

The Book of Philippians
Chapter 3 Part 2
“...That I May Know Him”

On Monday June 24th, 2002, a fire roared over the edge of Buckskin Canyon.

So super heated was this inferno, that it literally melted the hardened steel of wood stoves that were themselves, built to withstand heat.

In the path of this wildfire, pristine 500 year old ponderosa pines, and the homes that contained the lives of people who lived within the beauty of that canyon.

Some people had moved to Buckskin Canyon for the beauty of the forest. Others, for the peace and quiet. Still others, for the dream of living in a home in the high country.

In an hour, all of it was gone, a lifetime of building and all of the possessions, now nothing left, but ashes, nothing more than garbage.

If your life consists of the building of things and the accumulation of possessions, then despair sets in.

If your life is built upon the Rock that Jesus is, then when everything else is gone and scraped away from the ground, you will find that the rock is still there for you to stand on.

Last Friday, Elsie and I stood in the ashes that once was the home that we loved. We held each other and had a real good cry.

We loved that beautiful canyon, the trees and the building, and all that was the life we lived there.

Some of you shared it with us. But we count all of that “**Garbage**” compared to the excellence of knowing, and loving Jesus my Lord...

This was also the sincere response of Paul, who as it is believed, was extremely wealthy and had many material things. Paul was known for his knowledge of the law, he was respected and revered as one of the highest among the Jews in Israel.

But in Philippians chapter 3, as we continue this morning, Paul says..

Philippians 3:8

8 Yet 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

The Greek word for "knowing" here, the NT:1108 "**GNOSIS**" (gno'-sis) speaks of a personal, experience, and a growing knowledge.

The Religious Jewish leaders had a Religion, but Paul (and all of us) have a wonderful personal relationship and fellowship with Jesus himself

This kind of personal, intimate relationship with Jesus, far surpasses the value of anything else that is in this world.

Then Paul used a rather vulgar and shocking word to describe all the deception of the things that are in the world:

Philippians 3:8

"...And count them as rubbish..."

The word Greek word "**SKUBALA**" (NT:4657) is the vilest, most awful, most detestable thing there is: "**Dung**", or **Manure**, the dross or refuse of anything; the rotting garbage.

Paul used this repulsive Greek word to show us how utterly unimportant and worthless all that we have materially in this world will be to us when we are there with Jesus.

Philippians 3:8

...that I may gain Christ...

- **On that day** that you finally stand there in the presence of Jesus, what will be the most costly, of the greatest value to you will be that "**You Have Jesus!**"

The story is told by the chief accountant for one of the wealthiest men who ever lived-- John D. Rockefeller,

Sr. Someone asked his accountant one day, "**How much did John D. leave when he died? We know he was an immensely wealthy man.**" Without a moment's hesitation, the accountant answered, "**Everything!**"

Philippians 3:9

9 and be found in Him, (That is, in Jesus) 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;

- **To be found "In Christ"**, means that you are not relying upon anything in yourself, or that you have done yourself, to be acceptable to God.
- **To be found "In Christ"** means that what you are trusting in, clinging to, relying upon in your life and your eternal life is Jesus, and Him alone.

If while I am in heaven, someone say asks you where I am, and they search for me, I want them to say, "**Oh there Rob is over there, he is hidden in Jesus!**"

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore, **if anyone** is **in Christ**, he is **a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Romans 8:1

1 There is therefore now **no condemnation** to those who are **in Christ** Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Because of Jesus' death on the cross, The Father can exchange our sin and shortcomings for Jesus complete righteousness. He did this in a way we that we as humans will never understand, "**God made him (Jesus) who had no sin to be(come) sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God**" (2 Corinthians 5:2

Philippians 3:10

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

This is the one thing that I long for, strive for, it is the burning desire of my heart. "**That I could just know Jesus, who He really is**". **Know him intimately, by experience because I have gone through all of my life trusting in and loving Him.**

I have know Jesus most intimately, "**In the fellowship of His suffering**". It is when I have suffered the most that I have know Him the best.

- **When we stood there Friday** in the ash heap that once was our home,
- **When my heart was broken last year** when it was certain that Elsie would die.
- **When My children's mother left me** and took everything that I loved.
- **When I was 7 years old**, and dying from a rattlesnake bite...

It was in those moments of suffering that I have known Jesus the most intimately and felt His presence the strongest...

- I want to know Jesus through my suffering,
- I want to know what He felt when He gave everything so that I could be forgiven and free.
- I want to count the cost that Jesus paid for me, and never allow anything to take the place that He has in my life...

When Jesus died on the Cross, something happened that is beyond our ability to understand.

- **An exchange took place**, your life was exchanged for His Life.
- **You exchanged all of your sins** for Jesus perfection.
- **Your old life died**, no record of it exists any more.
- **You exist now**, as well as before the foundation of the world, and forever in the future as perfect, spotless and Holy.
- **When the Father sees you today**, all He can see is perfection.
- **If this were not true**, then you would not be able to enter heaven.
- **The part that you are to do**, it to give your life completely over to Jesus authority, to allow Him to live His life through yours.
- **You give up ownership of your life, because Jesus bought it**, you accepted this when you asked Him to be Lord of your life.
- **The wonderful news is**, His plan for your life is much better than the one that you have imagined for yourself.

- **His plan is designed for maximum blessing**, and He knows how to get you there!

Galatians 2:20

20 **I** have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

- **When you first got it that Jesus died for you**, and you accepted this fact, this is when the exchange began.
- **Next, as you humbled yourself** and confessed to Jesus that you had sinned, you gave him a basis for Him to forgive all of those sins.
- **When Jesus died**, He was dying for all of the sins of every person who has ever been born.
- **In that moment**, Jesus could have just given every person their eternal life.
- **Think about this**: If He had just given eternal life to every person ever born, He would be infringing upon their rights.
- **What if a person did not want Jesus sacrifice?**, to give it to them anyway would violate their free choice.
- **What the Lord desires** is the same thing you desire, “Love given from a willing heart. Fellowship and friendship with people who want Him.”
- **This is why salvation is now your choice**, either to believe and accept, or not believe and deny the gift.
- **At the moment you do accept Jesus offer**, the transaction is complete, you are saved, the bible calls this being “Born Again”..
- **After you confess that you have believed** and accepted Jesus sacrifice, the deal is sealed by the Holy Spirit who comes to live inside you. This salvation can never be lost as long as **you** continue to abide in Jesus.
- **You were not forced to be saved**, and you will not be forced to remain saved.

Where much of the confusion comes from, is what happens next after you have believed and received you salvation.

- **Now you make the choice** who is going to run things, either you or Jesus.
- **If you want to run it yourself**, then He will let you.
- **But if you decide to let Jesus run your life**, then He will begin to move you every second of your life, exactly where He wants for you to be.
- **What He is now trying to accomplish**, it to “Conform you into His own image”, make you, over the process of your entire life, just like He is.
- **The most effective way** that a human being who has truly been born again, can be conformed into Jesus image, is through suffering.
- **This was the same process** that Jesus learned His obedience.

Hebrews 5:8-9

8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

Suffering loss, disappointment, struggle over sin, and being humbled is all a part of the life long process.

As the Holy Spirit continues to teach us about this process, He does it through the example of Paul's own life.

1. **After the confession of sin is made** and the acceptance of what Jesus did for us, step 2 begins.
2. **This one does not happen all at once**, it is called "Being Sanctified", it means "**Being set Apart**". It means **belonging to Jesus**.
3. **Now from His viewpoint**, you already belong to Him forever from the first moment that you believed.
4. **The work is on your side**, convincing you that you belong to Jesus.
5. **The work of Being sanctified**, is also Jesus Job as He works in your life through all of the circumstances of your life.
6. **Your part is to be willing and obedient to try.**
7. **It is a progressive work**, over days, weeks, months and years.
8. Paul described the work of being sanctified as if it were like "**A race.**"
9. **It is not a sprint**, where you get there in just a short run.
10. **Paul said that being sanctified** and convincing yourself that you belong to Jesus and allow Him to take total control, **is like a marathon.**
11. **Jesus wants you to have endurance**, to never quit, no matter how many times you fall down in your race.

This is the meaning of what Paul says in the next verse:

Philippians 3:11

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

The "**IF**" in verse 11, means that Paul understood that his being raised up from the dead, had absolutely nothing to do with himself, except that he needs to try.

Paul recognized that the "MEANS" whereby he was going to finish this marathon race of being sanctified, was by any means that Jesus might choose.

Paul taught about the resurrection for the one who has accepted Jesus sacrifice, in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

20 But now Jesus is risen from the dead, and has become **the firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep. (**a Polite term to describe death**)

21 For since by Adam came death, by Jesus also came the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Jesus all shall be made alive.

23 **But each one in his own order**: Jesus first, afterward those who belong to Jesus at His coming. (Robinson)

1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:1

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For **if we believe that Jesus died and rose again**, (DO YOU?) even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you **by the word of the Lord**, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will **by no means precede those who have died believing in Jesus sacrifice**. (Robinson)

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Those who live their entire life and never accept Jesus offer of forgiveness, are not raised until the end of the 7 year tribulation and the 1,000 years that Jesus reigns upon the earth.

Revelation 20:5-6

5 But **the rest of the dead** did not live again **until the thousand years were finished**. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

1. **Believers, die once, are raised once**, to Live forever because they accepted Jesus sacrifice. Or alive when Jesus comes, never to die.
2. **Non believers Die once, are raised**, (end of 1,000 years) judged according to their own works, **Die again in the second death** by what they asked for, eternal separation from God's presence.

So then, the topic is "Finishing this Race" that all of us who love Jesus are in...

"I want you to know this morning that I have actually accomplished this, yes I am finally like Jesus, I have finished the race!"

Is that true?, those of you who know me best know it's not true!

I have not finished my race, like you I am still running, this is what Paul is talking about in the next verse of Philippians 3

Philippians 3:12

12 **Not 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.

Paul says, "NO! I have not already attained becoming like Jesus, I am not perfect yet" AMEN?

So...we don't quit, we press on so that...Now watch this closely..."So that we can lay hold of that which Jesus has laid hold of us..."

Did you catch that?

Jesus laid hold of you because He has an awesome plan for your life, and He is working that plan out right now in each one of our lives.

The question then is, DO YOU WANT TO LAY HOLD OF WHAT JESUS HAS PLANNED FOR YOU?

Absolutely, “Lord I want to lay hold of everything that you have planned for me...!”

To miss out on something that Jesus has planned for you, is to miss out on something totally awesome!

“Lord just do everything that you want to in my life, I don’t want to miss a thing!”

1. **This is going to require some patience**, because you are much harder on yourself and other believers than Jesus is.
2. **You are a work in progress**, and not only you, take a look around you this morning, every person here who loves Jesus is also a work in progress, so cut them some slack!
3. **When will this process be done**, never while you still live in this body, only when Jesus comes for you will it be complete.

Isaiah 55:10-12

10 "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, **And make it bring forth and bud**, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater,

11 **So shall My word be (patience over time)** that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

The idea here by the Holy Spirit is that patience and growth as believers in Jesus is like the seeds that lie dormant in the earth.

1. **Anyone that has ever planted a garden** knows that it takes tremendous patience.
2. **Would you say that when you have tilled up the hard ground**, that you have apprehended what you planted this garden for? Of course not, there is more work and time still needed.
3. **Would you say that after you planted the seed**, you have apprehended a garden? No still needs more time and watering.
4. **How about when the plants first sprout leaves**, is that when we have apprehended the garden that we planted? No, still more time...
5. **Finally the plants mature** and begin to produce fruit. Then we can say we have finally apprehended the garden that we planted.

If these things be true—that even a simple garden takes time, patience and hanging in there, why is it then that we give up on ourselves or others when we don’t see progress fast enough?

There is a particular weed that I hate called “The Cocklebur”.

What makes it such a pain is the fact that it has these sticky seed pods that does not just contain seeds that will germinate once in the first year.

It contains several different seed that will each germinate in different years.

This year, if the conditions are not right and it cannot germinate, no problem, it will wait till the next year where the second seed will be waiting for it's turn to germinate.

And If that second seed doesn't germinate, well then that us alright because there is a third year seed also waiting it's turn.

This weed grows through being patient with itself for years, if necessary.

I have a question...Why can't we have more patience with ourselves and others when we don't see and progress or growth in some years?

This verse in Isaiah gives to us a hint that the Lord grows us very much the same way that this cocklebur grows.

The Lord is patient with us, if we don't bear fruit this year, he will nurture us so that perhaps we will bear some fruit next year. He us patient and longsuffering

Philippians 3:13

13 Brethren, 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,

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

"I **have not apprehended all that the Lord has for me**"...In other words, every one of us still has many thing in us that the Lord wants to work on.

Next in verse 13, is probably one of the most important parts of Philippians chapter 3: "**...But one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind me...**"

1. **This morning many of us are still living in regrets** for things that we have done, or that was done to us in our past.
2. **Let me ask you**, how much of what happened could you have actually changed at the time, based on what you knew back them?
3. **What can you do** about some of these things that have already happened?

Matthew 6:34

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

James 4:14-15

14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

The secret to being a happy and contented person in the Lord, is to always seek to be happy where you are—with what you have

If you live in regrets of the past, what you have lost, what you should have done, it will drive you crazy!

If Elsie and I really focused right now on how much we have lost, and how hard we worked on that house in Heber, we would be totally distraught.

I discovered something in all of this that I keep reminding myself of, see if this helps you put thing in perspective:

Just think how happy you would be if you lost everything you now have, and then suddenly got it back.

Kind of puts things in perspective doesn't it? Learn to appreciate what you do have right now, and forget about what you have lost, or didn't do, or the mistakes that you have made in the past

Philippians 3:13-14

13...forgetting those things which are behind and **reaching forward to those things which are ahead**,

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

NT:1901 **EPEKTEINOMAI (ep-ek-ti'-nom-ahee)** to stretch (oneself) forward to be the first to touch the ribbon at the finish line...

Paul is thinking of those Roman games in which the runners would stretch their chest out front of them as they approached the finish line, seeking to be the first to touch the finish line ribbon and win the race.

We are in the home stretch right now, Jesus is about to come for us, we don't have much time, we need to stretch ourselves to try and finish this race for the Lord...

The idea here is that in the race; every muscle and nerve is exerted, we are to put forth every particle of our strength in running. We are running for our life and the life that Jesus gave for us.

To press towards the mark in the Greek Language, was the "**KATA SKOPON DIOOKOO**"

It is a reference to the white line that marked the ground in the stadium from the starting place to the goal, on which the runners were obliged to keep their eye fixed. If they took their eyes off of the line even for a moment and ran past the line, they were not crowned, even though they were first.

Philippians 3:15

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

This morning, I want to encourage you to mature in the Lord, grow up into a person who:

- **Knows** they are really saved.
- **Perfection** is your goal.
- **Not pretending** that sin is not a problem, because it is a problem for all of us.
- **Not to dwell** on the past mistakes, losses and regrets.
- **Don't let what happen** in the past be a barrier to you achieving all that Jesus has for you now and in the future.
- **Don't use past failures** or a current fear of repeating failure as an excuse for quitting and not trying to achieve perfection in the Lord.
- **Be devoted** to Jesus in every area of your life.
- **Be devoted** to Jesus no matter what your circumstances are.
- **Strain to achieve** all that is ahead for you.
- **Press on to the final goal** of finishing faithful, watching for Jesus return, expecting Him to come at any moment.

Philippians 3:16

16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

In other words, even though each one of us has suffered loss, set backs, failures and disappointments, along with these we have also made some progress.

- **To the degree** that we have already had some growth lets keep pressing towards the finish line.
- **Lets not get distracted** by anything else that is in the world.
- **Let's not get discouraged** or focused on the past failures and regrets.
- **Lets all be of the same mind**, that we are all struggling with the same kinds of things in our life.
- **When we sin, lets confess it for what it is**, SIN, and ask Jesus to cleanse us from it, and then get up and move on.
- **Then lets pick out someone** who we have observed is being a good example of following Jesus and follow their good patterns.
- **Always remembering** that they are just like us, at some point they will also fail, so we don't let their struggles discourage us.
- **We use Jesus** as the ultimate pattern to follow.

Philippians 3:18

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things.

Jesus told a story of a man who sowed good seed in his field, that while he slept an enemy came and also planted tares with the wheat.

Matthew 13:24-30

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.
26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.
27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'
28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'
29 But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.
30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

As they were growing together, you couldn't tell the difference between the wheat and the tares.

- A servant asked if they should go and remove the tares, the master told them no, that He would remove them later.

Unfortunately, in Jesus church there are those like what Paul described here in Philippians 3, verses 18 and 19...

1. **They are enemies** of Jesus Cross.
2. **Their God** is their own appetites and feeding their flesh.
3. **They set their mind on the things of this earth** and not on Jesus and what is important to Him.

We are not to try and guess who the Tares are, That is Jesus Business not ours,

- When Jesus returns he will separate the Tares from the true wheat that belong to Him.

Our job is to love everyone in this church, and perhaps if there are any tares here, who knows, if we love them enough, maybe they will also become a WHEAT!

[Philippians 3:20-21](#)

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. NKJV