

“To Know Christ is Life” Philippians 3:10-16

Because we have received the absolutely free gift of Christ’s righteousness, we have also received the privilege of knowing Him in an ever-deepening, personal relationship. As we identify fully with Jesus Christ in every way, including suffering for the sake of His name, we come to know the power of His resurrection in our daily lives. This is the great goal of life – to know Jesus Christ fully as we have been fully known. It will require all of our focus and all of our energy. We will experience distractions from lesser goals, regret from the past, and a variety of temptations to quit. Never give up. Press on to know Jesus.

Paul is like a coach, giving his most motivational speech. Last week he reminded them how they qualified to get into this race in the first place.

I. Qualify for the race – Phil. 3:2-6

I was running in the wrong race. Prove my qualifications to God.

You will be tempted to run in the wrong race. Keep the Law; be circumcised. Add to the work of Christ. Qualify yourself.

Romans 10:1-4

Trust in Christ – Phil. 3:7-9

II. Run in the right direction – 3:10

A. Know Him – 3:8, 10

Relational. Not rules. Not religion.

OT concept of “knowing” God; relational, not intellectual;
parent/child, husband/wife; Jer. 9:23-24

1 Cor. 13:12; To know as I have been fully known; THE GOAL

All else is “excrement” by comparison – 3:17-19

B. HOW? Know His power – 3:10

Unmotivated to pursue a goal because I don't believe I can get it done. I don't want to enter a race I don't think I can finish.

Realistically, there are some things I cannot do.

Other things I could do, but I don't believe I can.

We can know Christ more intimately.

Christ's work is prior; we are responding. 3:12 (I was laid hold of); 3:3

Eph. 1:18-21; how can we know this power?

C. Share His sufferings – 3:10

not seeking suffering, but identifying so closely with Jesus; "fellowship"; not potluck socials

"conformed" to His death; present tense; cp. 2:6-7

Not martyrdom; cross-life; living sacrificially, suffering for Christ

Power only known by those who FULLY identify with His entire life, including sufferings.

Does your family know you belong to Christ?

Is it worth the price? Jesus never asks us to make a sacrifice that He was unwilling to make; always makes it worth the cost

III. Receive the prize – 3:10-11

Isn't resurrection guaranteed?

"attain"; *καταντάω* – lit. arrive at a destination; attainment of a goal

Unique phrase in Greek NT; the "out-resurrection"; prefixes added for emphasis. Paul is saying something special here

1. General resurrection – Daniel 12:2; inevitable

2. "First" resurrection – all believers; Rev. 20:5, 6; 1 Cor. 15:20; 2 Cor. 5:1; Phil. 3:20-21; guaranteed

"if somehow"; CONDITIONAL

3. "Better" resurrection – Heb. 11:35-38

3:13b-14; "goal," "prize," "upward call"; Panhellenic Games in Olympia - victorious runner summoned to the stands to receive his prize. In Rome, on special occasions it came from the Emperor.

Acts 7:55-56 – Christ standing to welcome Stephen

2 Peter 1

Without "death" of this kind, there is no "resurrection" of this kind. Power in this life and commendation when we see Jesus

Transition: 3:12-16 explain what Paul means and how we attain to it

- A. Keep your eye on the prize – 3:11-12

"perfect"; reached the goal

Goal: to know Christ.

1 John 3:1-3

like the tape at the finish line

Paul applies all of his energy in one direction – 3:13a

"but one thing" (power is in the ellipsis; don't add "I do")

3:12, 14; "press on"; formerly persecuted the Church

"hunger" is observable among God's people

- B. Look forward, not back – 3:13-14

"paying no attention to"; not "forgetting" per se

Haggai – how does it seem to you now?

Joel – the years the locusts have eaten

You are never too far gone

You have not yet “arrived” – 3:15-16

C. Don’t run alone – 3:15-16

Shift to from “I” to “Let us”

Application

One great goal in life – to know Christ

Recommit ourselves.

Not by keeping rules but by pursuing a relationship with Jesus;
identifying with Jesus.

If I listed my priorities, would “knowing and becoming like Jesus” be at the top? In the top 5?

What other pursuits are distracting me from pursuing Christ more fully?

What specific step toward knowing Christ will I take this week?