



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

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The Know KNOW Book

After, writing, buying, and reading all sixteen volumes of the vastly poor selling Know NO Books described in last week's Chronicle, there must be a sequel. Sure enough in that same genre, and knowing that you have learned a great deal of knowledge and wisdom in the massive volumes, we shall prepare and publish the undefeated volume know as the "The Know KNOW Book of life."

Unlike the Know NO series that confined their topics to a single point, the "Know KNOW Book of Life" covers three topics in descending order of importance. This book also, like the others, does have a Biblical topic as it center of developmental thought. That topic comes from 2 Corinthians 12, describing the Apostle Paul's vision of heaven and his thorn in the flesh.

The Vision of Paradise

1 It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions

and revelations of the Lord: 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows such a one was caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I know such a man whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows 4 how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. 5 Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. 6 For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.

The Thorn in the Flesh

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is



sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

For sake of discussion working through 16 volumes of the Know NO series, might not give you visions of heaven, but would at least have a drastic effect upon your personality.

“It is not profitable for me to boast, but I just completed reading and studying 16 volumes of the least popular book series in history. Whether in the body or out of the body I do not know. But this I do know, what I did not Know NO then, I do Know KNOW now. I realize these inexpressible words do not make logical sense, and hence you see the power of the truth of which I speak in this weakness, thus making me strong.”

Paul doesn’t detail his “thorn in the flesh” and hence, virtually every Know NO Bible commentator has speculated about Paul’s health, his vision, this disease or that. If we could just figure out what that thorn was, other than from a rose, or a thorn berry, a cactus, or a thistle, we could announce we now know something of which we can relate, sympathize, and add to our self indulgent similarity with the Apostle.

The point of the thorn in the flesh however, is humility in the presence of God, not our exaltation of ourselves especially among others, less qualified.

Put into the context of what we have been dealing with these last couple of weeks, Paul is announcing to the world, that even including all his God given gifts and all of his self reliant talents putting them all together in a great symbiotic union that makes an Apostle from an ordinary man then and especially then, Paul begins to understand his weaknesses in the presence of God’s attributes.

That Know KNOW humility is the beginning of wisdom in truly understanding what really is important in this life. It is not the visions, nor

is it your self reliance, nor is it your physical stuff and health, nor is it your job or your ministry. What Paul and you will know living out the Know KNOW book, first and foremost, is your total depravity compared to the holiness of God.

Total depravity says you were not born innocent and undefiled, and when you die you are not going to go to heaven because you were basically a good person, who from time to time in your life tried to do good things for yourself and for others. Total depravity says you are completely evil and desire to do nothing but evil things. Any good you do in this life is really a gift of God totally. That gift might be in the sphere of common grace, good things to which all humans aspire. Or that gift might be associated with the specific grace of God relating to the exclusive claims of Jesus Christ, as both the Son of God and the Son of man, and His sacrifice to erase your evil sins on the cross. His bodily resurrection demonstrating the truth of your justification.

Know KNOW point 1: *Everything that happens in your life is a gift of God’s grace.*

You don’t hear that on the TV or in church these days. As a mysterious gift, grace is yours to use or not to use depending upon the circumstances.

Know KNOW point 2: *God controls the circumstances.*

That surely should blow a hole in your self reliant, self indulgent personality.

Know KNOW point 3: *When given the circumstances you are obligated to utilize the gifts, knowledge, wisdom and other attributes of your eternal personality to help and encourage others not so eternally gifted.*

The way eternal gifts are developed is not through hoarding them for yourself and those close to you, but to give of your best and through that gifting process you become more Christ like and more in line with not your worldly personality, but your eternal personality. That eternal personality, created by God in His image, can become your reason for existence in this life and will only be a change of stations in the life to come.

The context that all this happens within is God’s love.

Most of us remember the song refrain: “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”

I remember the words, but truthfully I didn't really have a clue that the Bible said that, that was relayed to me by the Sunday School teacher who taught me the words, when I was but a pre reading lad. As I grew older and read the Bible, one of the first things I learned was that God's love in the Bible was a whole lot more complex than just that simple tune. What really disturbed me however, was the fact that many if not most Christians never matured beyond this simple song.

Think about it for a moment, God's love is so powerful that even a direct tiny dose can fuse all the synapses of your nerves and frying you instantly and yet, “I asked Jesus into my heart, 15 years ago and I have done nothing with it since that time, Praise the Lord.”

What is missing here ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls is no training in the Know NO Books, way before we get to the Know KNOW position.

Our next progression in understanding of God's love, we remember from weddings and funerals, 1 Corinthians 13. “If I have not love I am nothing.”

What is missing, probably culturally more than in the words of the passage, is that love to be love can not be received unless it is first given away. The true understanding of love is to be real love, it must always serve from the deficit. In other words to truly understand love you must give more away than you can ever hope to receive. It is guaranteed in God's economy however, that you will receive enough of God's loving grace, to continue to love and serve others. Self service only works in buying gas not dispensing love. Verses 11 and 12 of this chapter give us the progressive context in the imperative mood not the indicative.

11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

The final wisdom of the Know KNOW Book is not love of fellow man, but love of mankind as God's instrument. As God's instrument God's love is not fatal as would be His direct loving touch, but rather music that touches the soul. There is that old song about the old violin in the hands of a master violinist.

More to the point in the Chronicle Oikos Thoughts the last couple of weeks we have been composing around, wordsmith wise, not tunesmith wise, the problems of coal as an icon of personal self indulgence, both environmentally and humanly, and how coal can become a diamond in short order, given enough pressure and heat. Coal we burn for dollars per ton, diamonds we cherish forever at least according to the advertising spending thousands of dollars per carat 200 milligrams .

God made coal and God made diamonds. In the human sense that is also true. However, even though we all begin life more elementary as a lump of coal, we can become more diamond like in this life, by wading through the unpublished Know NO books to enter into the Know KNOW sequel.

Coal and diamonds have different uses but are in the elemental form just a chunk of carbon with impurities. Heat and pressure remove many of coal's impurities on the way to become diamonds. Moving from that in a human sense, is truly trusting in the reality of God's love that saved the totally deprived in the first place, and is the first step to understanding the precious life God has prepared for His adopted children. The better you understand that adoption from eternal condemnation, the better you will be able to handle your diamond making pressures, trusting in God's grace through all circumstances. That in this world is the truest form of worship.