



Sunday, Nov. 6, 2011: Pressing on to Victory

Speaker: Joe Boot

Scripture: Philippians 3:12-4:1

Sermon Notes:

1. The key to understanding Philippians is the hymn in chapter 2, which outlines the self-humbling and glorification of Christ.
2. By recognizing Christ as Lord and submitting to Him, we can receive the power of His life in us.
3. Our identity is that we are the redeemed by Christ.
4. Even Paul himself had not yet known Christ perfectly.
5. Only after Christ has first taken hold of us are we able to take hold of Him (see Ephesians 1:3-7).
6. We press forward for the prize; the purpose is victory in Jesus who is subjecting all things to Himself.
7. The strength to see the race to the end comes from the gift of the Holy Spirit within us, who enables us to finish.
8. We are not to dwell on what is behind us during the race (i.e., guilt, shame, our past, how other people are running); we're to press forward, living in the present and looking to Jesus.
9. Doctrines of instant sanctification or sinless perfection in this life are both false and based on illusion.
10. Our zeal to reach the prize should rule out all distractions (Phil. 3:13-14; cf. Hebrews 12:1-2).
11. In Phil. 3:15-17, Paul encourages believers to follow the example of humble Christian discipleship.
12. Paul warns of men who are enemies of the cross of Christ, who teach false doctrine and practice self-indulgent, sinful lives.
13. Some people pretend to be believers. Calvin even observes the "calamity of wicked and faithless pastors in the church."
14. The best deceptions come with smooth, flattering speech.
15. Some have distorted the gospel to be merely humanitarian concern, or solidarity with the economically deprived.
16. Concern for others is not the source of salvation, nor is it the meaning of the cross; rather concern for others is a fruit of the cross.
17. Self-righteousness is the theme of those who glory in their diet or their treatment of the flesh.
18. The human rights movement is a manmade substitute to biblical faith and law (and thereby for the gospel), by creating rights to sin against God's law, demand equal wealth, or rights to abort babies. People believe they are saved by such rights.
19. Psalm 100 give us the one universal right: the worship and service to God.
20. Christ is bringing all things into subjection under His feet (1 Cor. 15:24-28).
21. This sums up the gospel: that all things be subject to Christ and that God be all in all (cf. Genesis 49:10).
22. All things will be brought into the subjection of Christ's Lordship; Paul's life models this humble submission to the reign of Christ.
23. We're to live now as Kingdom citizens, submitting to Christ our emotions, relationships, desires, vocations, families, etc.
24. Since Christ is king, we're to stand fast (Phil. 4:1).

Application Questions

1. What are the implications of Paul's statement in Phil. 3:12: "Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me"? Cf. Ephesians 1:3-7.
2. Where does the Christian derive the mental strength -- the will power -- to finish the course?
3. How should we handle distractions or challenges (ditches and hurdles) that we encounter during the race?
4. Give examples from church history that can encourage and motivate us to run our race well.
5. Why is the belief that Christians can reach sinless perfection in this life such a dangerous doctrine?
6. How should the truth that there are no perfect churches or church leaders inform our participation in the body of Christ?
7. What are some of the marks of enemies of the cross in the church today?
8. What was Paul's attitude toward these enemies of the cross?
9. Contrast the modern notions of human rights with a biblical understanding of human rights.

10. What is the extent of Christ's right to rule? Are we ready to receive Christ's orders? Are we submitting to His rule?