

Message Six

**Being Found in Christ,
Knowing Christ, and Pursuing Christ**

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:9-14

I. Paul's desire was to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness but "that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith"—Phil. 3:9:

- A. Deep within Paul was the aspiration to have his whole being immersed in and saturated with Christ so that all who observed him might find him fully in Christ; we also should have the earnest desire to be found in Christ—v. 9a.
- B. Paul wanted to be found in Christ in the condition of not having his own righteousness but the righteousness of God, taking Christ as his subjective, lived-out righteousness—v. 9:
 - 1. There are two aspects of Christ being righteousness to the believers:
 - a. The first aspect is Christ being the believers' righteousness for them to be justified by God objectively—Rom. 3:24-26; Acts 13:39; Gal. 3:24b.
 - b. The second aspect is Christ being the believers' righteousness lived out of them as the manifestation of God, who is the righteousness in Christ given to the believers for them to be justified subjectively—Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 2:24a; James 2:24; Matt. 5:20; Rev. 19:8.
 - 2. The subjective righteousness of God in Philippians 3:9 is actually God Himself becoming our daily living, a living that is right with God and man:
 - a. Paul did not want to live in his own righteousness, the righteousness that comes from man's own effort to keep the law—vv. 6, 9.
 - b. Paul desired to live in the righteousness of God and to be found in the condition of expressing God by living Christ; if we would be found in Christ, we must be in such a condition—1:20-21a.
- C. Faith is the basis, the condition, on which we receive and possess the righteousness that is out of God, which is Christ—3:9; 1 Cor. 1:30.

II. Paul lived in a condition of having not his own righteousness but the righteousness that is out of God in order to know (experience) Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, to be conformed to His death, and to attain to the out-resurrection—Phil. 3:10-11:

- A. To have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ (v. 8) is by revelation, but to know Christ (v. 10) is by experience—to have an experiential knowledge of Him:
 - 1. To experience Christ is to know and enjoy Christ in an experiential way—2:17-18; 4:4, 10.
 - 2. To know Christ is not merely to have the knowledge of Him but to gain His person—2 Cor. 2:10.
 - 3. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches by paying a price—Phil. 3:8; Eph. 3:8.
 - 4. We need to know Christ by experiencing Him, enjoying Him, being one with Him, and having Him live within us; in this way we know Him by both revelation and experience—Phil. 3:10; 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20.

- B. Paul aspired to know the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings—Phil. 3:10:
 - 1. The power of Christ's resurrection is His resurrection life, which raised Him from the dead—Eph. 1:19-20:
 - a. The Spirit is the reality of Christ's resurrection and its power—Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:6.
 - b. The Spirit compounded with Christ's resurrection and its power indwells our spirit to dispense Christ's resurrection and its power into our entire being—Phil. 1:19; Exo. 30:23-25; Rom. 8:6b, 10-11.
 - c. If we put ourselves aside and remain under the death of the cross, we will experience the power of Christ's resurrection, and spontaneously, the power of resurrection experienced by us will build up the Body—Phil. 3:10; Eph. 4:12, 16.
 - 2. The expression *the fellowship of His sufferings* in Philippians 3:10 refers to the participation in Christ's sufferings, a necessary condition for the experience of the power of His resurrection—Matt. 20:22-23; Col. 1:24:
 - a. We first experience the power of Christ's resurrection, and then by this power we are enabled to participate in His sufferings—Phil. 3:10.
 - b. These sufferings are mainly for Christ's Body, the church—Col. 1:24.
- C. Philippians 3:10 also speaks of "being conformed to His death"; this indicates that Paul desired to take Christ's death as the mold of his life:
 - 1. Being conformed to Christ's death is the base of the experience of Christ—1:20-21a; 3:9-10.
 - 2. The mold of Christ's death refers to Christ's continually putting to death His natural life so that He might live by the life of God—John 6:57a.
 - 3. By being conformed to Christ's death, we experience Christ in His death for the release, impartation, and multiplication of life, and we also glorify the Father—12:24-26, 28; 13:31; 2 Cor. 4:12.
- D. The result of being conformed to Christ's death is that we attain to the out-resurrection from the dead, which will be a prize to the overcomers—Phil. 3:11:
 - 1. To attain to, to arrive at, the out-resurrection means that our entire being is gradually and continually resurrected—1 Thes. 5:23.
 - 2. The out-resurrection is a resurrection out of the old creation into the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.

III. Like Paul, we should pursue Christ Himself and "pursue toward the goal for the prize"—Phil. 3:12, 14a:

- A. In order to pursue Christ, we should not think that we have attained, and we should forget the things which are behind and stretch "forward to the things which are before"—vv. 12-13.
- B. The goal toward which we are pursuing is the full enjoyment and gaining of Christ, and the prize is the uttermost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom as a reward to the victorious runners of the New Testament race—v. 14; 1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 10:35; 11:26; 12:1-2.