



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - Philippians Study

Week 4 - Day 3

Approaching God

Read Psalm 40:8-13

I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.” I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, LORD, as you know. I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help. I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness from the great assembly. Do not withhold your mercy from me, LORD; may your love and faithfulness always protect me. For troubles without number surround me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me. Be pleased to save me, LORD; come quickly, LORD, to help me.

‘I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.’ All of the emotions in this Psalm come down to this desire. How does this phrase make you feel? Do you take delight in doing the will of God, or do you find it too difficult? Try to sum up in a prayer the feelings that this psalm brings out in you. What do you feel drawn to say to God at this moment?

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Philippians 3:7-11

Slowly & carefully read the passage 2 or 3x's before taking notes & answering questions

What Paul formerly regarded as achievement he now acknowledges to have been failure. What he would formerly have regarded as worthless and indeed pernicious he now regards to be the only achievement worth pursuing - the personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord, and sharing the experience of his death and resurrection.

Philippians 3:7-11 - **7** But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. **8** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith-- **10** that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. Which words or phrases stand out to you as significant?

Daily Study Questions

Continue trying the A.B.C. method for studying & meditating on a passage of scripture. The questions below are meant to help you get familiar with this method.

To Study the Passage:

- What are some things you learn or observe about God in this passage? (Father, Son, Holy Spirit?)
- What might this passage reveal about you, your neighbor, human nature, people?
- Are there any commands to be obeyed or things to be avoided, or examples to follow?

Now choose the verse or truth that is most striking and helpful to you so far. Paraphrase the thought or verse in your own words.

Meditation & Reflection Questions

- How would believing this truth or taking it seriously change your life? If it were fully alive and effective in your innermost being - what might be different?
- Why might God be showing you this truth today? What might be going on in my life that he would bring this to my attention?

Close in Prayer:

Rejoice: - What 1 or 2 things can you praise and rejoice in from today's study?

Repent: - What 1 or 2 things do you need to confess and ask for forgiveness?

Request: - What 1 or 2 things do you want to ask God for today as a result of your study?

Commentary on Philippians 3:7-11

Rather than taking pride in his own accomplishments, Paul says he “gains” Christ by the loss of all such things. His salvation comes not from his accomplishments but from depending on nothing but the Savior’s provision.

3:7- A radical verse. None of the above things in his list were evil in and of themselves. They only become evil when they become substitutes for God’s grace, when they become manmade stepping stones to heaven, a tower of Babel so to speak. Any of God’s good gifts that become more important to us than Him or become the focus of our hope, joy, confidence, glory and salvation then become a deadly thing to us. We are all prone to this and fight this battle our whole lives. In this context Paul can say that everything that used to be to his profit, he now thinks of as loss for Christ’s sake. He knows that he must “lose” those things. Not that he must actually quit being a Hebrew but that he must quit placing any confidence in anything other than Christ. Therefore, the things that used to be his life, love, and glory are now seen in a negative light for him for they were his idols that he bowed down to. His rituals, morality, and personal “righteousness” actually kept Him from God: the Giver of true saving righteousness. All God’s gifts are dangerous because they can become our idols. Paul says that these good things he had are loss when they are considered as hopes of salvation and meaning in life.

3:8 - Paul shifts gears here slightly and takes his thoughts even further. Not only does he regard all these past good things that were beneficial to him as loss with regards to earning his salvation, he sees everything in his life as a negative on the scale of how much joy and significance it brings when compared to knowing Christ. The word for “knowing” here could be used in the most intimate sense, even meaning sexual relations. It is an experiential knowledge. Paul is saying that the intimacy with Christ that comes from knowing the objective truth about Him and resting in Him alone for salvation is the greatest thing in the world. It has a worth that nothing else can compare with.

3:9-11 - Paul gladly calls Christ “my Lord,” for he knows that his whole life is in Christ. He says that he has actually lost all things for Christ and this is true. He is in prison possessing hardly anything on earth. He has lost all of his clout and status in the Jewish religious hierarchy. Anything that he still has he could have said that he had lost it or let it go for Christ’s sake in his heart. In this sense, he lost all things the day that He said “Yes!” to Christ for the first time. He actually views all other things in life as trash or dung in comparison to the riches and beauty that he has found in Christ. He is willing to totally lose everything so that he might, “gain Christ.” That is not only to be forgiven, but also to be conformed to His likeness: experiencing oneness with Him and ultimately being glorified in Him. Gaining Christ includes everything listed in verses 9-11.

Paul aims to be found in Christ, to know him and the power of his resurrection, sharing (*koinonia*) in his suffering (v. 10) and his death so that he might attain (i.e., arrive at, or reach) the resurrection (v. 11). Sharing in suffering does not “earn” us the resurrection but enables us to identify more with Christ, to experience the power that gave him new life, and to understand more of the love of the Savior who had to endure immeasurable pain for his resurrection and ours. When we take serious stock of our lives in light of the gospel, we realize that we must repent not only of our sins but also of the achievements that we would use to justify ourselves before God. But curiously and wonderfully, this descent from our pedestals identifies us with the risen Savior who gave up heaven’s honor to suffer for our sin. God’s righteousness comes by faith alone, in Christ alone (v. 9). God invites us to share, to fellowship (*koinonia*), not just in grace (1:7) but in Christ’s sufferings as well (3:10) in order that we might grasp the greatness of his love and the power of his resurrection hope. Can we say with Paul that we consider the achievements of our lives to be “rubbish”? In Christ, we can not only say such things but also discover that the greater wonders of the resurrection are ours no matter what we face in this life. Life under the gospel is an utter repudiation of our own moral resume—not only the bad but also the good. Christ is all. He alone has “surpassing worth” (v. 8)