeks to intimidate citizens of the Bible by calling them mean-spirited in not giving special favors to such degradation of a human being. And don't make any mistake about it. What homosexuals and lesbians do is an enormous degradation of a human being. And if the details were given to you, you would recoil in horror.

However, when it comes to being intimidated by a word like "mean-spirited," because you take your stand for a biblical principle and a biblical concept, as a child I learned a little axiom. It went like this: "Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names will never hurt you." Isn't that clever? Most of you have never heard that, have you? "Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names will never hurt you." So, if somebody calls me mean-spirited because I take a biblical position on something, I give a biblical answer: "Same to you, fella." But I'm not intimidated. I'm not crushed. And like some courageous politician, I don't cower, and like a sniveling dog, run from being called mean-spirited, because I know enough to say, "You better be careful with your mouth buddy, because what I stand for and what I say is merely quoting the Almighty. And if you call that mean-spirited, you are calling Him mean-spirited. You might want to think that over before you feel free to talk like that."

These people who attack us as Christians should not be dignified. They should not be given any respect. They should be treated kindly, but you should not be intimidated. And if you have the frame of reference of the mind of Christ, you won't be. You'll shake your head in sadness for them. Politicians scared stiff of being called mean-spirited because they lack biblical and constitutional attitudes? Jesus said that we are to take that kind of abuse of Christ as a great honor – not as a cause for doubting ourselves, and for being frightened and intimidated.

Please notice Philippians 1:29: "For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake." So, expect it. I expect it. I expect my best friends to start beating up on me when I'm right and they're wrong. And I'm not right because I'm smarter. I'm right because I'm on a biblical ground of a frame of reference of "epignosis" knowledge, and they are not. They think they may be. They have thought this through on a human level, and they think that something is the way to do it. But when you get to the Scriptures, it's not defensible.

1 Peter 2:21: "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps." Now with "epignosis" knowledge in the human spirit being cycled up by the Holy Spirit to your mentality, you have the mind of God, and you can walk in His steps. That means that you think the thoughts that Christ would think; you have the feelings that He would have; and, you have the decisions that He would make.

1 Peter 3:14-17: "But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled. But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts; always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence. And keep a good conscience, so that in the things in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right than for doing what is wrong." That is a very comforting Scripture to me, because I know what it is to suffer for doing the right thing and being on-track by people who are doing the wrong thing and are off-track, and thinking that they are the ones that should be listened to.

However, you have to keep your conscience clear. You cannot play loose with your own integrity. If you're going to stand up and declare a position for righteousness, you better be sure that your own integrity is not something that can be attacked by these people, because they are vicious dogs, and they have no mercy, and no sympathy for you.

1 Peter was written to people who are suffering. The whole point of the book is how Christians should comport themselves in suffering. We have another one in this book – 1 Peter 4:15-16: "By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or a troublesome meddler. But if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name, let him glorify God."

1 Peter 4:19: "Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right." Boy, did the martyrs who stood in the arena of Rome have to know that verse? They were suffering for the fact that they were right. They were suffering for the fact that it was the will of God for them at that point in time. And what did they do? They entrusted their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

All attempts to return government to the original limitations of the constitution for freedom and prosperity are considered mean-spirited. So, if you want to run a society by biblical moral laws, you're mean-spirited. If you want to run a society under the limitations of the tyranny that government is a power, and not a friend, then you're mean-spirited. The Christian with an "epignosis" full knowledge mind of Christ in his human spirit has a frame of reference to rightly judge this attack, and he is not cowered or silenced by it.

I must remind you that this was the attitude of Jesus and the apostles. They were not cowered, and they were not silenced by the attacks which were brought against them for their righteous conduct and their biblical beliefs. For example, Acts 4:18-20: "And when they (the Sanhedrin authorities – the Jewish ruling court) had summoned them (the apostles), they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge. For we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard." Now, how does anybody get to be that courageous, looking in the eyes of people who could beat them; who could imprison them; who could do them great physical harm; who could deny them the very sustenance of life; and, who, as in the case of Jesus, were able to bring pressure upon the Roman authorities, and even have them executed?

Peter says, "You decide. Is it better and right for us to listen to men, or listen to God, Who has told us to say these things? And we cannot stop telling what we have seen and what we know." But these people are saying, "No, you're wrong. You're wrong. Your authority is wrong. God is not telling you to do these things." And they said, "Yes, He is, because we've been in touch with the Son of God."

Move down to Acts 4:29. This is the prayer that the apostles uttered together after they were released. And it ends up: "Now Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond servant may speak Your word with all confidence." Boy, intimidation and being called mean-spirited closes a politician's mouth on the spirit of righteousness just like that. He is intimidated. He is frightened. He cannot understand that it is God who appoints rulers over people. And for those who deserve it, that God will place the basest of men, Daniel says, over those people.

Acts 5:28-29 has the same principle. The ruling Jewish authorities say to the apostles, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name. And, behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intended to bring this man's blood upon us." Oh, how awful! You murdered him, and now you don't want us to bring His innocent blood upon you? All we're doing is going around and saying what you did."

One of the liberal groups is trying to bring legal suit against one of these Christian groups. I forget which one it is, but they published a scorecard on important legislation relative to Christians. And as you come up to an election, they print this by the millions. And they pass them out to people. Doing what? Simply telling: here's a critical point, the point of abortion – here's how this person voted; the point of spending money – here's how they voted; the point about freedom for Christian schools – here's how they voted; and, right down the line. And what are they saying? It is exactly what these Sanhedrin said: "You're going around telling people what's true about us. We killed Jesus. We murdered Him. And now you're going to make people think that that was a terrible thing that we did. You're bringing His blood down on this." They never even discussed whether it was true or not. They just said, "We want you to stop making us look bad:" "Saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to do this. You're going to bring His blood upon us.'"

Acts 5:29: "But Peter and the apostles answered and said, 'We must obey God rather than men.'"

Go down to Acts 5:40, "And they took his advice, and after calling the apostles in, that is the advice of Gamaliel." Gamaliel was smarter than rest, and he said, "Listen boys, here in the Sanhedrin, if these men are of God (and we've got some trouble dismissing what Jesus did – his confirming miraculous powers) – if these men are really of God, and we beat up on them, and we bring this kind of treatment against them (what I told you just a minute ago), understand," Gamaliel said, "you're doing this to God Himself. Are you ready to resist God?"

Acts 5:39 says, "But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them, or else you may even be found fighting against God" That's exactly what they were doing. So, in Acts 5:40, the Sanhedrin took Gamaliel's advice, and backed off on what they wanted to do to these apostles. He took his advice, and: "After calling the apostles in, they flogged them, and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and then released them. So, they went on their way from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name." Now, that's the way to react when they say that you are mean-spirited. You have the frame of reference to know better. Therefore, you stand firm just as the apostles did.

**Compassionate**

There is another word I've observed as being used now against biblical people: the word "compassionate." The newly enacted federal welfare law, restricting the redistribution of the money of wage-earners to non-productive and non-deserving recipients has raised a deafening outcry from liberals. And the word that they're screaming is compassion. You don't have compassion. And they're raising pictures of millions of children who are going to be starving because someone is not compassionate.

Well, if somebody's children are starving, the problem is that their parents are not compassionate in taking care of them. That's point number one. Or the extended family is the one who's lacking compassion to take care of those children. But where do they get off saying that it is the duty of the federal government to take care of people who may have legitimate needs. The American producers of wealth who favor the new law are being described as lacking compassion for the poor. Large numbers of the welfare recipients do not choose to work, but to ride on the fruits of productive citizens.

The Bible declares that compassion (or love) can exist only in the context of the truth. In fact, the truth, relative to the system of welfare, is clearly dealt with by the apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 3:7-8: "For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you." And then he tells them in what way he and his associates were not undisciplined: "We did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we might not be a burden to any of you."

2 Thessalonians 3:10-11: "For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busy bodies." This is how the apostle Paul qualifies for the word non-compassionate. That statement makes it very clear that in our society today, anybody who talked like that would be accused of lacking compassion. What does he mean? He lacks the willingness to reinforce an evil, where we permit a person to ride on the backs of the fruits of other men's labors. Anyone who is in genuine material need, and is deserving, is by God's design to be helped by his family, or by volunteer social organizations – not government.

When I said this recently to someone, I got a contemptuous response toward the social organizations. Well, whatever their ups and downs are, they're pretty carefully supervised. And people who want to volunteer in orphanages and in any number of ways to help care for human needs are doing the work of God. And that is the way it should be. Nowhere, by the wildest stretch of anybody's imagination, either from Scripture or from practical experience, would you think that the federal government in Washington should do these things.

So, here, finally, something is done right to get something straightened out that has degraded millions of human beings, and tied them into a poverty lifestyle from generation to generation. And those who want to change that are called non-compassionate people. Do you know why you're being told you don't have compassion? Because they want to scare you off. They want to back you off from doing this, because the politician says, "If you take this away from me (from Washington), and let the states deal with human need so that I can look down the street and I can see my neighbor. I can follow him into the grocery store, and I see what he does with the food stamps. And I'll know whether he is deserving. I'll take a look at him. I know what he does with his life." In Washington you don't know, but down here we know this: "But if you take this away from me, how am I going to get votes? That's why people will vote for me, because I'm going to tell them: 'I'm going to keep getting this good stuff for you.'"

I remember seeing a lady on TV telling Martin Frost: chewing him out because he wasn't doing a good job for them in Washington. She said, "We sent you to Washington to get us this," and she rubbed her two fingers together. And for those of you who are uneducated, that means money. It's a sign for money.

It is not an act of compassion to provide from the fruits of other men's laborers what one should secure by his own able-bodied labor. The liberal concept of compassion in welfare is nothing but an act of legalized theft. And the Bible is very clear on that subject.

Ephesians 4:28, "Let him who steal, steal no longer, but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who is in need." You'll have enough for yourself. And if you're a Christian whose mind of Christ is what's running your life, if somebody comes up to you and says, "I have a need. Can you help me with this?" The mind of Christ will click in and say, "Yes." Or you'll look at this guy and say, "No." The mind of Christ will throw up red flags all over the place, and will say, "No." And you ease off.

I have a man who hounded me for a month for money that I could have provided by which he didn't deserve. And I haven't seen him since. He's no longer my friend because I treated him with respect of the principle of Scripture: to exercise his own labors, and to accumulate, thereby, what he needed for himself and for others.

The believer with the mind of Christ has a frame of reference. He's not silenced about the violations of constitutional limitations on welfare, nor is he intimidated by being called non-compassionate by those who don't know the true meaning of the word. The people who talk about compassion don't know the true meaning of the word. It is not compassion to make a person a slave to poverty. But in Jesus' day, the liberal theologians of His day, the non-doctrinal type, had a variety of names that they called Jesus. We cannot take time to read these Scriptures. I'll mention them to you, and I'll tell you what they called Him, so that it'll be an encouragement to you.

In Matthew 12:27, they told Him that he was an agent of Beelzebul. Beelzebul was a name for Satan. So, they in effect said that he was virtually Satan.

In Matthew 27:63, He was called by those who had crucified Him a deceiver. And they were telling Pilate, "We have to see that His disciples can't steal Him out of that grave, because that Deceiver told us that that was going to happen. And He'll trick all of us again if we don't see that that grave stays sealed. To this day, the Jewish rabbis, when asked, "What happened to Jesus?" They says that His disciples stole Him.

In Mark 14:64, he was called a blasphemer because He called Himself the Son of God. Who was right?

In John 5:16-18, He was accused of breaking the Sabbath. On one occasion, he healed a woman on the Sabbath day. And all the holy Joes of the liberal theologian group came and said, "Ah, You did it. You worked on the Sabbath day. You healed this woman." And Jesus said, "Come off of it, you hypocrites. Which one of you, when your ox falls into the ditch on the Sabbath day, and it'll be dead by the time the Sabbath is over, is not going to get out there and haul that animal out? And you attack Me as a Sabbath-breaker because I helped this poor woman who's been ill all her life with this terrible malady?”

In John 8:13, they called Him a false witness.

In John 8:48-49, they told Him that He was demon possessed.

In John 8:30, they called Him an evil-doer.

In John 19:7, they denied His claim as false, that He was the Son of God.

In John 19:12, He was labeled an opponent of Caesar in the government of Rome.

In John 19:21, they denied that He was the king of the Jews as he claimed.

And I'm sure that there are others that I didn't have time to collate. But in just this little bit (every one of these), what an insulting, degrading series of names to call the Son of God. Did it intimidate Him? Did it silence Him? Did it make Him crawl? Not for a moment. He gave them the biblical, doctrinal answer back. He treated even His enemies with respect. But He gave them the final word that they should have had, and that they should have received. Jesus knew: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt Me."

So, the frame of reference that doctrine will create is enormously important. That is your capacity to move through the devil's world, and to be victorious. That is the only way you're going to be able not to be carried along by what people do that is evil, and not to be carried along by the human good, which is what they mean by compassion. Human good comes out of the sin nature. You'll not be carried away by what is popular, or by what is the thing to do on the basis of what the famous people do. None of that's going to mean anything to you. You suddenly become a person of great dignity in your own right. You suddenly realize, "I am a child of God in the royal family of the church. And these people are nothing but the lowest levels of commoners. I possess the mind of Christ. They possess the mind of Satan. Why should I be impressed by people who demonstrate that they operate on the mind of Satan, including my Christian friends? Why should I be impressed with them?" You should not. The mind of Christ through the Word of God – and you should have a big piece of it because you are wise to be here today.

You also want to remember, you're not the only person in the picture. If you're a husband, your wife is going to be affected by whether you have the mind of Christ. If you're a wife, your husband's going to be affected by whether you have the mind of Christ. If you have children, oh boy, are those children ever going to be affected by the fact you have the mind of Christ. You're either going to be pushing them for the realities of God, and building their frame of reference, or you're going to be pushing them away to some stupid nonsense of the world system and of the religious community.

So, you are the ones who should be informed. And here in this context of this ministry, you have every opportunity to be informed. And you do not let anybody intimidate you, because you know better. Don't apologize. Don't try to compromise. Don't try to get along. Don't play ball with them. Don't go along to get along. Just take your stand on what is right. You don't have to be offensive. Just remember: sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me, because I'm right.

Father, we thank You for this insight into Your word, and we pray for courage to rise to it in the finest tradition of our Savior. What terrible thing He was called by sinful men who ridiculed.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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