

Monday 1/31**Phil. 3:1-2**

1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, for me it is not irksome, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision.

Related Verses**Phil. 4:4**

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Psa. 5:11

11 But let all who take refuge in You rejoice; Let them shout for joy forever; And may You spread a cover over them; And those who love Your name Will exult in You.

Isa. 12:3

3 Therefore you will draw water with rejoicing From the springs of salvation,

Gal. 5:1, 6, 24-25

1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not be entangled with a yoke of slavery again.

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith avails, operating through love.

24 But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Deut. 30:6

6 And Jehovah your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, so that you will love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

2 Cor. 13:11

11 Finally, brothers, rejoice, be perfected, be comforted, think the same thing, be at peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Portions from the Life-study messages

Toward the end of chapter two, Paul speaks of sending Timothy and Epaphroditus to Philippi. Remarks about the sending of co-workers to visit the saints are usually found at the very end of Paul's epistles. This may indicate that Paul was planning to close this epistle at the end of chapter two. Paul, however, was obviously burdened to write more. After he spoke of Timothy and Epaphroditus, his burden

was still not discharged. Deep in his heart he was troubled by the Judaizers. I believe that this is the reason for the change of subject at the beginning of chapter three.

In 3:1 Paul says, "Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, for me it is not irksome, but for you it is safe." The Greek word rendered irksome also means wearisome, tedious, troublesome. Paul did not find it irksome or wearisome to write the same thing to the saints.

Paul here charges the saints to rejoice in the Lord. To rejoice in the Lord is a safeguard, a security. For Paul to write the saints about rejoicing in the Lord was safe for them. Paul's use of the word safe points to the connection between 3:1 and 2. There must have been a situation in Philippi which required a safeguard, some kind of protection. The situation Paul had in mind was the trouble caused by the Judaizers. Therefore, after telling the believers to rejoice in the Lord, he charges them to beware of the dogs, the evil workers, the concision (v. 2). The Greek word for beware means to keep a watchful eye ever upon. On the one hand, the apostle advises the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord; on the other hand, he warns them to beware of, to keep a watchful eye ever upon, the Judaizers.

In using the word "dogs" Paul was very strong. If we were to use such an expression today, we would surely be condemned. Paul, however, was not the first to be so bold in his utterance. Both John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus referred to the Pharisees as the offspring of vipers (Matt. 3:7; 12:34). Like John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus, Paul was honest and frank in speaking the facts. The Pharisees truly were the offspring of vipers, and the Judaizers really were "dogs."

In 3:2 Paul says, "Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision." Since there is no conjunction used between these clauses, they must refer to the same class of people. Dogs are unclean (Lev. 11:4-8, 27), the workers are evil, and the concision are those deserving contempt. (Concision, meaning mutilation, is a term of contempt, used in place of circumcision.) The "dogs" refer to the Judaizers. In nature they are unclean dogs, in behavior they are evil workers, and in religion they are the concision, people of shame. In such a book concerning the experience and enjoyment of Christ, the apostle warns the Gentile believers to be wary of such unclean, evil, and contemptible people.

The subject of Philippians is the experience of Christ...It was necessary for the Philippians to experience Christ in order to overcome the influence of the Judaizers. We also need to experience Christ if we would overcome the opposition we face today. We cannot overcome the "barking" of religious "dogs" by anything we have in ourselves. The opposition is too severe to be overcome by our own efforts. For this, we need the adequate experience of Christ. We need to experience Christ in such a way that we live Him, and take Him as our pattern, goal, and power. Such an experience of Christ will enable us to overcome all opposition. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 139-141, 8-9)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 10 – Sections: How God Becomes Man's Enjoyment In The Spirit; The Need To Be In Spirit To Enjoy God

Tuesday 2/1**Phil. 3:3-6**

3 For we are the ¹circumcision, the ones who ²serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and ³have no confidence in the ⁴flesh,

4 Though I myself have something to be confident of in the flesh as well. If any other man thinks that he has confidence in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the ¹eighth day; of the ²race of Israel, of the ³tribe of Benjamin, a ⁴Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the ⁵law, a ⁶Pharisee;

6 As to ¹zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, become ²blameless.

Related Verses**Gal. 5:24**

24 But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.

Gal. 6:13-15

13 For neither do they that become circumcised keep the law themselves, but they desire you to be circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

15 For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters.

Rom. 7:6

6 But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that in which we were held, so that we serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter.

John 4:23-24

23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.

24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

1 Cor. 2:2

2 For I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.

Portions from the footnotes**Phil. 3:3¹ circumcision**

New Testament believers, genuinely circumcised by Christ's crucifixion (see note 11¹ in Gal. 5 and note 11¹ in Col. 2). They are absolutely different from the Judaizers. They serve as priests by the Spirit of God, not by the ordinances of law; they boast in Christ, not in the law; and they do not have confidence in the flesh but in the Spirit.

Phil. 3:3² serve

The Greek word for serve here and the word for service in 2:17 refer to the priestly service.

Phil. 3:3³ have

In vv. 2 and 3 there is a threefold contrast: believers who serve by the Spirit of God, in contrast to the dogs; believers who boast in Christ, in contrast to evil workers; and believers who have no confidence in the flesh, in contrast to the concision.

Phil. 3:3⁴ flesh

The flesh here comprises all that we are and have in our natural being. The fact that the Judaizers had confidence in their circumcision was a sign that their confidence was in their flesh, not in the Spirit.

Phil. 3:5¹ eighth

The day for a genuine Israelite to be circumcised (Gen. 17:12). Being circumcised on that day distinguished him from the Ishmaelites (Ishmael was circumcised thirteen years after his birth — Gen. 17:25) and proselytes, who were circumcised on a later day.

Phil. 3:5² race

God's called race, the genuine seed of Abraham (Rom. 11:1; 2 Cor. 11:22). Paul was not a descendant of the

proselytes, who were grafted into the race of God's covenant.

Phil. 3:5³ tribe

A lovely and faithful tribe, among whom was the royal city of Jerusalem with the temple of God (Deut. 33:12).

Phil. 3:5⁴ Hebrew

A Hebrew born of Hebrew parents with Hebrew ancestry on both sides.

Phil. 3:5⁵ law

The law of Moses, which is respected by all orthodox Jews.

Phil. 3:5⁶ Pharisee

The Pharisees were the strictest sect of the Jewish religion (Acts 26:5; 23:6), a sect exceedingly zealous for the law of Moses. See note 71 in Matt. 3.

Phil. 3:6¹ zeal

Zeal for the law of Moses and for the Jewish religion (Gal. 1:14 and note 1).

Phil. 3:6² blameless

I.e., found or proven blameless. This was in the eyes of man, according to man's judgment. In the eyes of God, according to His righteous law, no flesh is blameless (Gal. 2:16b).

Portions from the Life-study messages

Paul presented this list of qualifications [vv. 4-6] for the purpose of showing the Philippians that they should not have any trust in the Judaizers. Paul once had been a leading Judaizer, but a radical change had taken place in him. Now he was very different from what he had been before. This was a strong indication to the believers in Philippi not to follow the Judaizers.

Paul's word in 3:1-6 is also related to the experience of Christ. Had Paul remained a Judaizer, it would have been impossible for him to experience Christ. But because he became another kind of person, one who served by the Spirit of God, boasted in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh, he could enjoy Christ and experience Him in a very rich way. We also should be those who have no confidence in the flesh, in our natural ability, or in our heritage or tradition. Rather, we should be those who serve God by the Spirit, who boast in Christ, and who put no trust in the flesh. If we are such persons, we shall have the genuine experience of Christ. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 144-145)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 10 – Sections:: God Making Himself Available In The Form Of Food For Man To Enjoy (paragraphs 1-5)

Wednesday 2/2**Phil. 3:7-8**

7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

8 ¹But moreover I ²also count all things to be loss on account of the ³excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, ⁴on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as ⁵refuse that I may ⁶gain Christ

Related Verses**Jer. 9:23-24**

23 Thus says Jehovah, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, And let not the mighty man glory in his might; Let not the rich man glory in his riches.

24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he has insight and knows Me, That I am Jehovah who exercises lovingkindness, Justice, and righteousness on earth; For in these things I delight, declares Jehovah.

Luke 14:33

33 In the same way therefore everyone of you who does not forsake all his own possessions cannot be My disciple.

Matt. 13:45-46

45 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls;

46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Acts 20:24

24 But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

Rom. 8:18

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us.

Portions from the Life-study messages

When we come to [Philippians 3:7 and 8], we come to the heart of this book. Here we are initiated into the experience of Christ. In verse 7 Paul speaks of "what things

were gains to me." These are the things mentioned in verses 5 and 6....All the things which were once gains to Paul hindered him and held him back from participating in Christ and enjoying Him. Hence, on account of Christ, all the gains were a loss to him.

Whereas in verse 7 Paul refers specifically to religious things, in verse 8 he goes on to say, "I also continue to count all things to be loss." Paul counted as loss on account of Christ not only the things of his former religion, but all other things as well.

According to the context, Paul is not speaking of superficial, outward things. He is not concerned mainly with material things. His concept is much deeper and is related to religious, philosophical, and cultural things, even to our domestic logic and national philosophy, things hidden deep within us....It is very difficult for us to set aside these things in order to give ground to Christ and experience Him.... May the enemy's subtlety be exposed and may we truly count all things loss, including our own philosophy and logic, on account of Christ and the experience and enjoyment of Him. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 147, 152-153)

Portions from the footnotes

Phil. 3:8¹ But

Verses 8-11, being one long sentence, are like the ascending steps of a staircase, bringing us higher and higher until we reach the peak in v. 11.

Phil. 3:8² also

Paul counted as loss on account of Christ not only the things of his former religion listed in vv. 5 and 6 but all other things as well.

Phil. 3:8³ excellency

The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is derived from the excellency of His person. The Jews consider the law of God given through Moses the most excellent thing in human history; hence, they are zealous for the law. Paul participated in that zeal. But when Christ was revealed to him by God (Gal. 1:15-16), he saw that the excellency, the supereminence, the supreme preciousness, the surpassing worth, of Christ far exceeded the excellency of the law. His knowledge of Christ issued in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. On account of this, he counted as loss not only the law and the religion founded according to the law, but all things.

Phil. 3:8⁴ on

The phrase as to, which may be rendered according to, is used three times in vv. 5-6, with the law, zeal, and righteousness. The phrase on account of, which may be rendered because of, is used three times in vv. 7-8, with Christ (twice) and with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Christ stands in contrast to the law, the zeal for it, and the righteousness in it. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ and Christ Himself are in contrast to all things and to the law. On account of Christ and the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Paul gave up the law, his zeal for it, the righteousness in it, and all other things. This indicates that Christ and the excellency of the knowledge of Christ are far superior to the law and all things.

Phil. 3:8⁵ refuse

Referring to dregs, rubbish, filth, that which is thrown to the dogs; hence, dog food, dung. There is no comparison between such things and Christ.

Phil. 3:8⁶ gain

To know Christ is not merely to have the knowledge concerning Him but to gain His very person. Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead (Col. 2:9) and the reality of the shadows of all positive things (Col. 2:16-17). To gain something requires the paying of a price. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches (Eph. 3:8) by paying a price.

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 10 – Sections: God Making Himself Available In The Form Of Food For Man To Enjoy (paragraphs 6-10)

Thursday 2/3

Phil. 3:8-9

8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

9 And be ¹found in Him, ²not having my own righteousness which is ³out of the law, but that which is through ⁴faith in Christ, the ⁵righteousness which is out of God and ⁶based on faith,

Related Verses

Gal 2:16

16 And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law, because out of the works of law no flesh will be justified.

Phil. 1:20

20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

1 Cor. 1:30

30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Rom 3:21-22

21 But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been manifested, witness being borne to it by the Law and the Prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction;

Rom 10:9-10

9 That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

10 For with the heart there is believing unto righteousness, and with the mouth there is confession unto salvation.

2 Cor. 5:17

17 So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

Portions from the footnotes

Phil. 3:9¹ found

Paul had been altogether in the Jewish religion under the law and had always been found by others in the law. But at his conversion he was transferred from the law and his former religion into Christ and became “a man in Christ” (2 Cor. 12:2). Now he expected to be found in Christ by all who observed him — the Jews, the angels, and the demons. This indicates that he aspired to have his whole being immersed in and saturated with Christ that all who observed him might find him fully in Christ. Only when we are found in Christ will Christ be expressed and magnified (1:20).

Phil. 3:9² not

“Not having my own righteousness...but... the righteousness which is out of God” was the condition in which Paul desired to be found in Christ. He wanted to live not in his own righteousness but in the righteousness of God, and to be found in such a transcendent condition, expressing God by living Christ, not by keeping the law.

Phil. 3:9³ out

The righteousness that comes from man’s own effort to keep the law, as mentioned in v. 6.

Phil. 3:9⁴ faith

Lit., faith of Christ. See note 221 in Rom. 3. The faith with which we believe in Christ issues from our knowing and appreciating Christ. It is Christ Himself, infused into us through our appreciation of Him, who becomes our faith — the faith in Him. Hence, it is the faith of Christ that brings us into an organic union with Him.

Phil. 3:9⁵ righteousness

The righteousness that is God Himself lived out of us to be our righteousness through our faith in Christ. Such righteousness is the expression of God, who lives in us.

Phil. 3:9⁶ based

I.e., on the basis or condition of faith. Faith is the basis, the condition, on which we receive and possess the righteousness that is out of God, the highest righteousness, which is Christ (1 Cor. 1:30).

Portions from the Life-study messages

If we would have a proper understanding,...the end of verse 8 must be read in connection with the beginning of verse 9....According to these verses, Paul suffered the loss of all things and counted them to be refuse in order to gain Christ and be found in Him. Furthermore, Paul's desire was to be found in Christ in the condition of having the righteousness which is out of God based on faith, not of having his own righteousness.

I am burdened that we must not regard Paul's word in 3:8 and 9 as mere doctrine....Paul obtained the excellency of the knowledge of Christ through revelation....[However], to have the revelation concerning Christ does not mean we have already gained Christ....We may have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, but Christ may not yet be ours in our experience.

At the end of verse 8 Paul speaks of gaining Christ, and in verse 9 he speaks of being found in Him. These are two aspects of one thing. Paul desired to gain Christ and be

found in Him. To have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ is one thing. However,...Paul could say that he counted all things as refuse in order to gain Christ and be found in Him. This is a very important statement. All that he says in verses 5 through 7 help him to reveal his aspiration expressed in verses 8 and 9. Let us pray that we may be found in Christ by our wife or husband, by our children and relatives, and by our neighbors, colleagues, and classmates. If we are truly found in Christ, all other things will lose their hold on us. We shall no longer be under the influence of religion, philosophy, or culture. How marvelous to be found only in Christ! (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 163, 168, 449-451, 168-169)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 10 – Sections: God Being Enjoyed By Man In The Spirit

Friday 2/4**Phil. 3:9-10**

9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,

10 To ¹know Him and the ²power of His resurrection and the ³fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Related Verses**Eph. 1:19-20**

19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,

20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

Rom. 1:4

4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

2 Cor. 4:10-12

10 Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

11 For we who are alive are always being delivered unto

death for Jesus' sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death operates in us, but life in you.

Rom 8:17

17 And if children, heirs also; on the one hand, heirs of God; on the other, joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him.

Rom. 6:3, 5

3 Or are you ignorant that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

5 For if we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

Portions from the footnotes**Phil. 3:10¹ know**

Paul lived in a condition of having not his own righteousness but the righteousness that is out of God, in order to know (to experience) Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. In v. 8 to have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ is by revelation. But to know Him here is by experience — to have the experiential knowledge of Him, to experience Him in the full knowledge of Him. Paul first received the revelation of Christ, then sought the experience of Christ — to know and enjoy Christ in an experiential way.

Phil. 3:10² power

The power of Christ’s resurrection is His resurrection life, which raised Him from the dead (Eph. 1:19-20). The reality of the power of Christ’s resurrection is the Spirit (Rom. 1:4). To know, to experience, this power requires identification with Christ’s death and conformity to it. Death is the base of resurrection. To experience the power of Christ’s resurrection, we need to live a crucified life, as He did. Our conformity to His death affords the power of His resurrection a base from which to rise up that His divine life may be expressed in us.

Phil. 3:10³ fellowship

The participation in Christ’s sufferings (Matt. 20:22-23; Col. 1:24), a necessary condition for the experience of the power of His resurrection (2 Tim. 2:11) by being conformed to His death. Paul was pursuing to know and experience not only the excellency of Christ Himself but also the life power of His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings. With Christ, the sufferings and death

came first, followed by the resurrection; with us, the power of His resurrection comes first, followed by the participation in His sufferings and conformity to His death. We first receive the power of His resurrection; then by this power we are enabled to participate in His sufferings and live a crucified life in conformity to His death. Such sufferings are mainly for producing and building up the Body of Christ (Col. 1:24).

Portions from the Life-study messages

If we would understand 3:8-11, we need to pay attention to the way these verses are composed....Verses 8 through 11 are one long sentence. Verse 10 begins with the infinitive "to know." This infinitive phrase is related to the phrase "gain Christ and be found" [vv. 8-9]. This indicates that to know Christ is a result of being found in Him. All the words between "be found in Him" in verse 9 and "to know Him" in verse 10 describe in what condition Paul aspired to be found in Christ. He was willing to suffer the loss of all things and count them to be refuse that he might gain Christ and be found in Him to know Him. According to Paul's concept, if we would know Christ, we must first be found in Him. Moreover, to be found in Him requires that we count all things loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ and then suffer the loss of all things and count them to be refuse. Only when we have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, a vision of the supreme preciousness and surpassing worth of Christ, shall we be willing to let go of everything else and count those things as refuse. Then we shall gain Christ and be found in Him. We shall be those who live in Christ and who are found by others in Christ. Being found in Him, we shall surely know Him. (Life-study of Philippians, p. 171)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 10 – Sections: A Person Enjoying God As The Spirit

Saturday 2/5

Phil. 3:10-11

10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being ⁴conformed to His death,

11 If perhaps I may ¹attain to the ²out-resurrection from the dead.

Related Verses

1 Cor. 9:24-25

24 Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold.

25 And everyone who contends exercises self-control in all things; they then, that they may receive a corruptible crown, but we, an incorruptible.

2 Tim. 4:7-8

7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.

Heb. 12:1-2

1 Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us,

2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

Eph. 2:5-6

5 Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)

6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Portions from the footnotes

Phil. 3:10⁴ conformed

To take Christ's death as the mold of one's life. Paul lived a crucified life continually, a life under the cross, just as Christ did in His human living. Through such a life the resurrection power of Christ is experienced and expressed. The mold of Christ's death refers to Christ's experience of continually putting to death His human life that He might live by the life of God (John 6:57). Our life should be conformed to such a mold by our dying to our human life to live the divine life. Being conformed to the death of Christ is the condition for knowing and experiencing Him, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.

Phil. 3:11¹ attain

I.e., arrive at. This requires us to triumphantly run the race for the prize (1 Cor. 9:24-26; 2 Tim. 4:7-8).

Phil. 3:11² out

I.e., the outstanding resurrection, the extra-resurrection, which will be a prize to the overcoming saints. All believers who are dead in Christ will participate in the resurrection from the dead at the Lord's coming back (1 Thes. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:52). But the overcoming saints will enjoy an extra, outstanding portion of that resurrection. See note 352 in Heb. 11.

To arrive at the out-resurrection indicates that our entire being has been gradually and continually resurrected. God first resurrected our deadened spirit (Eph. 2:5-6); then from our spirit He proceeds to resurrect our soul (Rom. 8:6) and our mortal body (Rom. 8:11), until our entire being — spirit, soul, and body — is fully resurrected out of our old being by and with His life. This is a process in life through which we must pass and a race that we must run until we arrive at the out-resurrection as the prize. Hence, the out-resurrection should be the goal and destination of our Christian life. We can reach this goal only by being conformed to the death of Christ, by living a crucified life. In the death of Christ we are processed in resurrection from the old creation to the new.

Portions from the Life-study messages

In 3:10 Paul speaks of the power of Christ's resurrection. The power of Christ's resurrection is His resurrection life that raised Him from among the dead (Eph. 1:19-20). Christ's divine life includes the element of resurrection. Even before He was resurrected, He could say to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). The reality of Christ's resurrection life is the Spirit. Resurrection is abstract and mysterious; no one can define it. But we can know the Spirit as the reality of resurrection. The Spirit of Christ is the reality of the resurrection of Christ. Thus, where the Spirit of Christ is, there is resurrection. Because this Spirit is now within us, the power of Christ's resurrection is within us also.

Paul goes on to speak of the fellowship of Christ's suffering and of being conformed to His death. The fellowship of Christ's sufferings is our participation in His sufferings. During His entire life, Christ underwent a process of breaking so that the life power could be released from within Him. In particular, He was broken when He

died on the cross. The divine life seed has been planted into our being. Now we also need to be broken that the life power within the seed can be released. If our outer man is broken, the seed within us will be able to release its life power.

Eventually, this process of the breaking of the outer man will result in full conformity to the death of Christ. In this way the death of Christ becomes a model, or pattern, for our breaking. Then in our daily life we shall be able to apply Christ to our every need. If we need power, He will become power to us. If we need patience, He Himself will be our patience. This is to know Christ, to experience Him, and to enjoy Him. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 182-183, 184)

Hymns, #717, #908, #496, 538, #749

Outline

IV. Pursuing Christ to gain Him (3:1-21)

- A. Serving by the Spirit and trusting not in the flesh (vv. 1-6)
- B. Counting all things loss on account of Christ (vv. 7-11)

Crucial points

Philippians 3 is on pursuing Christ to gain Him. In verse 1 Paul charged the Philippian believers to rejoice in the Lord and indicated that this would safeguard, or protect, them from the influence of the Judaizers (v. 2). In nature the Judaizers were unclean "dogs," in behavior they were evil workers, and in religion they were the concision, people of shame. In contrast to the Judaizers, Paul gives three positive aspects of the spiritual believers (v. 3). They serve by the Spirit of God, boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. The Judaizers had confidence in their circumcision, a sign that their confidence was in their flesh, whereas the true believers have no confidence in the flesh. Because we deny the flesh, our old nature, we are the true circumcision, genuinely circumcised by Christ's crucifixion.

According to verses 4-6, Paul had been a model of the Judaizers. Paul once had been a leading Judaizer, but a radical change had taken place in him. This was a strong indication to the Philippians not to follow the Judaizers.

Had Paul remained a Judaizer, it would have been impossible for him to experience Christ. But because he became another kind of person, one who served by the Spirit of God, boasted in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh, he could enjoy Christ and experience Him in a very rich way.

In verse 7 Paul speaks of "what things were gains to me." These are the things mentioned in verses 5 and 6. All the things which were once gains to Paul hindered him and held him back from participating in Christ and enjoying Him. Whereas in verse 7 Paul refers specifically to religious things, in verse 8 he goes on to say, "I also continue to count all things to be loss." Paul counted as loss on account of Christ not only the things of his former religion, but all other things as well.

Verse 8 speaks of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. To experience Christ we firstly need the knowledge of Christ. We must know Him. We cannot experience Him without knowing Him. The knowledge of Christ is excellent, and this knowledge is even an excellency. The excellency here does not refer to the excellency of Christ the Person, but to the knowing of Christ. Christ Himself stressed that He would build His church not upon Himself as the rock but upon the revelation concerning Him. The revelation is for knowing. Without the revelation concerning Christ surely we could not know Him.

In verse 9 Paul speaks of being found in Him. Paul could say that he counted all things as refuse in order to gain Christ and be found in Him. This indicates that he aspired to have his whole being immersed in and saturated with Christ that all who observed him might find him fully in Christ. Only when we are found in Christ will Christ be expressed and magnified (1:20).

To know Christ in verses 10 and 11 is by experience—to have an experiential knowledge of Him, to experience Him in the full knowledge of Him. The power of Christ's resurrection is His resurrection life which raised Him from among the dead. The fellowship of His sufferings is the participation in Christ's sufferings by being conformed to His death. The result of this experience is that we attain to the out-resurrection from among the dead, the outstanding resurrection, the extra-resurrection, which will be a prize to the overcoming saints.

Lord's Day 2/6

Related Verses

Col. 2:8, 11-14

8 Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ;

11 In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ,

12 Buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead.

13 And you, though dead in your offenses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our offenses;

14 Wiping out the handwriting in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.

Gal. 2:16, 19-20

16 And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law, because out of the works of law no flesh will be justified.

19 For I through law have died to law that I might live to God.

20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Further Reading:

Life-study of Philippians, msgs. 17, 18, 19, 21, 22