

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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Philippians 3:1-21

October 7, 2018

Do you get why actively pursuing a Christ-like life is important?

- I just heard about this *thing* called R2R2
 - ♦ Running *Rim to Rim and back of the Grand Canyon* in 1 day.
 - ♦ 21 miles each way - 4,700' descent - 5,700' gain and reserve
 - ♦ For elite ultra-marathoners
 - ♦ **Why?** Prize of *I did it!* Sense of community. Be your best. Beat FKT.
- Paul reveals he is pressing on toward a prize and encourages us to also.
 - ♦ Why? Why not just take it easy and stroll toward the prize?
 - ♦ After all, Jesus saved us. Heaven is ours. It will be waiting for us.

Do you get why actively pursuing a Christ-like life is important?

❖ Be clear what you are pursuing.

- ***I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.***
 - ♦ Note the gospel: ***Christ Jesus took hold of me.*** Jesus rescued me!
- Paul defines the **that**: ***I press on toward the goal, for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*** Philippians 3:14 EHV
- Your understanding of the prize impacts how and why you press on.
 - ♦ Augustine notes how our view of the prize changes with maturity
 - At first see the goal of **escaping from hell** by getting to heaven.
 - ♦ Motive to behave, keep the faith - avoid hell. Pushed by *Fear*.
 - Learning of all the **goodies in heaven** run like kids to presents.
 - Finally - the more you get it you press on to **be with Jesus**.
 - ♦ Not the romance/bromance of some Christian hymns and songs!
 - ♦ There you'll know love and love. Fulfillment, contentment, joy...
 - ♦ Prize: transformed into Jesus' image - restored in the image of God
 - Shed our Old Self in death - enter God's presence sinless.
 - ***By his power he will change our earthly bodies. They will become like his glorious body.*** Philippians 3:21 NIV
- What's the prize we're called to?
 - ♦ We pursue God's goal for us: to fully be restored in God's image
 - ♦ So every fiber of our being wants what God wants: righteousness
 - ♦ Not because we have to. But because it's good - right - the ultimate!
 - ♦ It's what we were made for - walking in full harmony with God.

Awesome! - But if God will make me perfect in heaven, why pursue perfection now, especially since it is impossible for me to be perfect in this life.

❖ When eternal righteousness is your hope, the pursuit of righteousness is your life.

- Athletes say preparation is as much a matter of mind as well as body.
 - ♦ Mental focus: ***I press on toward the goal***
 - ♦ Focus so the challenges don't result in detours, disaster, or defeat.
 - ♦ If you prize the prize, you prepare and press on.
 - If you don't prize it, you don't press on. You'll prize taking it easy.
- Here's the key! **Do you get that righteousness is superior?** It's real life.
 - ♦ If you **don't** want to pursue righteousness, you'll walk/live this way.
 - ***...many walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ... Their end is destruction, their god is their appetite, and their glory is in their shame. They are thinking only about earthly things.*** Phil. 3:18b,19 EHV
 - **Focus** of daily life: seek to satisfy my creature-comfort appetites
 - ♦ Living for every excess shamelessly seeking shameful pleasure
 - ♦ It can also be living to be valued, to be loved, for those you love, to provide food, clothes, shelter, a pleasant carefree life.
 - ♦ ***They are thinking only about earthly things.*** Phil. 3:19 EHV
 - ♦ ³¹ ***So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'*** ³² ***For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.***
³³ ***But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*** Matthew 6
 - Sin gets its hooks into us, blinds, controls, destroys
 - Sin makes a fool out of us and leaves us dissatisfied and despairing.
 - Sin is **not good**. It is **not right**. It is **not righteous!** It's **fatal!**
 - ♦ Why pursue righteousness - for eternity and now?
 - ♦ **It's life to the full!** It's our hope for eternity. Why not for this life?
 - ♦ It's the work of the cross - daily rescuing me from my sin nature.
 - ♦ Failure to pursue righteousness says, *God's prize isn't all that great!*
 - ♦ Failure to pursue it opens your heart to seek that which destroys.

Do you get why actively pursuing a Christ-like life is important?

- You don't get it when you know it. Rather when you pursue it!
 - ♦ Start with a heart & mind that longs to walk with God not with flesh.
 - ♦ Use God's Word to tune your heart, mind, spirit to the mind of Christ.
 - ♦ Humbly subordinate yourself to Jesus - follow him.
 - ***Following - disciple making*** is being mentored by word and example.
 - People of all ages learn so much from the experienced and mature.
 - Seek the mentoring of a mature Christian. Be an example for others.

Daily rise saying, *I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me - his righteousness. Jesus, rescue me from sin. Jesus, transform me.*