

# SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

## *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians*

### Philippians 3:10-12 – “Following After God”

Jesus said in John 10:10, “...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

To “*have life*” is justification

Life “*more abundantly*” is sanctification

In verses 1-9, we saw Paul’s justification

How can a man be right with God? By faith in Jesus Christ (vs. 9)

Now Paul leads us into the inner most sanctuary of his heart where he reveals to us the supreme passion of his life.

Paul wants the sanctified life, life more abundantly.

Philippians 3:10-12, “*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*”

Getting saved is like getting married, it’s just the beginning of a growing, knowing, sharing relationship.

#### I. The Goals of Sanctification (vs. 10)

Philippians 3:10, “*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*”

Paul’s words of purpose, “*That I may know him,...*”

Paul wants a personal, experiential, intimate, knowledge.

This purpose cannot be fulfilled unless the truth of verses 7-9 becomes a reality in Paul’s life.

Justification must precede sanctification.

You first must be saved before you can be changed into the image of Jesus

Sanctification – to be set apart and made holy

God making you righteous or saintly - I am transformed to be more like Jesus Christ

Justification – God declaring you righteous

Declared a saint positionally in Christ

What is it that Paul wants to know?

1. I want to know Him (vs. 10) "*That I may know him...*"

Paul wanted a personal experience with Christ

Paul has been a Christian for 30 years

He didn't say, "I want to know about Him"

Paul had salvation; he wanted to know the Savior!

We know about the President, but we don't know him.

How to know Him

- The Bible
- Prayer
- Appetite – "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*" (Matthew 5:6)

David said, "*As the hart (Deer) panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*" (Psalms 42:1)

Are you hungry for God?

We taste Thee, O Thou Living Bread,  
And long to feast upon Thee still!  
We drink of Thee, the Fountain Head,  
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill!

Jesu, Dulcedo Cordium, St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Tr. Ray Palmer (1091–1153)

2. I want to know the power of His resurrection (vs. 10) "...and the power of his resurrection..."

Paul wanted powerful experience

He is not speaking of an abstract knowledge about the resurrection; he knows the facts!

What Paul wanted was to experience its power.

When Paul prayed for the Ephesians in Ephesians 1:19-20, "*And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*"

How did Paul wish to experience this power?

a) Power over sins grip

\* not by Law

\* not by flesh

b) Power to produce the Spirit's fruit

Gal 5:16, "*...Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh*"

3. I want to know "...the fellowship of his sufferings..." (vs. 10)

Paul wanted a painful experience.

This is hard to understand

What is Paul saying?

1. He's not saying, he wants to pay for his sin through suffering.

2. He wanted the fellowship with Christ that suffering for Christ brings.

*Paul's sufferings: 2 Corinthians 11:24-28, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own*

*countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."*

John Bunyan (wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* from prison) – "In times of affliction we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God."

**Paul's thorn:** 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, "*And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."*

God's greatest tool in shaping us into the image of Christ is suffering!

J.C. Ryle (1856) – If we are true Christians, we must not expect everything smooth in our journey to heaven. We must count it no strange thing, if we have to endure sicknesses, losses, bereavements, and disappointments, just like other men. Free pardon and full forgiveness, grace by the way and glory at the end – all this our Saviour has promised to give. But He has never promised that we shall have no affliction. He loves us too well to promise that. By affliction He teaches us many precious lesson, which without it we should never learn. By affliction He shows us our emptiness and weakness, draws us to the throne of grace, purifies our affections, weans us from the world, makes us long for heaven. In the resurrection morning, we shall all say, "It is good for me that I was afflicted." We shall thank God for every storm.

## II. The Expectation of his Goals (vs. 11)

Philippians 3:11, "*If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."*

Paul's Christian life had a goal.

*"If by any means I might attain..."*

What was it Paul wanted to attain?

1. Some say it's the resurrection of the body in the future.

2. I think it's better to see it as a present living out of the resurrected life.

Galatians 2:20, "*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*"

Illustrations:

Ephesians 5:14, "*...Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*"

Lazarus: John 11:44 - "*...Loose him, and let him go.*"

### III. The Attitudes behind Paul's Expectations (vs. 12)

Philippians 3:12, "*Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*"

Paul was not complacent or apathetic but honest about his spiritual life.

We see three attitudes that controlled his holy ambition:

1. He had not received everything

*"Not as though I had already attained..."*

Literally, not yet received

30 years and still looking forward.

2. He had not become everything

It's I have not yet arrived at my goal.

There is no sinless perfection

Don't fool yourself!

3. He had not done everything

*"...but I follow I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."*

a) *I follow after* – indicates a hard pursuit

It's like a hunter following the tracks of his prey.

b) *apprehended* – to lay hold and pull down.

Illustration: a football player tackling someone else.

God apprehended Saul (Paul) (Acts 9)

After that Paul continued to apprehend Christ

*2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"*

Christ is seeking to apprehend you

Will you seek after Him?