
CHRIST OUR GOAL & STRENGTH

It's been a good week in His word, hasn't it? Today we will cover the remaining two points of our introduction: CHRIST OUR GOAL & CHRIST OUR STRENGTH.

As we have searched and pondered the various scriptures this week, I hope that you have begun to get a glimpse of what God purposed in sending Jesus Christ. Not only did He come to save and rescue us from the domain of darkness (and that's putting it lightly, no pun intended), but He also left us a visual example of how to live for Him, how to walk in the Light, how to think, and react to this world around us. Then, knowing an example would not be enough, He blessed us with His Spirit and empowered us to accomplish what we could not do on our own. What an amazing Father. Let us be faithful to put on the mind of Christ in our daily thoughts and actions.

CHRIST OUR GOAL

The Apostle Paul's desire, as ours should be is -

"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death," (Philippians 3:10)

How do we attain such a lofty goal? **Take a look at the verses below. Contemplate the fullness of what is being said, and make some notes on the things that the Lord lays on your heart today.**

(1). Our confidence is to be in Christ and not the flesh (Philippians 3:4-9). Paul, more than most, could boast about his "religious" life, he was doing everything right, and even going above and beyond the call of duty to be diligent in living according to the Law. A zealot for God, BUT when he found the truth he counted all of that rubbish, all the religious things he could have boasted about became worthless to him once he met Christ. His life changed from having a religion to having a relationship with the Living God.

The question has to be asked - Is there any ounce of pride in our life that is based on living religiously? How quick are we to judge another because they aren't living, worshiping, serving, as we think they should? And just how much of what we do is to gain the approval of others?

Read what Paul has to say about that in Galatians 1:10 and write your thoughts here.

(2). We are to keep pressing toward spiritual maturity (3:10-14) Press On! The sense of having to push through. It doesn't say walk on, or stroll on, but rather, press on, lean into, push against, strive after. It's an effort on our part to press on!

Look at these: I Corinthians 3:1-3, Hebrews 5:11-6:2, I Peter 2:1-3.

Have you "tasted the kindness of the Lord"? How have you seen God's kindness in your life? Then let us press on!

(3). We are to live as citizens of the kingdom of Heaven (3:17-21) Oh what a glorious day! We "long for heaven but no one wants to die." Could it be because we are so entangled in the affairs of this world? Having our own agenda? Have we forgotten whose ambassador we are? At salvation our citizenship is placed in heaven, our King is Christ, and our Ruler is the Sovereign Lord God.

Look at 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Ephesians 6:18-20.

Are you living as a citizen of heaven, or of Earth?

Christ is our goal, He is the standard, and our example. Because of His dying for us we should then be living for Him, for He has raised us to walk in newness of life. What a wonderful thing.

But how can we, weak, sinful, humans ever meet the standard? We can't! It is by the grace of God that we are empowered. The most we are called to do is to submit and obey. Of course, in that submission and obedience He will call us to do many things, but may it never be on our own power. When we try to do works on our own strength we can quickly burn out of any energy to accomplish it. God reveals just how weak we are. But when His Spirit is working through us, wow, even when we should be dead already, He sees us through. Paul attests to that. It is in our weakness that we are made strong, in His strength. Let's look a bit at that.

CHRIST OUR STRENGTH

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

I'm sure you may have quoted this verse on more than one occasion! But the reminder is a great one - we operate in the very strength of Christ. God has provided the power of His Spirit to equip us! The power that raised Jesus from the dead resides in us!

Take some time to look at these verses. Write your answer for these two questions for each verse: What does relying on His strength do? What are the results?

(1). Philippians 4:5

(2). Philippians 4:6

(3). Philippians 4:7

(4). Philippians 4:9

Look again at Philippians 4:8, this is the mindset God has for us. Write the verse here:

As an added bonus, memorize it over the weekend!

With this introduction of Christ Our Life (Ch. 1), Christ Our Mind (Ch. 2), Christ Our Goal (Ch. 3) and Christ Our Strength (Ch. 4) as the basis, we will begin to study Philippians more deeply next week.

Optional: Now that you have more information about the book of Philippians, reread the entire book with what you've learned this week in mind. The more you read, the more you will observe, the more you observe the better your interpretation will be, the better your interpretation, the better the application. You're doing it girl! You're learning the mind of Christ. Keep up the work, and guard your time!