



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Philippians, Colossians, Philemon Sermon Series
Supports Session 4: Joy in Knowing Jesus
Sermon Title: Our New Life in Christ
Passage: Galatians 2:20

Connection to Philippians 3:8-21

For the life of Christ to be vital in us, we must be willing to completely forsake our old selves and desire to experience the power of Jesus' resurrection in our recreated identity. We are not bound by regrets; we possess a new joyous identity empowered by God's grace through faith.

Introduction/Opening

Baptism is a picture of our perfect salvation. Our old "dead" selves are lowered beneath the water as a picture of our death and burial. After we are lowered into the watery grave and then brought back up (resurrected to a new life) we symbolize the fellowship we now have with Jesus and promise of a new purpose found in serving His kingdom.

Outline

1. "I no longer live."
 - a. Paul's testimony of persecuting the early church revealed the mistakes of his former existence. In spite of his Jewish pedigree and training under leading rabbis in Jerusalem, he considered his past a personal loss (Phil. 3:7-8). Though grasping that the Lord used all of his prior experiences in his present service, Paul considered his past as "loss" and "dung" and cherished instead his new identity.
 - b. We all must have a clear demarcation like Paul as we begin our new life in Jesus.
 - c. The gospel proclaims we are dead in our sins (Eph. 2:1). Our individual corruption is so thorough that we lack the capacity to seek God or live for Him. Through baptism, we declare that our old lives were hopeless and the only recourse in death is to be buried.
 - d. We are "crucified" with Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, we died with Him. Our old lives are taken out of the way by God's action. Our old lives have to end.
 - e. For Jesus to be complete in us we must be tired of and ready to be finished with our old lives. This is not a self-loathing that creates a psychologically unfit soul, but a simple recognition of the power of sin upon our lives and an acceptance that the old life is over.

2. “Christ lives in me.”
 - a. At the time of our conversion by faith, we are no longer bound by human misery. We are born again, and the Spirit of God comes into our lives. It is a promise of unlimited potential for all persons at the time of salvation (Acts 2:38-39).
 - b. Instead of being limited by our pasts, we are filled with hope. Jesus comes to live in us (John 14:17,20). Our identities are redeemed in Christ.
 - c. Paul’s life is a wonderful example of this redemption. Paul was born with a powerful intellect and was blessed by the opportunity of elite rabbinical training. However, his old life was marked by rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. He persecuted the church, hunting members to destroy the church (Acts 9:1-2). After his conversion, Paul’s life was transformed (Acts 9:4-43). His powerful intellect and rabbinical training were now put into service of the Savior, Jesus, and Paul became the person God designed him to be.
 - d. And so it is with us. In our professions of faith in Jesus we are filled by the Holy Spirit and become who God designed us to be. The change we display is as varied as the complexity of the society we witness to (1 Cor. 12:7-11).

3. “I live by faith.”
 - a. “The word “life” is emphatic in this verse. The Greek term *zoe* (English “Zoology”) is repeated four times. We live! We don’t simply exist; we emerge to the abundant life promised by Jesus (John 10:10). We are to expect, embrace, and delight in the life Jesus presents to us after the death of our old selves.
 - b. Paul’s service reflected the “faith steps” of putting his death and new life to work. He experienced the death of his old identity and the resurrection and new life of his potential in Christ. He counted former accomplishments as rubbish (Phil. 3:8), and he was not bound down by his former misdeeds in unbelief; he was able to “forget” them and move forward in victory (3:13).
 - c. The center-point of his life was righteousness through faith in Christ (Phil. 3:9). He was not marked by the pride of self-righteous works, but by humility based on the forgiveness in Christ’s blood.
 - d. This life of faith is expressed through a daily walking in Jesus (Gal. 5:16).
 - e. The life of faith in Jesus is not beyond our grasp. The life of faith is expressed in a daily walk. Our walk is one day at a time, savoring each moment of service to Jesus.

Conclusion

Living with our past may trigger remorse and regrets or a delusion of self-righteous pride. Thankfully, we are privileged to “forget” what is behind us, accept forgiveness for our mistakes, and walk boldly into a future planned by Jesus. Our lives may be compared to a needlepoint canvas. On the underside are the strings and knots of our former misguided lives that present a vexing, confusing pattern. We may stare for hours wondering how this mess will make any sense. However, on the topside is a clear presentation of the subject representing our beautiful new lives in Christ. Thankfully, our former misdeeds are redeemed by Jesus to form our character, gentleness, and humility. Once we turn the tangled needlepoint of our lives over to the Lord, our new lives begin.

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