

Philippians Study Week 7

Philippians 3:10-21

As we concluded last week's study, we learned when we put our full faith in Jesus, we unite with Him in a way in which we can experience the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. In a world that seems to be falling apart, we need believers who walk in the power, authority and love of Jesus Christ. Verses 10 and 11 are a recap and a setting the tone for this week. Paul gave up everything to follow Jesus, and so should we.

*****Read Philippians 3:10-21*****

KEEP WORKING

Starting in verse 12, Paul shows his humility and his work ethic. Remember, in verse 10 and 11 talking about his future death and resurrection with Jesus... that someday he would be made perfect. So he reminds us in verse 12 that he is not perfect, that he hasn't arrived, that he's not sinless or perfect. His message to the Philippian Christians is still so relevant to us: his life, as well as ours, is a work in progress. And we will not stop working and growing until we are made perfect in heaven.

- **Talk about a time where you felt like you were “perfect”. Are you growing and becoming more like Jesus? How?**
 - Read the following verses and discuss how they are related
 - 1 Corinthians 9:24
 - 1 Timothy 6:12
 - Paul makes no claims that he is perfect, but pushes himself and us to become more like Jesus. And becoming like Jesus is not something that happens in an instant, it's a moment by moment, minute by minute, decision by decision process... it takes time!
 - 1 John 2:6
 - 1 Peter 2:21
 - 1 Corinthians 11:1
 - Ephesians 5:1-2

- John 13:13-17
- John 14:15
- 1 John 3:2

*****Read Phillipeans 3:13-14*****

Verse 13-14 Paul talks about a subject we all may struggle with at some point... the past. Paul had good reasons to want to forget the past and go towards what lies ahead. Remember Paul's life as Saul, watching Stephan stoned to death, hunting down christians, and persecuting the church. His past was horrific, and we too have things in our lives we would like to move on from. We all feel and live in the tension of who we were and who we want to be. The beauty of Jesus, when we place our hope and faith in Him, there is no guilt or shame. Because of this we can confidently look towards who God has called and created us to be. We must realize a few things: We are forgiven, we are loved, and we are called to become more and more like Jesus everyday. Your life is not over, and you have not sinned so bad that God does not want you anymore. Look forward to who you were created to be... and grow!

- **Do you struggle with things you have done in your past? Do you feel like you are too dirty or bad for God to love you? Do you focus more on the past or the future? Have you received forgiveness for your sins and what you have done in your past?**
 - Read the following verses and discuss how they relate.
 - Acts 9:1-19
 - 1 Corinthians 9:24
 - Hebrews 6:1
 - 1 John 1:9
 - James 5:16

*****Read Phillipeans 3:15-16*****

Let all who are spiritually mature! Church, did you hear Paul? Grow and become mature, and don't slip back into your old ways. Keep progressing forward, don't look back. We have the tendency to get discouraged because we haven't instantly become perfect... It's a slow process. In verse 12 Paul uses the word perfect, meaning mature or complete. What it does not mean is flawless and never making any mistakes. So how do we do this? We cannot do this in our own power, but through the power of the

Holy Spirit. The beauty is that God will work in our weakness and point out anything in us that needs to be removed or grow.

- **Would you consider yourself a spiritually mature person or spiritually immature person? How does one become spiritually mature?**
 - Read the following verses and discuss how they relate.
 - Matthew 5:48
 - 1 Corinthians 2:6
 - John 6:45
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:9
 - 1 Corinthians 2:16
 - Psalm 42:1
 - Psalm 43:3-4
 - Matthew 23:3-5
 - Hebrews 5:14
 - Spiritual maturity is all about acting on the wisdom and guidance you receive. We must not use excuses like, “There is too much to learn, I can't do this”. We are called to live up to the instruction and wisdom we have been given. There is a standard, and His name is Jesus. He called us into this adventure of growth, and all we have to do is say yes and move forward.

Read Philippians 3:17-21

Can you just hear the compassion and urgency in Paul's voice? And for many of us, let these five verses radically challenge your life. It's almost like Paul is speaking directly to us, become like Jesus, work hard to love and live as Jesus did, come on church, let's grow! Remember Paul just got done telling them that he wasn't perfect, do he was not telling them to copy him. What he was doing was pointing to his laser like focus on Jesus and living like him. In their time period, the gospels may not have been readily available and in circulation, so he was urging them to look at his life and learn!

- **Think about your life, can people tell you follow Jesus? Think about how you act when you are alone, could people tell you follow Jesus? If a new believer followed you and learned what Jesus is like through your life and teaching... What kind of Christian would they become?**
 - Read the following verses and discuss how they relate

- 1 Corinthians 4:16
- 1 Corinthians 11:1
- 1 Peter 5:3
- 2 Corinthians 11:13
- Acts 20:31
- Galatians 6:14
- Paul was speaking directly to the Christians who claim to follow Jesus but do not live like him. He was speaking to people who were selfish, focusing on their own desires and not the needs of others. He was speaking to the Judiazers who placed additional requirements to salvation and faith.