

Sermon Outline for FBC Feb.10th, 2019

Our Goal is Christ Likeness

Philippians 3:10 – 4:1

Good morning!

Today my message is entitled “Our Goal is Christ Likeness!”

As we continue to look at the book of Philippians, we are encouraged to follow the example of Paul in the quest for Christ-like living and to stand firm in that life.

I want to help you discover the power and joy that is available when you allow the love of God to overcome you and Jesus to take over your life and the Holy Spirit to indwell you.

Philippians 3:10-4:1 NIV

10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

I want you to know what Paul is saying here. He is letting us know that faith in Jesus Christ involves two things – sufferings and resurrection! This is what Jesus experienced for us so we would know how to handle it. Paul and us today, we experience resurrection first, then we suffer for Christ! But in all the suffering, we have the love of God and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to get us through it.

Romans 8:11 NIV

11 And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you.

Christ lives in you! Did you really know that fact? Do you believe that God is involved in your life? Can we be Christlike?

John Walvoord, in his study “Philippians – Triumph in Christ”, gives us a view of these next few verses: “What Paul is teaching in this section is that absolute perfection, such as exists in heaven, or attainment of spiritual victory which makes defeat impossible, is never achieved in this life. But there is the possibility of a high plateau of victory in Christ, of joy in the Spirit, and of the satisfaction of having served the Lord acceptably. It is this proper doctrine that the apostle is attempting to teach in this next section.”¹

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Lawrence Richards shares on these two words: “Forgetting: The word Paul uses means ‘overlooking.’ Our past is irrelevant and those things we once relied on now must be discarded, that all our energy might be given to following Christ.

The Goal: the goal is complete, present, experiential knowledge of Christ. And in a real way, this is also the prize. We press on, because Christ is too vast to know perfectly. Yet the more we learn of Him, the greater our joy and reward.”²

Eerdmans’ Handbook to the Bible gives us a picture to consider:

“Like the athlete or charioteer, who does not waste time looking back, but strains every nerve and concentrates every effort to cross the line or pass the post.”³

15 All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

16 Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

17 Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.

Charles Spurgeon puts it this way:

“A Christian should be a striking likeness of Jesus Christ... We should be pictures of Christ... Oh! My brethren, there is nothing that can so advantage you, nothing can so prosper you, so assist you, so make you walk towards heaven rapidly, so keep your head upwards towards the sky, and your eyes radiant with glory, like the imitation of Jesus Christ.”⁴

18 For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.

Since the Garden of Eden, Satan has fought to control this world. He will continue to do this until Christ comes to reign on earth eternally. The battle is a spiritual war that is beyond our understanding most times, but we are to face it and stand firm in Christ. If we do this, we will be safe in God’s family.

20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Eerdmans Handbook to the Bible tells us that Paul is telling the Philippians that they are to regard themselves as a colony of heaven. The Philippians, being intensely proud of their status as a Roman colony, would be quick to grasp all that that meant.⁵

Philippians 4:1 NIV

1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

As Paul states in this first verse of chapter four, I too want to encourage you to stand firm in your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! Given a choice of everything in the world without Christ, or life with Christ without the world stuff, I chose Christlikeness! I cannot go back to the old way of life, it is like it never existed. I go forward, towards the goal of life with Christ eternally. As I travel, I have joy in watching how God moves around me in the lives of all of you. Amen!

¹John Walvoord, pg. 89

²Lawrence O. Richards, pg. 808

³Eerdman's Handbook of the Bible, pg. 610

⁴Charles Spurgeon, pg. 103

⁵Eerdman's Handbook of the Bible, pg. 610

Bibliography:

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