

The Power of Knowing Christ

Nothing Worth Looking Back (vv 13, 14)

¹³Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,
¹⁴I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Take note of Paul’s attitude...he knew that in his flesh he would never apprehend what? (1 Thessalonians 5:8, 9; Hebrews 9:28)

My hand is on the plow and I am not looking back! What things (past and future) do you suppose Paul was referring to?

Have you considered what it means to press toward something? I see it not necessarily as work but as persistence though one might have trouble making the distinction. Another way at looking at it would be to acknowledge that it is not by works that we are saved, but it is work to attain salvation.

What is the goal and the prize?

Note Taker

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“I am a Christian.” How many times have you said or heard this statement? If being a Christian means that I go to church, read my Bible, pray and have faith, then maybe I am one. However, if being a Christian means that I have given up my dreams, possessions, vocation and friends or that I have been persecuted for righteousness sake then maybe I am not one.

Philippians-3:3-14(NKJV)

³For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

⁷But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

¹⁰that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

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⁹and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Gain, Lose—Lose, Gain (vv 7, 8)

Have you ever lost something that you consider valuable and did you gain the invaluable in return?

Paul speaks of his loss, not necessarily of worldly possessions, but of his worldly position.

Many have given up much for a variety of purposes, but few have given up all for a singular purpose (there are only two paths Matthew 7:13, 14; Deuteronomy 30:19).

Paul counted everything as loss so that He may gain Christ. I would not hesitate to call Paul a Christian—would you?

Found in Christ (v 9)

Is the worldview of Christianity one that considers Christians “Christlike” that is, those who are known to be in Christ?

What is the discriminator between Christians and the citizens of this world?

Our own righteousness could not get us a grain of salt in the midst of a salt mine. Our worldly possessions and even our worldly position cannot make us righteousness.

The simple act of believing on Christ is what makes one righteous and further enables one to be “found” in Christ.

Believing is Knowing, Knowing is Conforming (v10)

One cannot know Christ unless they first believe on Christ (Matthew 7:21-23).

What or who do you suppose Paul is referring to when he says “the power of His resurrection”? (Romans 8:11)

People in general like to fellowship, but to do so with sufferings is not readily embraced. However, we must grasp the fact that though we conform to His death, death is not the end, but merely the means to the end – resurrection!

Are We There Yet? (vv 11, 12)

There are too many Christians who think they have arrived.

Perfection is a fleeting target that we must continually strive for, not so that we can say “hey look at me and all my goodness,” but so that we can glorify God.

In all the things we press on in, our vocations, relationships, hobbies, none will compare to the reward of laying hold of that which Christ has for us.

What is the reason that Christ got a hold of you?

¹⁰that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

¹¹if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.