Living the Christian Life

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[0:00] Father, we thank you for your great grace upon us. We thank you for the privilege it is to open your word, to understand your word. We thank you for your spirit who illuminates our minds that we might not only understand, but to believe and to savingly follow and love you and run after you.

So I pray you would help us. Pray that you would clear the way for us. And I pray, Lord, that you would get all the glory in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. We are in Philippians chapter 3, verses 10 through 16 is what we'll end up looking at.
And so let me read that for us. Chapter 3. Chapter 3. It starts in the middle of a sentence. I'm going to come back to verse 8 and 9 here a little bit, but this is just where we are.
That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.
Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.
[1:16] Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet. But one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind, reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upper call of God in Christ Jesus.

Let us, therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude. And if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you.
However, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained. One of the things that my wife and I enjoy doing is we like to go hiking.
Well, we kind of like to go hiking. Sometimes hiking is not that much fun. But one of the things that, as I think about hiking, that you kind of need, you need three things.
One, you need to be able to have the skill to know if that's a path you should take or not. Is it too steep? Is it too rocky?
[2:27] Is it going in the direction you want it to go? Do you know where you're going? One time we were in Oklahoma and we were trying to follow the trails. And we got lost, the five of us, my wife and I and our three youngest girls.

And we got lost for a season and it was twilight. And we were trying to just find the parking lot. And we were just trampling through and backtracking. We just didn't know where we were.
We didn't have the skill to really hone in on that. But you also have to have the power and the ability. You know, there was a season back in 2016, for some reason my knees were really bad.
I don't know what the problem was, but I had to wear knee braces on both knees. And I could barely walk. And so that was a terrible time to try to hike. We tried to go hiking one time and I went up about 100 yards and I was like, I'm done.
You know, I just can't, I don't have the strength anymore to do this. But the other thing about hiking is the whole reason that you go. And so many of the hikes that we've been on that have been the best hikes, there's been a waterfall at the end.
[3:35] And I'm going to tell you something. Some of those waterfalls are so beautiful. There was this one that we got to see. It was actually, the pathway had two waterfalls.

It had one halfway and then one at the end. But the one on the halfway, you went up the path and you stopped and you turned and you looked 90 degrees from the path. And there was this waterfall. And you're kind of far away from it, but it was huge. It was huge. It was just pouring down. And you could hear the roar of the water. It was just so beautiful. But you have these three things.
You have the skill, you have the power, and you have the purpose. And that's one of the things about the Christian life that often we forget. There is certain skills that we need to live the Christian

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life.
There is absolutely the power that we need to live the Christian life. But there's also the aim, the direction, the purpose, and what we're aiming for as we live our Christian life.
[4:34] And I think this passage does a good job of helping us look at those three things and kind of pulling them all together. It gives us four things, and really it's three because two of them are very similar.

But I want us to look at this. And we're going to look at the marks first, and we're going to see how Paul then makes application of those marks. Okay? So, let's start in verse 8.
And you'll remember that verse 8, Paul was saying that he wanted to count everything as rubbish, right? So, count them but rubbish, so that he might gain Christ.
Alright? So, he is counting everything as a loss, everything as rubbish, the things that were to his advantage, other things in his life, rubbish, trash, garbage, so that he might gain Christ.
Because you can't hold on to both. So, that was verse 8. Verse 9, he goes on to say not only to gain Christ, but also to be found in him.
[5:44] And we talked about this a lot last week. The righteousness that comes not from the law, but through faith in Christ. And so, we talked about what it is to be justified by faith alone.

To have this righteousness that covers us because our empty hands of faith hold Christ. Right? Well, so the verse 10 is right in the middle of this sentence.
And right at the end of verse 9, we see that this is the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith. And then verse 10, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection.
Because of this word right here, because of that word right there, that what we have here is we've got some things that he hopes to be the outcome of being saved.
Okay? So, looking at verse 10, what is the first outcome of gaining Christ and being found righteous that Paul is pointing to?
[6:43] To know him. That I may know him. To know him. That's the first thing. To know him. This is a... This is that...

You've heard it often said about the Bible that knowledge in the Bible is experiential knowledge. You've heard that it's not just a lot of mental facts. But it's the kind of knowledge you have where you say, oh, I know them.
Right? If you were to talk about the president, and it doesn't matter who the president is, most of us don't know the president. We know the name, and we know what we're told in the news, but we don't know the president.
Now, maybe some of you, at one time in your life, you knew the president. Or maybe you knew the president of, you know, a corporation. Or maybe you knew, you know, like...
How many of you know who Tom Landry is? Did you know? Yeah, I ate supper with Tom Landry once. But I don't know Tom Landry. It was a table of 50 people, and he was speaking at the conference that I was at.
[7:46] And I got to hear him and eat at the same table, but I didn't know him. This is that we might know Christ. That's this first mark.

The whole point of what we're after is in this new life in Christ. Christ is to know Jesus Christ more and more and more. The whole reason that as a Christian you read your Bible, the whole reason that you pray, the whole reason that you attend worship and sit under the preaching of the Word, the whole reason that you have your own quiet time, the whole reason that you sit with other Christians and encourage and hold one another accountable, is so that you might know Christ more and more and more.
Know him in his person. To know God in who he is. Without that, we really don't have any direction with what we're doing with our Christian life.
What's the second thing in verse 10 that is supposed to be the outcome? Know the power of his resurrection. Right. So it's not only just know him, but it's also to know the power of his resurrection. To know the power of his resurrection. Now that's different from knowing his resurrection. Right? If I read the Bible, I know about the resurrection.
[9:04] I can see the facts about the resurrection. But Paul wanted to know the power of that resurrection. That means he's wanting to see the power that raised Christ from the dead be in his own life.

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The way that we live the Christian life is that the power that raised Christ from the dead is the power that lives in us. And helps us and transforms us. What is the power that raised Christ from the dead?
Do you know? Do you know what the power is that raised Christ from the dead? This is kind of a tricky question. But it's there. I'm saying it in such a way that you're all going to go like, oh.
But if I say it a different way. Who is the power that raised Christ from the dead? Right. The father raised Christ from the dead. And he did so by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Specifically. So when we talk about the Holy Spirit coming to live in us. Right? A Christian, they get saved. Now the Holy Spirit lives in me. It's not just the Holy Spirit living in me.
[10:12] But we're talking about the power of the resurrection living in me. Does that make sense? Yes. Okay. Okay. Paul wants to know this power of the resurrection.

And especially in light of the rest of verse 10. Where he talks about this idea of the fellowship of his sufferings and being conformed to his death. How is that going to play out in his life?
Let's take then a look at verse 11. What does verse 11 say is going to be the outcome of gaining Christ? In order that I may what?
Attain to the resurrection. Attain to the resurrection from the dead. Okay. When? When is going to be the resurrection of the dead?
When Christ returns. Yeah. At the end. Right? So Paul is looking all the way to the end of time. And he's saying. I want.
[11:20] I'm going to gain Christ. I count everything as rubbish. So I can gain Christ. So that I can know him. So I can know the power of his resurrection. And so I can attain to the resurrection myself.

This is what we call. I don't know if you've ever heard this before. If you've ever heard pastors or theologians talk about the already and not yet.
You ever heard those phrases? The already and the not yet. My wife reminded me this morning of a hymn that we all know.
Help me with the words here. Pardon for sin. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth. Strength for today.
And bright hope for tomorrow. Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. Is there more to it? Those are just the two. Yeah. So what you have in that phrase in that hymn.
[12:21] Is you have the author understanding. That there is something for the right now. And something for the later. I'm saved right now from sin.

But I have blessings coming to me one day. That's what Paul's doing. I want to know the power of the resurrection now. And I want to attain to the resurrection then.
Then we have blessings from God. That are here and now. And there and then. Already and not yet. That is a.
It's a beautiful thing to remember that. Because sometimes we think. That the not yet stuff. Is stuff that we should have already. And God is going like not yet. Not yet.
Here's what you get already. You know. So. So. Paul is wanting to attain to that. He's looking forward. To that resurrected. Body. And that resurrected.
[13:16] Life. I don't know anybody who's a Christian. Who's not looking forward to that. Let's go to verse 12 then. So.

Verse 12 says then. In connection to verse 11. That what was it that Paul was doing. Because of these things. Because. I don't know if that's a.
Yeah. That's what I want to say. What's he doing? He's pressing on. He's pressing on.
That's right. I press on. This word press. Means. To pursue. To run towards.
To chase. So he is. He is chasing after. In order to catch someone. He's pursuing. Christ. I press on.
[14:14] So that I may lay hold of that. For which I also was laid hold of. By Christ Jesus. So. In order to do this though. Paul says that he forgets. What lies behind.

Now. Think about. Think about. Philippians 3. What kinds of things. Is Paul thinking. In this verse. That lie behind him. The answer is.
In chapter 3. And from last week. Is it.
Because of the. Law of Moses. Right. All of these things. About himself. Where he says. I've got. I've got. Reason to be confident. I'm a Hebrew. Of Hebrews.

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As to the law. A Pharisee. As to zeal. Persecuting the church. All these things. That were. In the world's view. Gain for him. He counted as a law.
[15:13] So here. He's saying. I'm putting behind me. Not that I've already tainted. But I'm becoming perfect. I press on. So I may lay hold of that. For which. Christ. Laid hold of me. It is the things.

In verse 13. Forgetting. What lies behind. And reaching forward. What lies ahead. That's how he chases. So imagine the scene.
Right. You've seen. You've seen little kids. In a swimming pool. Right. They're holding on to the side. And you tell them. Come here. Come here. And they do this. And they won't let go of the side. So Paul is saying. Listen. I've let go. Of all of that. So that I can pursue Christ. Because we cannot. We cannot hold on to our past. And pursue Christ.
Christ. And what that means. Is that we can't hold on to our failures. We can't hold on to our sin. We can't hold on to being the boss of our own life. We can't hold on to those things.
[16:07] And also pursue Christ. We have to let go. And pursue him. So. If we sort of summarize. These things. What we get.

Well. Let me go ahead and hit verse 14. Verse 14. He says. I press on toward the goal. For the prize. The upper call. Of God. In Christ Jesus. This is the verse. Most of us are familiar with.
But everything he has said. Up to this point. He uses this. As a summary. Of what he's talking about. Right. This is a summary. Of what he's talking about. We see that he wants.
To know Christ. To know the power. Of the resurrection. To attain. To the resurrection. But then. He's wanting. To pursue. Christ. Christ. And that is.
The. This. This fourth mark. Of this Christian life. So. Let me put it this way. Our priority. Of the Christian life.
[17:02] Ought to be Christ. Our power. In the Christian life. Is. The Holy Spirit. Our future prospect.

For the Christian life. Is the resurrection. From the dead. Christ. And then. Our. Pursuit. In this life. Is Christ.
So you see. It bookends. I want to know Christ. And I want to pursue Christ. I want to know Christ. And I want to pursue Christ. And in the middle. We have the power. And then the ultimate goal. And that is. Attaining to the resurrection. I think. I think. That this is. Important. Because. When you think about. The priority.
Of knowing Christ. Christ. Here's a question. I like to ask. And I think it's important. To think about. If you've been in the church. Any length of time.
[17:57] You know some of the promises. About heaven. We know the promises. That there will be no more tears. And no more sorrow. There will be no more sickness. No more pain. No more death.

There will be no more night. And so. We also know. Some of the other promises. That are there. And so. One of the questions. I like to ask people. For you to be thinking about. Is this. If it were possible.
That you could have. All the blessings of heaven. You could see your loved ones. That have gone on before. And you could have all of these blessings. The only one thing.
You could not have. Would be Jesus. Would you still want to go? No. No. And that is the way. We should. Always be. That if. If I can't have Jesus. In any other way. Except. In. This rickety old world. In this rickety old body. Then I will take Christ.
[18:54] Above all. And I think that's a good way. To even look at your own self. If your. If your initial sort of thing. Was kind of like. That is a ridiculous question. Then good.

Because it is a ridiculous question. Because we want. We want Christ. The prospect for the future. Thinking about the resurrected life.
I just wanted to. Bring out to you. Why that's so important. Why would. Why would. Thinking about. The resurrected life. That one day. I'm going to attain to the resurrection.
Why would that be. Such a powerful thing. That Paul says. I want here now. And it's a part of. The Christian life. Because it's way out there. You know.
When we looked at our kids. And they were talking about. You know. One day. I'm going to get my driver's license. And we're going like. Well you know. You got to focus on the here and now. Stop thinking way out there. In the future. That's the way we have a.

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[19:47] Tendency to live. So why is Paul saying. No no. Look way out there. In the future. And this is going to help. Your Christian life. Well. We're throwing everything away.

Or passed away. So that we can live the Christian life. You know. That means. There's a lot of. Pleasure. Throwing a lot of away.
Yeah. Yeah. That's true. Can you think of anything else? I'm not sure why it works.
The way it works. But Paul says the same thing. In another passage. Look at this passage. In 1 Corinthians 15. But when this perishable.
Will have put on. The imperishable. And this mortal. Will have put on. Immortality. Then will come about. The saying that is written.
[20:41] Death is swallowed up in victory. O death. Where is your victory? O death. Where is your sting? The sting of death is sin. The power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God.

Who gives us the victory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore. Now right there. Right there. Paul. Is doing something. Paul.
Paul. Is about to tell them. How they need to live. He tells them. Be steadfast. Immovable. Always abounding. In the work of the Lord.
Knowing. That your toil. Is not in vain. And he tells them. He tells them. Get to work. Be steadfast. Be immovable. Always abounding. In the work of the Lord.
And the reason. He tells them to do that. Is because. One day. This perishable. Will put on. The imperishable. One day. Death. Will be swallowed up. In victory.
[21:37] Does that make sense? So. So you go back to Philippians. And that's what he's saying. He's saying the same thing. He's saying. We need to live the Christian life. We need to pursue Christ. We need to have the power of the resurrection.

We need to do these things. Because one day. We're attaining to the resurrection. I love the words he uses. Be steadfast. Immovable.
Oh yeah. Always abounding. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. So. Paul makes. Further application of this.
In verse 15. 16. So let's. Let's take a look at verse 15. How do you know. I'm saying that this is a conclusion. That Paul is making.
What's the word. That you would see. That tells you. That this is a conclusion. That he's making. Therefore.
[22:33] Therefore. That's right. What is it that. Pastors have said for years. About therefore. You ever heard this. A therefore.

Is there for a reason. A therefore. Is there for a reason. When you see a therefore. He's drawing a conclusion.
He's bringing it to a close. He's going to make application. Of what he just talked about. So you want to keep those together. You don't want to separate them out. Separate them out from each other. So what is Paul's conclusion.
In verse 15. What's his conclusion. God will reveal. Say again. God will reveal. Okay. Part of it is God will reveal.
That's the last part of it though. So let's go back up. What does he tell them to do. Therefore. Yes ma'am. Well first off he says. Who are mature.
[23:36] Yep. That means. More complete. Incomplete. Yes. Not flawless. Have this mind. So. So. So. So. So. So let's just go there. As many as are perfect.

So. Mine says perfect. Somebody else's may say mature. Somebody else's may say complete. This is the Greek word. That's to tell us die. It's very similar to what you would find. When Jesus says it is finished.
It comes from that same root. The idea is something is complete. Something's done. If I say that I am running to the store. That's something that's happening right now.
But if I say. I've gone to the store. That's something that's completed. So. Perfection. Here. Does not mean sinlessness. Right.
It's just a maturity. Because even Paul says. Back in verse 13. That he wasn't perfect yet. So right. So that. So you got this maturity. It's about direction. So. He's talking to those kinds of people.
[24:33] That's who he's making this conclusion to. As many as are perfect. As many as are mature in Christ. What are they to do? Have this attitude.

Which attitude? What attitude is he talking about? That they will live up to what they will. That they already have attained. That's right.

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All that he's just said. He wants them to have this attitude. But there's a possibility. That they might not have that attitude. There's a possibility. If in anything.
You have a different attitude. It is a possibility for a Christian. To kind of be missing some of these things. Right. And.
Now that's a sad existence for a Christian. But. It's a possibility. That a Christian. Isn't seeing the big picture. Of wanting to know Christ. To pursue Christ. To have the power of the resurrection.
[25:30] As a matter of fact. I think right there. Is something that a lot of Christians. Don't know about. Is that they have the power of the resurrection. They have the Holy Spirit. To empower them. To obey the Lord. And a lot of Christians.

Don't know that. And think that they've just got to pull themselves up. By their bootstraps. And just get it together. There. So he says.
Have this attitude in you. And God's going to correct you. If you don't have it right. And then in verse 16. He just. Reiterates the same thing. Let's keep living by the same standard.
To which we have attained. Another way of saying. The salvation you have is so great. Live worthy of the calling. With which you have been.
Called. Now I just. I just want to. Say one final thing. And then let you guys. Have some discussion. As Paul is saying this.
[26:27] It makes me think about. The fact that. Living the Christian life. Is a hard thing. But we are never given. But we are never given. Any excuse.

Not to do it. There's. There's no trouble that comes our way. There's no. Physical inability. That we might have. There's no age.
That we might attain to. That excuses us. From knowing Christ. Pursuing Christ. Knowing the power. Of the resurrection. Longing to attain.
To the resurrection. There's no. There's nothing. That excuses us. From that life. It is something. We're to constantly. Go after. There are things. In our life.
That make it harder. Just as. Lack of sleep. Can make it harder. For you to function. Right. So. So also. Any of our trials.
[27:23] And things. Can make it harder. For us to. Pursue Christ. But it doesn't mean. That we are excused. From pursuing Christ. What were you going to. Did we become perfect. When we died. Yes.

I believe. That at death. We're glorified. And so. To be absent. From the bodies. To be present. With the Lord. And when that happens. Now. Our salvation. Is not finished.
Because what else. Has to happen. So if I die. I leave this body here. I go on to be with the Lord. But my body. Goes to the ground. And so I'm perfect. But I'm not complete. That's right.
The body gets resurrected. I rejoin my body. And I live in this. Corporal existence. Except glorified. Forever. So. Yeah. That's a good question.
Any other questions? Friends. This really is all about. Living the Christian life. And. Where's the power come from. And what is the aim?
[28:20] What are you supposed to aim at. As you. Do so. And so the questions. I think will. Will help kind of. Lead that direction. So. Why don't we. Why don't we do this. We'll let the.

Three of you. Talk. And then. Carol and Ernie. If y'all want to turn back. And. And. Talk to here. And then. Jack Adhoti. With Linda. And Michelle. And I'll give y'all. I'll give y'all.
About 15 minutes. To. Talk through the questions. And then. We'll. We'll. Close. Thank you.

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