

# "I Know"

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 24 January 2016

Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[ 0 : 00 ] In Revelation chapter 2, there are two monosyllabic words I would like us to focus on, which we find in four different verses in this second chapter.

We find them in verse 2, in verse 9, and in verse 13, and at verse 19. And they are the little words, I know.

Now, in the Greek language in which the New Testament is written, there are different ways of describing the term to know or to have knowledge. And the most common one is that which is used most of the time in Scripture, and that is the word for knowledge or knowing, which is in a process of increasing.

For example, we might say that, oh, I know a bit about maths, or I know a bit about history, or I know so-and-so quite well. But all of these are descriptions of a knowledge which we have, which is in the process of increasing, and which is not yet complete.

You know, we might know a neighbour or a friend, but we don't know them as fully or completely as somebody who lives with them the whole time. We may have a great knowledge of a different language or of a different academic subject, but we don't know everything there is to know about it.

[ 1 : 26 ] We are, in a sense, sort of paddling on the surface of the ocean. But the word that is used here in verses 2 and 9 and 13 and 94, for I know, which is coming from the mouth of the risen Christ and being written here through his servant John, is a word that implies a complete knowledge, a knowledge which cannot now be increased because it is absolutely full, absolutely packed to the absolute limits.

There is no way of increasing it because it is total knowledge. And that is the word that is used in the Greek here to describe these terms. I know.

And this word, if we're to use, you know, similes or illustrations, we talked about paddling on the surface of the ocean. Somebody might be, say, you know, a scuba dive or an aqua dive, and they've got their oxygen tanks on the back, and they can go down with their wee flippers to a certain depth, and they can pop up again, and then breathe air, and then go down again for a little.

And that's a wee bit of knowledge, and a wee bit of what's in some part of the ocean. But the word that's used for I know here is as though one is right down in the bottom of the seabed, and has knowledge not only of the depths all the way down, but of all the vastness of all the oceans, Pacific, Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Arctic Ocean, the Arabian sea, all of these things.

One has complete, total knowledge of every cubic centimetre of water in all of these oceans. I know. Now, this is the term by which the risen Lord speaks to these seven churches.

[ 3 : 13 ] We've only got four of them covered in this chapter. But this is the term by which he addresses them. I know. I know thy works, thy labour, thy patience, and I can't stop there, them which are evil.

I know thy works in tribulation and poverty, but thou art rich. I know thy works where thou dwellest, where Satan's seed is. I know thy works in charity and service and faith and patience. He knows. He also knows what their failings and faults are. But he knows all that they have been through. And this sense of knowing from the inside, this is a sense of not just to know intellectually, and not just to know absolutely, but to know by experience.

Somebody once wrote that there's a difference between being physically, say, kicked in the teeth, and reading a description of somebody being kicked in the teeth.

And some people call it existential. To experience the pain and the agony of that event means that you really know about it in a way that nobody who hasn't been through it can ever know.

[ 4 : 24 ] Now, when it comes to the sufferings, and when it comes to the agonies and the tribulations and the endurance of the churches to whom he is writing, in almost every case, the Lord

has a wee bit of chivvy to do for them.

He has to say to them, look, I've still got some things against you. You're doing this wrong and this wrong, and you're still falling down on this aspect. There are two exceptions. The church is in Smyrna. And if we were to go to the next chapter of the church in Philadelphia, about them, he has nothing bad to say.

There's one church Saturday about whom he's got nothing good to say. But, however, all through these descriptions, he knows them completely. He has experienced, as it were, with them all that they themselves have gone through.

Now, obviously to belong to the church of Jesus Christ in this world is to be on, as it were, foreign territory. We have the experience of being aliens in our own land, aliens in what we think of as our own home.

But this isn't really our home, because here we have no continuing city. We are always, in a sense, up against the world. And the more we seek to be faithful to the Lord, the more we will find the brick wall of the world and its values being hostile against us.

[ 5 : 47 ] The Lord knows all these things, because he has experienced all these things. His knowledge of them is absolute. It is total.

It is to the absolute depths of the ocean. He knows completely, experientially, all that they themselves have experienced only a wee bit of.

He has been through so much more of it. When he gets alongside them, as it were, and says, I know what you're going through, he really, really means it.

Just as the head is conscious when the rest of the body suffers, so our head, Christ, feels the pain and the blessings and the sorrows and the joys of his people here upon earth.

Now, I know it has become a cliché of sort of artificiality to say, oh, I feel your pain. And people say that, and they don't actually mean it, because they don't feel your pain.

[ 6 : 49 ] And unless somebody has actually been through the experience that is devastating somebody else, whether it's widowhood or a particular kind of operation that they themselves have experienced, or treatment for a particularly serious illness, somebody who has actually been through that can say, look, I know how you feel.

I do know. I have been through it. I know what you'll be going through just now. They're probably the very last people who are going to say, look, I feel your pain. But rather, if they know, it's because they themselves have been through it first.

It is not a cheap and easy statement. It is rather one that looks, as it says, you know, with the eyes, there is a flame of fire that can pierce right through to the depths of your heart and say, look, I know. I know all that you are going through. I know all that you are experiencing. I know what is casting you down. I know what is breaking your heart.

I know why it is. Maybe you're a bit angry at God just now. Or maybe you think he's distant from you. Or maybe you think he's letting you down. But I know why you think these things.

[ 7 : 58 ] And even in terms of where maybe not as right with the Lord as once we thought we were or once we should be, even if we feel there's a bit of distance between us and the Lord, remember that the risen Christ himself is he who cried upon the cross, my God, my God, and the Lord has done forsaken me.

I know, says Jesus. And first of all, if we can leave aside the context of the seven churches to whom the risen Lord is speaking, let's think about that for a second for each one of us.

Now, I do not know your individual situations. I don't know what you're going through right now or what may be troubling you or what may be exciting you or giving you joy or sense of anticipation.

I don't know what is happening in your extended families. Sometimes I don't know what's happening in my extended family. But still, the fact of the matter is we cannot experience somebody else's life.

So I cannot know what is going on in your heart or in your experience or in your soul. But this risen Christ does. When he says, I know, he isn't just saying it to Ephesus.

[ 9 : 11 ] He isn't just saying it to Pergamos and Smyrna and Triatira. He isn't even just saying it to Scalpi. He's saying it to you. He is saying it individually to your life, to your heart, to your mind and thought, right into the depths of your soul.

He is putting his finger right on the sore point. Right on the thing that may be causing you distress or anxiety. Saying, look, that's what's really troubling you. You don't realize it.

All the things that you think are making you feel down or making your world begin to fall apart or this is going wrong or that's going wrong and you can't get on with so and so. This is the real cause that he puts his finger right on it.

And say, I know. Oh, that's what it is. That's the thing right there. That's the thing that either needs to be dealt with or brought out into the open. You don't even actually have to tell me about it. But if you want to talk to me in prayer, you can. Because I know. You don't have to explain it. You don't have to pretend.

[10:18] I know the absolute depths of it all. Now these are words of tremendous sympathy. Before the Lord criticizes any of these seven churches, he first of all assures them of his encouragement.

He first of all assures them that he is sharing in joy at what they have achieved and what they have done and how they have stayed faithful up to a point.

And where there are things that need to be put right or where there are criticisms to be made, he only says it after you said how good they are at some other things.

So these are words, first of all, of sympathy. Our great high priest. One who doesn't just offer our behalf but is himself the sacrifice.

Knows what we are going through because he has been through it himself. Remember what we read then of prophet Isaiah. Looking ahead in chapter 53, it's prophesying Christ to come.

[11:20] It says, We rise in front of us and we could jolly well do it in our own strength and we thought, yes, we could take on the world.

We didn't need all this stuff. We despised and rejected the Christ of our forefathers and of previous generations who were obviously less sophisticated than us.

Who obviously didn't know as much as us. And we forget, of course, that every single generation thinks of themselves, rightly, as the most up-to-date and sophisticated age there has ever been.

If we were to look back at what we now think of as ancient history, we would think and say, oh, the 1920s or something like that. The 1920s, they thought they were absolutely cutting edge.

They've got the First World War behind them. They had telegraph. They had typewriters. They had telephones. They had radio. All these things that, all these inventions that nobody had really utilized in a way.

[12:46] The war had opened up all manner of possibilities. It was absolutely the most modern age anybody had ever lived in up until then. And the same would be said of every single generation.

They thought they were cutting edge. And we would look back on them now and we would chuckle and say, oh, dear, how deluded they were. How old-fashioned. Look at us now. We are so much better and stronger.

We don't need this Christ. He is despised and rejected by us. And he continues to be, even if we have an outward respect for perhaps the things of religion, we may continue outwardly to do these things.

But we despise Christ as long as we reject him as our Savior until such time as he changes our hearts. And he does that at exactly the right time because he knows.

He knows every detail about us. He knows exactly when we reach the point where he is needed most in our lives. He answers the prayer of the needy and the destitute.

[13:53] These are words of sympathy. They do your words also of sharing and of compassion as the head of the bodies, which says he feels and shares all the trials and persecutions of the members.

In everything that they endure, he endures it as well. He knows it is a matter of present experience. And he feels it. But also we have to recognise that as the Lord begins with encouragement, he also goes on to say in most cases that there is some things that need to be addressed in these particular churches.

There are things that they are not doing, perhaps they should. Even if it is perhaps this most frightening one of all to some, I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love. And that's what he says as to Ephesus verse 4 of this second chapter. And because they've left their first love, all the other problems flow from it. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, do the first work.

So that's I will come unto thee quickly. Remove thy candles to get in this place, except thou repent. Now, maybe Ephesus didn't know that they had drifted away and cooled towards the Lord.

[15:10] Maybe, for example, Thyatira didn't know that they were being wronged in allowing this Jezebel to seduce so many in the church and teach them to commit fornication and being sacrificed to idols.

And perhaps those in Pergamos didn't know that they were encouraging the doctrine of Baal. Same kind of problem, eating things sacrificed to idols and commit fornication. Now, what are these really, basically?

Eating things sacrificed to idols means sharing in the worship of other gods. It means sitting down with people who worship other gods, idols in their temples, and sharing in their feet.

It means, effectively, interfaith worship. And people think, oh, but that's good. That's encouraging. That's being open-minded. And we've got to sort of get along with other people now.

The Lord says that such treating of other gods as though they are the same as him, that is idolatry. And that is a sin. And he holds it against these churches. Oh, committing fornication.

[16:11] Oh, well, we don't like to be so negative. We don't like to be critical or judgmental. So, I mean, we've got to be open-minded about these things. And people are far more easy about these sort of relationships than they used to be.

It's not what God and his words says. We may think, oh, times have changed. God hasn't changed. He doesn't say to these churches, oh, how broad-minded you are. Oh, how tolerant and open you are.

He says, rather, these are sins I'm holding against you. These are sins that are problems. I know it works, yes. I know what you do that is good. I know the ways that you've been faithful, notwithstanding.

Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee. Now, these churches may not have realized or have known the things which were, in fact, polluting their relationship with the Lord.

And it is also true that we, in our own lives, may not see or know the things which are maybe damaging or undermining our relationship with the Lord and with others.

[17:11] It is always easier to see slightly from a distance. You know, when an artist is painting away at his canvas, sometimes he'll take a step back and look at it so he can see all the broad canvas, rather the wee detail he's working at.

And you can see things sometimes much more clearly from a little bit of distance than you can from right up close. And so it is that sometimes it's easier for other people to see the faults that are in us than it is for us to see them ourselves.

In fact, almost always, they can see it more clearly in us than we can ourselves. But for them, genuinely, they may not have been able to recognize.

Just as if we go back to the Old Testament and we think of the situation with Joshua and the Israelites after they had defeated Jericho, then there was a problem.

So, Achan, amongst the children of Israel, when they were told that everything was to be destroyed, nothing was to be laid their hands on, they wanted to enrich themselves at the expense of Jericho.

[18:13] It was all dedicated to the Lord. But he thought, well, there's only a couple of wee things. You have this good wedge of gold and this goodly Babylonish garment and a few shengles of silica.

You've got a mistroats. You see, if you get some kind of disease in part of your body, you don't say, ah, well, your finger's diseased or your arm's diseased or your torso is diseased.

You say your body is diseased. You say your body has caught this particular virus. The body of the children of Israel was infected with this particular virus, but they didn't know it. Or most of them didn't know it.

Achan knew it, but not everybody knew it, but the Lord knew it. And as a result, they failed in their next battle and many people were killed. Well, comparatively, a small number of people, but enough that needn't have died.

And so they were beaten. And so the Lord points out to them the problem. He indicates there is a sin amongst the people. And when they drew lots, and tribe by tribe is taken, and then family by family is taken.

[19:33] And then within that family, individual by individual is taken. It must have been absolutely terrifying for Achan. He knew what he had done. Seeing the finger of God is we're getting closer and closer and closer.

And finally he is identified. And Joshua 7 to Achan. It says Joshua 7 at verse 19. My son, hereby pray thee glory to the Lord God of Israel. And make confession unto him.

And tell him now what thou hast done. Hide it not from me. Tell me now what thou hast done. Hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel. And thus and thus have I done, when I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment of two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight.

Then I coveted them and took them. And behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent and brought them unto Joshua and unto all the children of Israel and laid them out before the Lord.

And of course we all know what happens next. Achan and everything and everyone that belongs to him is put to death. It's not a happy episode. But notice how the righteousness and the justice is followed through.

[ 20 : 50 ] It's not just enough. Oh well, he's admitted it now. He's confessed. That's it. Put him to death. Now no. They go and investigate. And they check that what he says is actually the truth.

And they dig up in his tent. And only when they find the evidence and he's set out in the sight of all Israel is he actually condemned. There is perfect justice with God.

But God could have easily said to Joshua right there and said, No, it's Achan. He's the problem. He went and nicked the gold in the Babylonian garment and so on. He's, you know, one. Get rid of him. But no. It had to be done in such a way that both there is the confession of the wrongdoing and the recognition by all that this has happened.

Everyone is seen to recognize there is sin in the midst of the nation. There is a problem that needs to be dealt with so that there wouldn't be any question about what needed to be done when it had to be done.

[ 21 : 46 ] If it had just been pointed out secretly from the Lord, they might have said, Well, I never saw him do that. I don't believe that. I think they're just picking on Achan. I think Joshua just doesn't like him.

Or words to that effect. But the perfect justice and openness of the Lord makes clear. The identifying the culprit, the confession by the culprit, setting out of the evidence, and eventually and tragically the execution of the sentence.

And then the problem is dealt with. The sin is put away. And then there's victory after that. Then there is progress after that. The Lord here in each of these churches is identifying particular sins and saying, These are the things that I have against you.

Maybe they didn't realize that these things were problems. Just as Israel at large did not realize what was hidden in the earth under Achan's tent. Just as you and I might not in all sincerity recognize the things that God sees as a problem.

Now it does take quite a bit of courage to be prepared to go and say to the Lord, Lord, whatever it is that is holding me back in my relationship with you.

[ 23 : 03 ] Whatever it is that is coming between me and you. If there's something I am holding on to that I ought to be letting go. If there's something, some secret sin that I am cherishing.

Not simply saying, Lord, I know this is a problem. I know this is my besetting sin. I repent of it. I will try so hard with your help not to commit it again. And then we do let the ones say, you know, we all fall.

We all sin at times. That's different from saying, oh, no, no, Lord. This is my favorite one. I'm not going to give this one up. You can have everything else in my life, but you're not getting this. And there is some aspect of our lives of which Christ is not Lord.

And if there is any aspect of our lives of which Christ is not Lord, then he's not Lord at all. That particular cherished sin takes charge of us.

Just as if we can say there's any aspect of our body that is in fact infected with some particular disease or virus, then none of us is pure.

[ 24 : 07 ] None of our body can be said, oh, well, it's okay because my arms and my legs are, it's just this wee bit of my torso here that's got the virus or it's got the infection or whatever. The rest of it is perfectly clean.

No. We'd say that person is infected. And if there's a sin we are cherishing or an obstacle that is coming between us and the Lord or a thing of which we are guilty that maybe we genuinely, and on the Bible, do not know that we are guilty of or we didn't see it as a problem or we just didn't think. And to ask the Lord in all honesty and humility, put your finger on whatever it is, Lord, and I'll repent of it and we can put it away and the blood of Christ cleanse it and wash it away so that I can be right

with you again.

And that does take courage, but which is worse, to face the Lord who already knows everything about you and with the dignity and with the privacy that he offers you for that or at the last day and all your sins set out in front of all the angelic hosts and all the reason.

This is so-and-so's like, look at all the things they did. They are guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty.

And not have the blood of Christ cleanse us from all sin to wash it all away, to have us pronounced clean.

[ 25 : 27 ] If there's anything we are holding on to now, let me tell you it isn't worth it. It is not worth whatever benefit or enjoyment or whatever strength or privilege you think is being gained from holding on to these things.

Whatever it is that may be coming between you and the Lord, whatever it is that may be polluting or defiling your relationship with the Lord, whatever it is which is holding back the growth or preventing the blessing, it does take courage to be prepared to go to the Lord and say, Lord, show me what is wrong.

Because the one thing you can guarantee is that you may not be aware of it or you may not be able to identify it, but he's the one who says, I know. I know every detail of every grubby little secret that you might have.

I know every dark little corner of your heart. I know every secret of your mind. Still, I love you. I love you just as you are, but I want you to be so much better than you are.

I want you to be cleansed. I want you to be whole. I want you to be free and not bound by these chains which, unbeknown to you, are becoming the chains that are keeping you down.

[ 26 : 47 ] Your soul should be free to soar, to be with me, to have the strength, the joy, the enablement that I want to give you the horses. But these sins, whilst we cherish them, get in the way.

These obstacles, they may not even be direct sins in the sense of things that are forbidden in God's word, but they may affect us in sinful ways.

They may enable pride. They may encourage a spirit of envy or jealousy or whatever it is against others. They may be poisoning our relationship with others.

Whatever it is, whether it is good or bad, somewhere there is bound to be an echan in your soul.

There is bound to be that which needs to be dealt with.

And yes, you might say, well, maybe not. Maybe I'm a Smyrna or a Philadelphia where there's nothing wrong with me at all. Well, blessings on you, brother or sister, if that is the case.

[ 27 : 46 ] Then you won't have any problems saying to the Lord, search my heart. Put your finger on whatever may be wrong. Try me and see if there will be any wicked way in me, as David says to the Lord.

Well, that's fine. It won't be a problem for you then, will it? If you're as open and clean as that, most of us know. That is not the case. And the Lord certainly knows that it is not the case.

But he understands how we have gone where we have. He understands why that particular fetish or descending sin or pet favorite sin is so important to you.

He understands the comfort you get from it. He understands why you've held on to it all these years. And he understands it is difficult to let go. But at the end of the day, you cannot hold on to these things.

I love the Christ. Just like those in Thyatira and in Pergamos cannot cherish their fornication and their idol worship at the same time as they seek to be faithful to Christ.

[ 28 : 49 ] It is a blot. It is a defilement on the purity of their relationship. It is holding them back. But the Lord loves them still.

And the Lord knows every detail of them. These are words of mercy in anticipation. Mercy in advance.

Mercy that says, look, come to me. And tell me the things that I already know. Pour out your soul to me because you won't shock me. I already understand.

I already know better than you know yourself. Remember these verses in Jeremiah that, of course, everybody loves, but mostly they don't quote the whole lot.

Jeremiah 29. I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord. Jeremiah 29, verse 11.

Thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end.

[ 29 : 45 ] As other versions of the Bible put it, you know, thoughts to prosper you and not to harm you. To give you hope in the future. And that's usually where people stop. But really the context as you go on says, then shall ye call upon me.

And ye shall go and pray unto me. And I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me and find me. When ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Not keeping back part of it. Not saying, oh, well, you can have everything except these might take the same sins. You can have all of me except this week or not year. No. The Lord has these good thoughts that he thinks towards us.

Thoughts of peace and not of evil. To prosper us and not to harm us. But it's not just a sort of generalistic sort of don't worry, be happy. Blessings on you all. Regards.

It is almost as it were conditional upon seeking the Lord while he is to be found. Then shall ye seek me or search me or find me.

[ 30 : 47 ] Will you search for me with all your heart. And if we are going to find that which is greatest of all. Peace in Christ Jesus. We must search for with all of our heart.

That is the invitation. That is what the prophet is inviting people to do. That is why it is so blessed. It's not just a sort of a kind of catch all, kind of everybody be happy.

But rather then shall ye call upon me. It is bound up with crying out to the Lord Jesus Christ. And ye shall go and pray unto me. And I will hearken unto you.

Ye shall seek me and find me. When ye shall search for me with all your heart. These two little words. I know. I know every detail.

I know what is in your heart. I know why you hold on to these resetting sins. I know and I understand. But whatever it is that may be costing you.

[ 31 : 47 ] Whatever it is that faithfulness to the Lord may be draining out of you. You think I can't go on like this. Remember what Paul writes to the Romans. He writes, I reckon that the sufferings of this present time.

Are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. This is the promise that is in these words as well. And he begins that very chapter where there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

Who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. The sufferings of this present time. What about them? And Jesus says about them not, oh they don't matter. He says, ah forget that.

There's better days to come. He says, I know. I understand. I know why it hurts. I know every tear that you have shed. I know all that you have gone through.

Because I have gone through it myself. I do literally feel the pain. I do know. I know. But the things that he may have against a church or an individual are such that they must be put away from us.

[ 32 : 57 ] If a relationship to the Lord would not be endured. Many people sought to follow Christ in the days of his flesh. It came to pass that as they went in the way a certain man said to him, Lord I will follow thee whosoever thou goes.

Jesus said unto him, foxes of holes and the birds of the air have nests. For the son of man hath not where to lay his head. Now that man didn't say, oh well, stuff it out and go home. We don't know whether or not he still followed the Lord.

But Jesus obviously was putting his finger on something that was important to this man. That he liked his home comforts. And that these home comforts might be threatened.

If he followed Jesus as he said he was going to do. Notice that he made profession of it with his lips before he'd actually put it into practice.

Notice that Jesus puts his finger right on where the biggest cost is going to be. Maybe he was prepared to pay that cost. We're not told that he wasn't.

[ 33 : 58 ] But Jesus identified his weak spot. And he said to another, follow me. But he said, Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father. Now again, that doesn't literally mean, well my father's just died and the family's all gathered for the wake.

And Lord, you know, we're just about to have the burial so I've got to go and get my spade. That's not the sense in which it means. It means my father and mother are getting old. And, you know, I've got to kind of stay and look after them.

They look to me for support. But, you know, once all that's done. And once I'm asking in my own house. And once my father's no longer with us. And, you know, then there'll be time to give to the Lord.

Jesus said to him, let the dead bury their dead. Now that's again, it's not physical intention there. There are obviously physical corpses. There's kind of any other corpses. It means let those who are spiritually dead do the burying of your father.

There's something in you. He's saying, follow me. There's a spiritual spark. I see it in you. I know you have a desire to follow me. I know you have a desire for the things of the kingdom.

[ 35 : 00 ] Other people don't necessarily have that. You are spiritually alive. They are spiritually dead. Let the dead bury their dead. But go down and preach the kingdom of God.

And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee. But let me first go and bid them farewell. Which are at home at my house. And was I going to go back and take my farewells? It's not unreasonable.

But, you know, if he was serious about following the Lord. He would have done that first. He would have said, look, guys, family. I'm off to follow this Jesus. So, you know, here's our worldly goods.

You look after them. We can take this new bag of provisions and extra clothing and so on. But I don't know when you'll see me again. I'm off. And he would have taken his goodbyes. But instead he goes to Jesus.

And he says, look, I'm going to follow you. I've got to go back and do this first. Why does he do that? He wants Jesus to say, that's okay. You know, no bother. I understand where the priorities have to be.

[ 35 : 56 ] Home and family is going to come first. Jesus doesn't say that. Brother, Jesus says, no man having put his hand to the plow. And looking back, it's fit for the kingdom of God.

Looking back with that longing. And Lot's wife looked back to Sodom. As the one with his hand on the plow now looks behind him. As though to see, oh, where have I come from? He's not going to plow a straight funnel doing that.

There is work ahead of him. His hand is to the plow. Now what he has to do is go forward. But he's still looking back to the old home and the family and the individual relations there.

And that's where really his heart is. And it's going to be costly to follow Jesus. And everyone that has taken up the cross to follow Christ knows that it is costly.

And Jesus himself says repeatedly in this chapter, I know. I know the price that you have paid. I know the cost that it has been to you.

[ 36 : 56 ] I know all that you have endured. There are still some things wrong. Just because you've done that doesn't mean that's you. You've got plaster's sake now. Never have to worry about another sin. Whatever you put a foot wrong, it's already taken care of.

You sin your little heart out. As long as you're following Jesus, nothing bad is going to happen to you. No, Jesus says, yeah, you've done well. You've gone so far. You've been really good. I know all that you've been through.

But still some things that are wrong. Still some things that need sorting out. You and I, we might know what those things are. We might know what the achilles is in our midst.

Others might not. We might not. But Jesus knows. And he won't put his finger on where the problem lies. He will find that weak spot.

And you and I have to be prepared either to confess and acknowledge it and say, yes, Lord, this is a problem. Help me deal with it so that I can follow you better. But what we can never do is we can never fool him.

[ 37 : 55 ] We can never lie to him. We can lie to others. We can pretend to others and say, oh, yes, of course. I'm serious about this. I really am. Yeah. But you can't lie to Jesus.

Because whatever else we may think or others may think or the church may believe, Jesus is the one who puts his finger right on the pinpoint of your soul and says, I know.

Are you lying to me or whether you're telling me the truth? I know. Whatever's in your heart.

Whatever's burdening you. Whatever is the weight that you carry. And the reason for all your tears. I know.

I understand why you may be hesitant. I understand why you think you're weak. I understand why you think you won't make it to the end of the journey if once you start. And that's what you're afraid of.

And he says, I know. I recognize. I don't just know partially. I know completely. In the sense of experiencing it all.

[ 38 : 54 ] Feeling every hot salt tear that you have wept. Sensing every beat and vibration of your heart that after all I created.

And I brought you into being. I know. I know far more than you imagine. I know everything there is to know about your soul and life and body and spirit.  
And hopes and dreams. I know it all. This isn't just to seven churches long ago. This isn't even just to one church here in this island tonight.  
This is to you. And to me. Let me see that wherever you may be on this journey. Whatever may be the burden that you may be carrying. Or by which you are weighed down.  
Or whatever may be the trials and afflictions or problems. All indeed secret sins. Let them be secret between you and the Lord no longer. Because you can't fool them anyway.  
[ 39 : 56 ] He is the one who for good. And for your blessing. And for hope. And for invitation. And for the future that he desires. For the eternal blessing of your soul.  
He says. I know. Bless you.