

***Theme for 2018***

**WE ARE THE ARMY OF GOD &  
WE ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!**

*“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)*



***This Week’s Thought – April 22, 2018***

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*“I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.” Philippians 3:10-11 (NIV)*

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Knowing God is not for the casual Christian, but for the committed one. This intimate relationship is forged in the ‘crucible’ of adversity and expressed through the power of Christ’s resurrected life. Knowing God requires dying to self and coming alive in Christ. Resurrected living is the fruit of a faith that is not satisfied with surface Christianity.

To know God is to be loved by Him, to love Him, and to love for Him. To know Him is to behold Him in the glory of His Holiness and to bow down in humble worship. To know Christ is to receive His comfort and to carry on a caring conversation with Him. It is going deep in knowledge and understanding of God so we can carry His character and faith far and wide. Knowing God leads to making God known with our words and deeds.

*“Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.” (Psalm 100:3–4)*

Knowing God grows your character, as intimacy with Him influences you to be like Him. Christ’s character begins to transform your character. His influence in your life broadens your influence in other lives. Indeed, your depth of character determines your breadth of influence.

April 22, 2018

Grow in grace so you can export grace throughout your circle of influence, but be careful not to compare your character standard to that of others or even other Christians. Comparison games are the enemy’s game plan to get you off track in trusting Jesus. Pride will puncture your ballooning influence when you begin to take credit for what only the Lord can do. The more you know God, the less you see of yourself and the more you see of Him and others. You know Christ in His death, accompanied by a radical resurrection.

How do you grow to know Him better? It happens in the margins of life, not in a packed schedule with no room for interruptions. A frantic pace lacks grace. A hurried life is tired and unable to trust or give back. Start by slowing down and calendaring time with Christ. Be with Him so you can hear Him, get to know Him, and be changed by Him. Then the depth of your character will grow the breadth of your influence—for His glory!

*“For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.”* (Psalm 86:10–11)

**Application:** How are you growing in your knowledge of God? How is He transforming your character and broadening your influence for Him?

**Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week:** *“I am calling you to a life of constant communion with Me. Basic training includes learning to live above your circumstances, even while interacting on that cluttered plane of life. I challenge you to accept each day just as it comes, and find Me in the midst of it all. Talk with Me about every aspect of your day, including your feelings. Remember that your ultimate goal is not to control or fix everything around you; it is to keep communing with Me. Do not let your to-do list (written or mental) become an idol directing your life. A successful day is one in which you have stayed in touch with Me, even if some or many things remain undone at the end of the day.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Proverbs 3:6; Galatians 5:25)

*“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.”* Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King