

## Life Together: The Purpose - To Know and Be Known

### Galatians 4:8-9

**MPS** Relationship with God produces a life of authenticity together to be known in Christian community.

**OBJ** Every Christian should immerse in life together of Christian community because of three faithful applications.

**INTRO** Reality TV Reality TV teaches us a lot about people, but not necessarily in the way they intend. I love the reality series Alone, where they drop off 10 people into the most remote parts of the world, give them 10 items, and see who will survive the longest. The show consistently proves the first of two great truths about human nature; being alone makes us go crazy. And two, we do crazy and often destroy self and one another when we build community around pleasure, recreation, comfort, etc. Reality TV teaches us that humans neither know how to live with themselves alone, OR how to handle others in a healthy way without some unifying center that is beneficial for all. Nothing will ever replace, compete or compare with Christ. There is nothing that is like knowing, and even better, being known by Christ.

**What are we to do?** I have an answer I would like to propose; we are dying to be known, even to know ourselves. **When you live for stuff or experiences, you are as hollow as any empty idol, and still left longing “to be known.”**

**Relationship with God produces a life of authenticity together to be known in Christian community.**

**READ** Galatians 4:8-9

*Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods.*

*But now that you have **come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? Galatians 4:9***

**Galatians is Paul’s condensed treatise on salvation**, a shorter version than Romans. These two verses form the heart of Galatians. Paul argues against the errors that had crept into their doctrines and beliefs, and subsequently in their practice.

**What was their error?** The Galatians had made salvation about things contrary to what God intended, to what Jesus taught, to what the Scriptures record, and for how Christians should live. They completely missed the point because they had replaced the gospel with different sets of impossible requirements and incorrect concessions, for how to earn, achieve, or attain to God. Paul reminds them that all of these were nothing more than the “*elementary principles*”<sup>4:3</sup> they were once enslaved to, false teachings from worldly ideologies, philosophies, and religious teachings. “*But...*”, he counters<sup>4:4</sup>, God sent Jesus to fulfill the Law and become the perfect sacrifice to redeem those under the Law, so they might receive adoption as sons. In Christ, they were delivered from enslavement and made heirs as children of God. Through the gospel, because of Jesus, they walked away from false idols when they came to faith in Jesus. They had been delivered from slavery and made children of God. **What a powerful truth to receive; in Christ we are delivered from a life of eternal condemnation and brought into a relationship with God!**

Here we learn **three important aspects of salvation**<sup>1</sup> in Jesus. **First**, salvation is secured by God’s divine plan in the perfect life and finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross; His death, burial, and resurrection. [See 4:21-31; Hagar & Sarah]

*“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,*

*that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” 1 Corinthians 15:3-4*

**This is the heart of the gospel**; NOT what God does in us or through us, but what God has done to conquer sin. Salvation belongs to the Lord!<sup>Jonah2:9;Psalm3:8</sup>

**Second**, salvation means we are redeemed to a new identity.

*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

When we hear the gospel and believe in Jesus, because of His blood, we are forgiven our sin debt, cleansed from our sin-stained soul, and His righteousness is placed on us. Paul captures the entire purpose of the Christian’s life in this one verse.

<sup>1</sup> David Platt and Tony Merida, [Exalting Jesus in Galatians](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014), 86. These are adapted from Tony Merida. He states, “We can summarize Paul’s argument in this passage by looking through three different lenses: how we got here, who we are, and where we’re going.”



But LOOK, sin is not merely actions accomplished but identities embraced; Jesus was made to be sin so that we might become righteousness! This is why salvation means we are transformed<sup>Romans12:2</sup>; born again<sup>John3:3-6</sup>; made alive<sup>Ephesians2:5</sup>, a new creation<sup>2Corinthians5:17</sup>, made new<sup>Colossians3:10</sup>. **God's purpose in sending Jesus was to take our sin so His righteousness could be placed on us.**

**Third**, salvation means our new identity produces a new life of walking in obedience to God's Word by Holy Spirit's power. *For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup>I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

**Galatians 2:19-20**

Paul has already made this point in Galatians 2. He also makes the same application for the Corinthians for sexual purity when he states, "You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God with your body."<sup>1</sup>Corinthians6:19b-20  
**Living in our new identity from Jesus means we walk distinctively according to God's Word by the power of Holy Spirit.**

**SUMMARY** **By faith in Jesus Christ, we are brought into a personal relationship with God; no longer enslaved to the false idols of world nor false hope of religion.** RELATIONSHIP is the first core value of LifePoint Church because everything about who we are and what we do is determined by our salvation in Jesus Christ.

So when we come to verse 8, "Formerly, when you did not know God...", Paul refers to their life before Christ of slavery to false idols; "enslaved to those that by nature are not gods". They were enslaved because they did not know God. "But now that you have come to know God..." he begins verse 9. Here is your outline to write a faithful testimony; "Formerly, when I did not know Jesus... But NOW...!" There was a life that was distinct to NOT knowing God, but that has changed now. Paul turns the reality from what WAS true to what is NOW true because of Jesus Christ. Now "you have come to know God". "Know" (*ginontes*) is an experiential knowledge; a word whose meaning spans from intellect to sexual intimacy between husband and wife. This is what we mean by "relationship", an intimacy of knowledge of God because of how well He knows us. **By faith in Jesus, we come to a knowledge of God that we never had before, nor could have on our own.**

**APPL** **Do you remember what your life was like before God? Do you remember when you came to know God; when you heard the gospel and it pricked your heart? Do you remember the Holy Spirit enveloping your whole being and the glory of God before you in the face of Jesus Christ so that all you could do is bow before Him?**

**TRANS** And just as it seems Paul has given the final statement on knowing God, he provides one final clarification. **"Or rather, to be known (*gnosthentes*) by God"**. Paul says, "there is a better way to understand your knowledge of, relationship with God; You are known by God." Paul writes to the Romans<sup>8:29</sup>, "For those He foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son," and says the same to the Ephesians<sup>1:4-5</sup>.

**HOW well does God know us?** The Bible says...

**READ** Palm 139:1-6

*O LORD, you have searched me and known me!*

<sup>2</sup>*You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.*

<sup>3</sup>*You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.*

<sup>4</sup>*Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.*

<sup>5</sup>*You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.*

<sup>6</sup>*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. **Psalm 139:1-6***

Psalm 139 tells us that God knows us better than we do or can know ourselves!(.1-6) He knows our every movement, thought, and motive. He knows where we are headed and how we will get there. Again, not only in our direction of life but process of rationalizing and justifying. He knows what we want to say, and what we will say. When we run away and hide, we do not run from His sight and perfect knowledge. He is there. What God knows about us is too much to know about self.

**TRANS** And if that's not enough, just wait. There's more!

**READ** Palm 139:13-16

<sup>13</sup>*For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.*



<sup>14</sup>I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

<sup>15</sup>My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. **Psalm 139:1-16**

God not only knows who we are. He know us before we were. He formed our inward parts; not just our internal organs, intellect, emotions, and psyche, but the innermost part, spirit and soul. He saw us when we were, as some call it, a “clump of cells”, and said, “I see you, and love you!” **No part of who you are is outside of God’s perfect knowledge.** And Galatians captures one other aspect that we must understand as Christians. God has known us far longer than we have even existed; foreknown before the foundation of the world!<sup>Romans8:29; Ephesians4:2</sup> **Christian, God knows you perfectly and eternally.**

**Galatians 4:9 is the antithesis and explanation of verse 8.** God is known NOT because we found Him, but because He saved us! God IS known because He is alive and reveals Himself that He might be known. He came in Jesus Christ, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven where he is alive and ruling today. His Spirit is working so that others will come to know Him. God wants you to know Him; to know that He loves you. **Once you did not know God. But now that you have come to know God it is because YOU are KNOWN by GOD!**

**The cry of the soul is NOT to just know others, but to be known.** **ILLUS** Have you ever had your child tell you, “But you just don’t understand.”? I have, people of all ages as a father, youth pastor, and pastor. **Everyone cries out to be understood because we are desperate to be known!** God says, “I know you! You are known by me!” And this is the reason life together is so important. **[Series slide] God commands His people to live in community with to be known by other Christ-followers, life together #toknowbeknown, that we might be daily reminded, “I am known by Him!”**

**Relationship with God produces a life of authenticity together to be known in Christian community.**

**TRANS** I am laboring to see every adult at LifePoint connected in community because it is God’s design for you.

**OBJ** **Three faithful applications why every Christian should immerse themselves in life together of Christian community.**

**One:** for God.

**1. Life Together in Christian community forms the oneness of God’s people to serve as His dwelling place in the world.**

Speaking of the local church, Ephesians 2:21-22 records that God is joining us together for a holy temple to the Lord for His swelling place. And Peter (1 Peter 2:9-10) says that His purpose for His dwelling in our oneness is that we might declare His excellencies in our salvation. **Life together is the church’s first act of faithful witness in the world, both in gathered worship and community.**

**Two:** For you.

**2. Life together in Christian community is where the gospel produces an authenticity of life for all that God has redeemed us to be.**

Psalm 139 declares that God perfectly knows the real, created you. God’s perfect knowledge includes more than only created being. Romans 8:29 tells us that God’s perfect knowledge of us was to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, His redemptive purpose for us. Jesus is the standard and measure of Christian maturity.<sup>Ephesians4:13c</sup> This is not our work to achieve in our strength. But only by His grace at work in us through His Word, He completes this work in us<sup>2Timothy3:17</sup> as we grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus.<sup>2Peter3:18</sup> **God established Christian community as the place for authenticity to grow as we discover and pursue by our participation to become the person God has redeemed us to be.**

**Three:** for God’s Kingdom mission

**3. Life together in Christian community is where the gospel goes forth so others can hear and be saved.**

Every account of the Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, is written to every individual Christ-follower. **By your life and your participation in life together, God has ordained to send the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth, beginning across the street, so others may hear and be saved.**



**CLOSE** Every religion, ideology, or philosophy other than the gospel makes God or heaven something you attain to or achieve. You work, strive, labor, and toil to get there, but you never know if you arrive or not. You hope, pray, cry out, but with no guarantee. This is not so for the Christian. We know that we know God because the Bible reveals the living God who knows us! [Until you are known by God, no one else knowing you will be sufficient to satisfy you. But once you come to know God, to understand that you are known by God, you will understand everything else in light of His knowledge of you.](#)

[Relationship with God produces a life of authenticity together to be known in Christian community.](#)

**CLOSE** Today I want to make two invitations clear. **First**, God is inviting you into a personal relationship with Him today; to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, place your faith in Him, repent of your sin, and receive His eternal life. **Second**, God is inviting you into community, to deepen your relationship (knowledge of) with Him, so you can walk more fully in the authenticity of life into which He is making you, in the image of His Son, Jesus Christ.

