

## **The church that forgot Christ!** **By Bob Young**

### **Introduction**

- Thomas Oden, Catholic, NY Times bestseller review
- What happens to a church that forgets Christ? Paul provides helpful insights.
- Many ways to think about texts--Sun. night, prayers of Paul, first prayer in 1:15ff
- First task today is to think about the context of the book of Ephesians:
  - Church that delights in the purpose of God—accepts Jesus as the purpose/plan of God
  - Church that demonstrates the grace of God—depends on the grace of God
  - Church that declares the wisdom of God—makes known the wisdom of God
  - Church that demands the unity of the Spirit—lives in the unity of the Spirit of God
  - Church that dwells as children of God—keeps pure as children of God
  - Church that defends with the armor of God—fights the good fight with God’s armor

### **When a church forgets Christ—**

Notice the following links: praise, prayer, purpose, promises.

1. Forgets to praise, 1:3-14, reasons for praise.
2. Forgets to pray, 1:15-16, prayer rises from gratitude, reasons for prayer
  - Grateful for their life, conversion, transformation, God’s grace, God’s work
  - Grateful for the success of the gospel in every place
  - Prayer and promise are linked
3. Forgets the purpose of God, 1:9-11.
4. Forgets the promises of God, 1:12-14.

These are indeed disastrous. But they are not the focus of our lesson.

1. Forfeits the ability to know God, to know God better, with wisdom, with revelation. Pray for others to know God, pray for self to know God.
2. Forfeits the ability to remember its hopeful calling.
3. Forfeits its power.
  - Power to change lives.
  - Power to overcome.
  - Power to be like Jesus—to represent Christ as fullness, the power of Christ-likeness
  - Power to bring the presence of Christ into this world.

### **Conclusion**

What happens when a Christian forgets Christ? Is it possible that there are Christians who attend with some regularity—most Sunday mornings, for worship if not for Bible class—who have forgotten Christ? Who don’t praise him during the week, don’t pray, are not committed to his purposes, seldom remember his promises and often forget them, with melancholy and depression when life sours.

How could you know you have forgotten Christ?

- Do you know him better every day?
- Do you live in hope because he has called you?
- Do you live in power?

We have a power at work in us so great that the resurrection of Jesus is peanuts. Power so great that it has changed and does change our lives every day. Power so great that we overcome temptation and struggles and problems. Power that lives out the life of Jesus daily. Power that brings the presence of Christ to the world where we live. Power that allows us to be carriers—where we go the presence of Christ goes.