

Philippians

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Date: 16 December 1992

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- [0 : 01] Speaking of the Lord's help, I direct your attention this evening to the third chapter of Paul's epistle to the Philippians, the last clause of verse 8 and the first clause of verse 9.
- Third chapter of Paul's epistle to the Philippians, the last clause of verse 8 and the first clause of verse 9, that I may win Christ and be found in him.
- That I may win Christ and be found in him. The Apostle Paul was brought to a place where he was taught by God the reality of salvation.
- And it was eternal union with the Lord Jesus Christ. And we see here in his prayer, in this chapter, in more than one place, his urgent longing, desire expressed to be found in this blessed union with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- He says in another place, in the same desire, that I might know him. He wanted to know the eternal Son of God for himself.
- [1 : 47] He did not see this as easy. He was not one who accepted the type of easy believism we see about us today.
- To him, there was a wrestling and a struggle. To him, there lay at the root of this wrestling and struggle a realisation that these were awful realities.
- They were this. Either he was right or wrong. Either he was brought into this place or he never attained it.
- He said in one place, lest after preaching to others, having preached to others, I myself might prove to be a pastor.
- He speaks of one who runs the race in his epistle to the church of Corinth. He says, all run, but one gaineth the prize.
- [3 : 18] I press toward the mark. He says in our chapter here tonight, the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
- Nothing less than the sacred reality of the Lord. Apprehending him as he had done.
- And him reaching the end of the life journey, his life journey, to be brought to be with God himself would satisfy him.
- And this is what is at the root of our text here tonight. That I may win Christ and be found in him.
- We desire the Lord may help us to be enabled to look for a little while at this word win. The first thing we would desire to bring before you is this.
- [4 : 35] To gain his ear. Oh, how solemnly prayer. Many may utter a form of words.
- The apostle did. Used to a form of words in his day as a Pharisee. Very satisfied. Totally satisfied with a form of words.
- That when he came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as he did on the road to Damascus then, he was not satisfied, could not be satisfied, short of gaining his ear.
- Knowing that the Lord heard him. Knowing what we call access. Knowing a sweet nearness.

- Knowing a precious liberty. Knowing the presence of the Holy Spirit in dining breath.
- [5 : 42] Access with what he wanted. To draw near to the Lord Jesus Christ. To lay his case before him. To plead with him.
- And to know that his God had heard him. And you know, every grace and every favor comes to us through Jesus' blood.
- And all access at the throne of grace is dependent upon the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ in the courts of heaven above.
- Now, the Lord doesn't always answer his dear people's prayers instantly. Often, they wait long to gain access to the Lord.
- There is, in this pathway, a teaching of sovereign grace.
- [6 : 49] The figure that the scripture shows is that of Queen Esther going into the king, waiting for the scepter to be extended to him.
- Rightly, the people going unto the Lord himself, the great King of Kings, and they long for that precious scepter to be extended to them. They long for this precious accent.
- They long for this scepter of mercy to be extended. And they long to know his blessed approbation. They long to be able to draw near to him.
- and to know that he hears them. That they have access. Now, when they have do, find that access and the Lord grants it to them as much that they want to tell him.
- There's not much that they want to ask him. There's much they want to plead before him. There is much they long to confess and pour out before him.
- [8 : 06] Two things here they long to tell him in godly sorrow and repentance what they have been and what they are.
- They are hopeless and lost condition. they long to tell him their uttering ability. They long to tell him their vile in gratitude.
- And they long to hear and to know in that confession and in that repentance they long to know his pardoning what?
- they plead for mercy and they long for that scepter to be extended to them.
- But there stands before them and this is the avenue to it and this is where they learn it. There stands before them sovereign grace.
- [9 : 20] it is the very learning ground and I believe it is of sovereign grace God's dear children's approach to him.
- they learn their utter inability to come. They learn their utter inability to confess. They know their utter inability to mourn and repent.
- They come pleading with the Lord to give them a heart of flesh instead of a heart of stone. This is the substance of what the apostle says here that I may win Christ, win his ears.
- and so much more than his ears, his heart. They long for sweet intimations from his own lips that he has loved them with an everlasting love.
- They long to know that he has moved towards them, that he is theirs, that he died for them, that he has loved them with an everlasting love, and that they're his.
- [10 : 33] How else can we understand the apostle's earnest desire to be found in him? It is like the graftings of the tree, that when the grafting is truly grafting and taped, the sap will flow.
- And God's dear people long to know that they're grafted into the living vine, that they are a branch in that vine, because unless they are, no sap is going to flow and there will never be any fruit.

There can never be any fruit unless we're grafted to that living vine. and here is the pathway they come in desire that I might win him, win Christ, that he would hear my prayer.

Solemn is this pathway, it's not only in the beginning, the experience of which I'm now speaking, it's also known. There may be many times of backsliding and coldness and death in which after periods of sweet communion with the Lord, there are long periods of coldness, of warmness, of worldliness.

And prayer becomes lax and lame and the Lord in his sovereign and solemn displeasure withdraws himself.

[12 : 15] And there is an entrance into the experience of which the scriptures speak, the heavens are iron and bronze. God does not answer.

There is the case of Job which is clearly revealed in the scripture that the Lord withdrew to teach his servant Job such lessons. Lessons regarding divine sovereignty, lessons regarding the Lord's sovereign right to do as he will with his own, and lessons in wrestling prayer that the people of God often find that I cry and shout but he shut it out my prayer.

And yes, you know the prophet Isaiah gives the theorist the direction and he couldn't give anything clearer than in the 50th chapter. Let him that who is among you that fear is the Lord that obey the voice of his servant that walk in darkness and hath no light let him trust in the name of the Lord.

What's he got to do? He's got to stay upon his guard. He's never, never, never leave the throne of grace. He's to come. And you know the Lord taught this in his parable of the man who claimed the unjust judge and he wouldn't rise because he was his friend but because of his importunity he rose and gave him.

And the point of it is this I say unto you ask and it I promise that word of the Lord Jesus Christ that he will answer instantly.

[14 : 04] It may be days and weeks and months and years before he answers but I say unto you ask and the promise is this you shall receive.

An importunity is asking thousands and thousands of times the great test of the importunity is the same test that the Lord put his dear servant Jacob through when he faced him with eternity and Esau coming to kill him.

The test was that as he faced eternity he asked until he obtained the blessing. There was an urgency there was a wrestling prayer there was the importunity which is so sweetly expressed in the scriptures I will not let thee go except no blessing that I may win Christ.

I was going to say and I believe it's right Christ is not one easily. Apostle Paul says this if I may apprehend what a mystery is contained here if I may apprehend in my experience feeling in my heart that which also I'm apprehended of Christ.

Apostle Paul was apprehended of Christ on the road to Damascus he longed to apprehend a sweet and sacred assurance which he did apprehend.

[15 : 31] In his last letter to Timothy before he died he said and he had apprehended it then they laid up for me a crane of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge will give me now I believe he won Christ the sweet assurance by faith was given him but one day he will be with him he says in another very blessed phase for me to live is Christ and to die is God and he says in another phase I know in whom I have to lead and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day that I may win crown Christ apprehends his dear children in a way of salvation through the work of the spirit they're born again to know their lost condition and their need of salvation now he brings them into that place where they're lost where they have no hope in themselves where they long to be able by faith to apprehend him and they can't where they're kept waiting at the mercy and where he begins to deal with them so that they enter into the experience of the psalmist in the 107th psalm they wander in a solitary way hungry and thirsty their soul faint in them they cannot get his ear what do they do they cry unto the Lord there is an urgency in their prayers there is a reality in the wrestling I will not let thee go except they bless them and you know as Mr.

Philpott says regarding every child of God the the home of salvation is in victory it is in obtaining the request whilst the pathway is one of trial and many temptations and doubts and fears and much unbelief that's not the hallmark of victory that's the hallmark of sin the hallmark of victory is that they wrestle on toward heaven as Rutherford says mid storm and wind and time and they come to the blessed place where the Lord here and where he gives them a precious ray of hope where he rises as the son of righteousness in their heart gives them a reality there are many whose religion is concerned with their dress and their tradition and what they've done in the past and their reading of

God's word and so on and their works for the Lord but you know a true child of God religion is solely and alone concerned with this that I may win Christ and be found in him solely and alone concerned with it and you can see what lies behind and what lies before what lies behind is put in a nutshell by top lady nothing in my hand I bring what lies before is again put in a nutshell simply to thy cross I claim now that is it that I may win Christ and be found in him and it's like the bride and the bridegroom the bride of

Christ wants to feel his love wants to know his atoning blood in the experience of it in her heart wants to know that her sin is power nothing else will satisfy nothing else will give her peace by the teaching of the spirit under the divine work of the spirit she knows what she wants she knows that she wants that sealing of the spirit she knows that she wants those divine tokens and the lord has so ordained in his church that he leaves her in the desert hungry and thirsty and sets in her heart such a need and it is his ordained means that she shall wrestle and cry in her need to him and that he will hear that she will as we read in the song of

[20 : 42] Solomon go about the street of the city searching for him seeking for him longing for him and that he in answer to her crying will come to her she will find him in her longings in her hunger and thirst she will eventually find him I found him whom my soul loveth and I may win cry there's one thing that stands out a mile here and that is that the axe is laid with brutal force to the whole question of worth in salvation I say brutal force the apostle says that the things he counted gain he counted dung and wrath for knowledge of Christ

Jesus it was dung nothing else could describe what he saw as false religion it was dung it stank in his nostrils it lay behind him the spirit's teaching had been such a light that what he counted gain he saw to be done and wrath and what now he counted gain was the knowledge of Christ his Lord the knowledge the intimate knowledge that upon the cross he had died for his sins alone he wanted to know that he was not satisfied with the generality that Christ died for the world and therefore it must include him he wanted to know that his sins were nailed to his cross and he bore them no more and he wanted in his heart the sweet experience of washing in the blood of the Lamb do you want it to know blessed mercy of the Lord has given you such divine teaching that you know this is the way walk in it you see that straight and narrow way you say the path

I see and I'll pursue the narrow way for him I view you can never rest satisfied short of winning Christ and being found in him and if you are found in him it will be so clear you won't have your own righteousness the apostle is so clear about this that those who are found in him not having mine own righteousness which is the law but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God thy faith he desired something which was heavenly something which was divine something which was eternal something which was woven by the eternal son of

God something which is spoken of in the psalms with great beauty and clarity the scriptures reveal this robe of the righteousness of Christ the king's daughter we read is all glorious within her clothing is of raw gold she shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought they shall enter into the king's palace and we see this raiment spoken of the righteousness of Christ the obedience of the eternal son of God keeping he himself in this world in his humanity keeping his father's holy law for his church

Abraham we read believe God and it was counted unto him for righteousness it's specific we need it not a generality of universal redemption it is a perfect obedience for the sinner not not having mine own righteousness righteousness but then he describes what he will have what he will apprehend by faith and obtain and he says not having mine own righteousness but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God thy faith and this is the righteousness which he desires and this is the sacred benefit of the church when she is found in him united to Jesus the vine

[26 : 42] I said to him writer I life health and righteousness to and this he will teach me in time without him I nothing can know here is the desire prayer of the apostle Paul that I might be found in him now this ties up conclusively with the Lord's prayer in the 17th chapter of the gospel of John that they may be one in us the Lord prayed in that prayer for the union of Father Son and Holy Spirit and encompassed in that prayer was his church that they may that they all may be one as thou father art in me and

I in thee that they also may be one in us and then he adds in the 23rd verse I in them and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one that the world may know that thou hast sent me and that thou hast loved me as thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me father I will but they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory this prayer is the preliminary to the preparation for that glory that have by faith this blessed righteousness hymn writer speaks of Jesus thy blood and righteousness my beauty art my glorious breath midst flaming worlds in these arrayed with joy shall

I accept my head the child of God desires to apprehend that which also he is apprehended of Christ Jesus he longs to apprehend the blessing which the Lord Jesus Christ has to give him not least this precious righteousness not least to be found in him and not least to know him there several words which stand out in this chapter the apostle Paul speaking of this word winning and being found in him says I follow after I follow after here is the pathway to apprehending

I follow after if so be I may apprehend apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus and he goes on to speak in this vein when he speaks of the words I press towards mark he says let us there for as many as be perfect be thus minded are you thus minded tonight don't be put off by the word perfect there's nothing perfect in you nor in this world the perfection that is spoken of there is the work of the spirit it is the sight and the light and the teaching the divine teaching that is given the very work of grace in the heart the work that is of the Holy Spirit the new birth the spirit might as well have said there as many therefore as are born of the spirit last month they have been shown they have been taught they are nothing they feel nothing they possess nothing but they're thus minded they press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of

God in Christ Jesus and their language is like Esther's I will go in under the king I perish I perish I'm going nowhere else I'm thus minded my heart is fixed is set on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus name that is where they are thus minded and this is what they wait to receive the word win that I may win Christ means to gain Christ to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of

[32 : 32] God in Christ Jesus and to know that we are his children the pressing is prayer wrestling prayer that is what is contained in this word win oh it is what I said at the beginning tonight it is to gain his ears as regards your soul salvation to gain his dear heart and love and mercy and power and peace it is to be pleaded for and begged for some of the prayers that come in that pleading are these pardon mine iniquity oh Lord it is great there is in the prayers of those who press toward the mark sincerity and truth they may not feel it but there is a reality in it there is a refining in their prayers in the trial of their faith there is a cry to their God

Lord save our parents they know the reality of the footsteps they are their footsteps and they say this in the experience of it if my soul if the Lord never answered was sent to hell his righteous law approved it well that their cries there they seek for mercy I pray toward the man for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus that I may win Christ his love and mercy his pardon and peace is your desire to know and you will not rest satisfied by thinking that well

I can read in the old book gospel standards and such rates of those who did obtain the blessing that will not satisfy it may encourage you but it will not satisfy you'll want it for yourself you'll want that peace in your own heart and when you have had a sip of it you'll want a draught on it you will want it all your days you will indeed and all through life's pathway you will find no peace no rest outside of this world found in him to be at a distance from him like Peter was when he followed him to the judgment hall Peter followed at a distance will grant you no rest you'll long to enter into the sweet experience that Peter entered into the sea of down he

Lord said he in precious communion with his master thou and I that I love you will want to hear the Lord's voice and that voice in that hour was a commandment to the ministry of the gospel feed my sheep have you noticed this that Christ sends into the vineyard those who have known his love known his presence Peter went knowing the approbation the love of Christ the pardoning blood of Christ and when he wrote his epistle he could write for as much as you know you're not redeemed with corruptible things of silver and gold your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers but with the precious blood of

Christ he knew it he could describe it he could speak of it and to him he could tell you its value it was unutterably precious as much as he knew he were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without spots and without lemons what a sacred confession for the apostle to be able to say that he knew he had been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ and pardon cannot quite twice demise first at my bleeding short his hand then again at mine all to know that pardoning blood was the cry from the apostle's heart when he penned these words that I may win Christ and be found in him and not having mine own righteousness which is of the law but that which is through the faith of

[38 : 44] Christ having the righteousness which is of God by faith that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering being made conformable unto his death if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead not as though I had already attained either were already perfect but I follow after if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus brethren I count not myself to have apprehended for this one thing I do forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before I pray toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ

Jesus Amen Amen