

The Exegetical Paper

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Philippians 3: 8-14

What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ the righteousness that comes from God based on faith. I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Introduction

English Standard Version Bible (2018, Phil. 3:8-14) presents a powerful message about the importance of knowing Christ and pursuing righteousness through faith in him. In this passage, the apostle Paul reflects on his experiences and how they have shaped his faith. He encourages the Philippians to adopt a similar mindset of striving towards a deeper relationship with Christ. Paul also urges the Philippians to forget what is behind them and press forward toward what is ahead. He recognizes the importance of letting go of the past, whether past failures, achievements, or experiences, to embrace the present and future Christ fully has in store

for them. By focusing on what lies ahead and striving towards the goal of knowing Christ, believers can experience the transformative power of Christ in their lives and achieve a deeper sense of purpose and fulfillment. Thus, it is critical to explore the key themes and insights that can be gleaned from this passage, with a focus on the importance of letting go of the past, pressing toward the future, and embracing the transformative power of Christ.

Interpretation

What I observed in this scripture is a man speaking to a group of people about all the goals he wanted to achieve in being closer to Jesus. He explained that how important he was in the world, based on the level of zealous he had to follow the law and what he has achieved in the flesh based on his knowledge of the law and how much he depended on his flesh notoriety and gain. The name of the Author of this book was Paul who studied at the feet of Gamaliel who in those days would be consider in a high esteem for his knowledge of the law. Paul was a roman citizen who was an enforcer of the law in his community. He was a Christian killer. This book issues among the Philippians through a man name Epaphroditus. Philippians the letter was in response to the issues that was explained to him.

English Standard Version Bible (2018, Phil. 3:8-14) contains an exhortation from the Apostle Paul to the Philippians to pursue the knowledge of Christ and to press on towards the goal of knowing Him more fully. The passage is set in the context of a warning against false teachers and legalists seeking to undermine the gospel of grace.

The Apostle Paul uses the phrase "press on" to describe his determination to pursue the goal of knowing Christ more fully. The phrase "press on" in this context conveys the idea of continuous and determined effort to move forward. It implies a sense of urgency and

perseverance, as if one is straining towards a finish line with all their might. Paul uses this phrase to describe his attitude toward the Christian life, recognizing that the pursuit of knowing Christ is not a passive or casual endeavor but requires active and intentional effort (Schaper, 2019). The phrase "press on" also suggests that the Christian life is not a destination but a journey (Lewis, 2018). Paul acknowledges that he has not yet attained the fullness of what he desires, but he continues to press on toward knowing Christ more fully.

In the opening verses, Paul declares that everything he once considered valuable, including his status as a Pharisee, is now worthless compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, his Lord. He counts all his former accomplishments as loss and even garbage, to gain Christ (Silberman, 2018). He recognizes that all these things are temporary and fleeting and that only the knowledge of Christ has eternal significance (Silberman, 2018). Paul's perspective challenges us to examine our priorities and ask ourselves if we value the things of this world over the surpassing worth of knowing Christ.

Paul then contrasts his former reliance on the law for righteousness with his current faith in Christ as the source of his righteousness. He recognizes that the righteousness he now has is not his own but comes from God based on faith in Christ. This conviction is a crucial distinction, for the law cannot save but only condemn. Only through faith in Christ can we be justified before God. He realizes that he cannot earn salvation through the law but only through faith in Christ (Schaper, 2019). This distinction is crucial, highlighting the inadequacy of relying on human effort for salvation. No matter how well-intentioned or diligent we may be in following religious laws, we cannot achieve salvation through our works. Instead, we must rely on the grace of God, which is made available to us through faith in Christ. Paul's message serves as a reminder that our salvation is a gift freely given to us by God and not something we can earn or merit through

our efforts (Schaper, 2019). It is a humbling recognition that we depend entirely on God's grace for our salvation. This realization should encourage us to deepen our faith in Christ and to rely on his righteousness rather than our own.

In the following verses, Paul expresses his desire to know Christ more fully intellectually and experientially. He wants to participate in the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings. He recognizes that this will require him to be conformed to Christ's death, to die to self, and to live for Christ. Paul's longing to know Christ intimately, to experience the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, reveals his deep understanding of the gospel's transformative power (Lewis, 2018). He realizes that knowing Christ is not just an intellectual pursuit but also a personal and experiential one. It is not an easy path but it leads to true life and freedom. By conforming to Christ's death, Paul understands that Christ's resurrection power will also transform him. This transformative process does not happen overnight but requires a lifetime of surrender and growth in Christ.

Application

Philippians was written around AD 61-62 toward the end of Paul imprisonment. Paul was writing to the church of Philippi that consisted mainly of a Gentile audience. The Philippians people locations were Eastern Macedonia, Philippi and Thrace Greece. The biggest problem that the Philippians were dealing with, was disunity within the church. Pride and jealousy. Paul wrote to the Philippians about false teaching getting inside the church to be careful and encourage them to remain joyful. Paul's declaration in Philippians 3:8-14 is a powerful reminder to believers of the true worth and value of knowing Christ Jesus. The things of this world that we may hold dear, including our achievements, possessions, and relationships, pale compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ.

This truth challenges us to evaluate our priorities and deepen our relationship with Christ, recognizing that we can find true fulfillment and purpose only in him. The concept of losing everything to gain Christ may seem extreme to some, but it is a foundational principle of the Christian faith. We are called to surrender our desires and ambitions, recognizing that the only way to gain true life is through Christ. This approach means living a life of selflessness and service to others, as Christ demonstrated through his sacrificial death on the cross.

The righteousness that Paul speaks of in Philippians 3:9 is not something we can attain through our efforts. Rather, it is a gift from God that comes through faith in Christ. The truth reminds us that our salvation is not something we can earn or merit but a gift we receive through faith. Salvation should humble us and cause us to be grateful for the grace that God has shown us. Paul's desire to know Christ more deeply and to participate in his sufferings challenges us to reexamine our relationship with Christ. Are we content with simply believing in him, or are we actively seeking to know him more deeply and to identify with him in his suffering? This understanding requires us to sacrifice our comfort and convenience, just as Christ did for us.

Also, Paul's exhortation to forget what is behind and to press on toward the goal of knowing Christ more fully is a call to perseverance and endurance. The Christian life is not easy, and many challenges and obstacles will exist. But we are called to keep our eyes fixed on Christ and to press on toward the goal, trusting in his strength and guidance. This take requires discipline in our spiritual lives, making time for prayer, Bible study, and fellowship with other believers. Moreover, Paul's emphasis on faith in Christ as the source of righteousness has profound implications for how we view ourselves and others. If we recognize that our righteousness comes solely from God through faith in Christ, we can no longer boast about our

accomplishments or look down on others who may not meet our standards. Instead, we are called to love and serve others, just as Christ loved and served us.

In conclusion, Philippians 3: 8-14 focuses on the importance of letting go of the past, pressing toward the future, and embracing the transformative power of Christ. This passage encourages Christians to forget the things behind them, such as their past mistakes, failures, and accomplishments, and to focus instead on what lies ahead. The author also emphasizes the importance of having a single-minded focus on Christ and his transformative power rather than relying on their efforts to achieve righteousness. Through Christ, believers can experience a new identity and purpose, and they are called to press on toward the goal of knowing Christ and becoming like him.

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