

**Outline of the Messages  
for the New Zealand National Conference  
April 7-9, 2023**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
PURSUING CHRIST FOR THE FULLEST EXPERIENCE  
AND ENJOYMENT OF CHRIST**

Message One

**Gaining Christ—the Goal of the Believers' Pursuit of Christ**

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:4-14

- I. In Philippians 3:3-16 Christ is presented as the goal of the believers' pursuit:**
- A. For Christ to be our goal means that He is the highest enjoyment.
  - B. Our goal is the all-inclusive Christ as the prize to be awarded to us; when we reach the goal, the goal will immediately become the prize—v. 14.
  - C. Paul's pursuit was toward one goal, one aim—Christ; he took Christ as his goal, pursuing to obtain the prize to which God in Christ Jesus had called him upward—vv. 12-14
  - D. Since our goal is to gain Christ, we should forsake all other things and pursue nothing but Christ—vv. 7-8.
- II. On account of (or because of) the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Paul counted all things to be loss—v. 8a:**
- A. Paul placed great value on the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; this is indicated by the words *my Lord*, which convey his intimate, tender feelings concerning Christ.
  - B. Paul's eyes were opened to see the excellency of the wonderful, all-inclusive Christ; on account of this excellency, he counted as loss all things, whether they related to religious gain or natural gain.
  - C. In verse 8 *all things* indicates that Paul dropped not only religious things but all things on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; thus, to Paul, the loss of all things was the loss of everything.
  - D. The more we have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, the more we will count as loss everything religious and natural—vv. 4-8a.
- III. On account of Christ, Paul suffered the loss of all things and counted them as refuse in order to gain Christ—vv. 7, 8b:**
- A. *All things* in verse 8 includes the things of religion, philosophy, and culture; Paul suffered the loss of all these things because they were substitutes for Christ, hooks used by Satan to keep people from Christ and the experience of Christ.
  - B. We gain Christ by suffering the loss of all things that were once a gain for us and by counting them as refuse—vv. 4, 8:
    - 1. The Greek word for *gain* in verse 8 means “to secure, to obtain, to lay hold of.”
    - 2. Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead (Col. 2:9) and the reality of the shadows of all positive things (vv. 16-17).

3. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches—Eph. 3:8.
4. Like Paul, we should not only count all things as loss on account of Christ (Phil. 3:7) but also suffer the loss of all things and count all things as refuse (v. 8).
5. The more we suffer the loss of all things and count them as refuse on account of Christ, the more we will gain Christ for our experience and enjoyment—vv. 7-8.

Message Two

**Being Found in Christ,  
Having the Righteousness of God through the Faith of Christ**

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:3, 7-9; 1:20

**I. Paul's earnest desire was to be found in Christ—Phil. 3:9:**

- A. At his conversion, Paul became “a man in Christ”—2 Cor. 12:2.
- B. Deep within Paul was the aspiration to be found in Christ; Paul aspired to have his whole being immersed in and saturated with Christ so that all who observed him would find him fully in Christ—Phil. 3:9.
- C. To be found in Christ means that Christ is our unique expression; only when we are found in Christ will Christ be expressed and magnified—3:9; 1:20.
- D. Paul wanted to be found in Christ in the condition of the righteousness of God, taking Christ as his subjective, lived-out righteousness—3:9.

**II. The necessary condition of being found in Christ is not having our own righteousness but the righteousness of God through the faith of Christ—v. 9:**

- A. Paul did not want to have his own righteousness but to have the righteousness which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith—v. 9.
- B. Not having his own righteousness but having the righteousness which is out of God was the condition for Paul to be found in Christ—v. 9; cf. Job 1:1, 8; 2:3; 42:5:
  - 1. Paul wanted to live not in his own righteousness but in the righteousness of God and to be found in such a transcendent condition, expressing God by living Christ—Phil. 3:9; 1:20.
  - 2. Paul's desire was to be observed as a person living in Christ and having Christ as his righteousness.
- C. There are two aspects of Christ being righteousness to the believers:
  - 1. The first aspect—to be the believers' righteousness for them to be justified before God objectively at the time of their repenting unto God and believing into Christ—Rom. 3:24-26; Acts 13:39; Gal. 3:24b, 27.
  - 2. The second aspect—to be 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 by God subjectively—Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 2:24a; James 2:24; Matt. 5:20; Rev. 19:8.
  - 3. These two aspects are typified by the garments in Luke 15:22 and Matthew 22:11-12.
- D. The subjective righteousness of God in Philippians 3:9 is actually God Himself becoming our daily living, a living which is right with God and man:
  - 1. Paul did not want to live in his own righteousness, the righteousness which comes from man's own effort to keep the law—vv. 6, 9.
  - 2. Our own righteousness is the expression of ourselves, the living out of ourselves.
  - 3. Paul desired to live in the righteousness of God and to be found in such a transcendent condition, expressing God by living Christ, not by keeping the law—cf. Matt. 5:20.
  - 4. The living which is right with both God and man must be God as our expression in our daily living, God Himself lived out through us.

5. If we are to be found in Christ, we must be in such a condition that God is expressed through us and becomes our daily living.
- E. The righteousness which is out of God and based on faith is the righteousness that is God Himself lived out of us to be our righteousness through faith in Christ; such righteousness is the expression of God, who lives in us—Phil. 3:9:
1. Literally, *faith in Christ* in verse 9 is *faith of Christ*:
    - a. This faith is Christ Himself, infused into us through our appreciation of Him, who becomes our faith—the faith in Him—Gal. 2:16, 20; Heb. 12:2.
    - b. The faith of Christ brings us into an organic union with Him—Phil. 3:9; John 15:4-5.
  2. The righteousness of God is based on faith because it is on the basis, or condition, of faith; faith is the basis, the condition, for us to receive and possess the righteousness that is out of God, the highest righteousness, which is Christ—1 Cor. 1:30; Matt. 5:22; 2 Cor. 5:21.
  3. When we experientially have the supply of the Spirit through the word of life (Phil. 1:19; 2:15) issuing in the faith of Christ (3:9), we are infused with God Himself (Rom. 10:17); then the God who has been infused into us becomes our daily living, the living which Paul describes as the righteousness of God.
  4. We should aspire to be found in Christ under the condition of enjoying God's infusion so that we may live Him out through the supply of the Spirit, the word of life, and the righteousness of God through faith—Phil. 1:19-21a; 2:16.

## Message Three

### Knowing Christ and the Power of His Resurrection

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:10; John 11:25; 20:22; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 1:9

#### I. Paul aspired to know Christ—Phil. 3:10:

- A. To have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ in Philippians 3:8 is by revelation, but to know Him in verse 10 is by experience.
- B. Paul first received the revelation of Christ, then sought the experience of Christ—to know and enjoy Christ in an experiential way.
- C. *The one thing* in the book of Philippians is the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ—2:2; cf. 1:20-21; 2:5; 3:7-9; 4:12-13.
- D. To know Christ is not merely to have the knowledge concerning Him but to gain His very person—2 Cor. 2:10; cf. Col. 2:9, 16-17:
  1. To gain something requires the paying of a price; to gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches (Eph. 3:8) by paying a price.
  2. Christ has gained us, taken possession of us, that we might gain Him, take possession of Him—Phil. 3:12.
  3. The Christian life is a life of gaining Christ in His full ministry in His three divine and mystical stages—incarnation, inclusion, and intensification—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 1:4; 4:5; 5:6:
    - a. Even though Paul had experienced and gained Christ tremendously, he did not consider that he had experienced Him in full or gained Him to the uttermost; for this reason he was still advancing toward the goal—the gaining of Christ to the fullest extent—Phil. 3:12-14.
    - b. In order to gain Christ to the fullest extent, Paul not only forsook his experiences in Judaism but also would not linger in his past experiences of Christ and be limited by them; he forgot the past—v. 13.
    - c. Not to forget but to linger in our past experiences, however genuine they were, frustrates our further pursuing of Christ—v. 13; Heb. 6:1a.
    - d. Christ is unsearchably rich, and there is a vast territory of His riches to be possessed; Paul was stretching out to reach the farthest extent of this territory—Phil. 3:13.

#### II. Paul aspired to know the power of Christ's resurrection—v. 10:

- A. The power of Christ's resurrection is His resurrection life, which raised Him from the dead—Eph. 1:19-20.
- B. The Spirit is the reality of Christ's resurrection and its power—Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:6.
- C. The Spirit compounded with Christ's resurrection and its power (Phil. 1:19; Exo. 30:23-25) indwells our spirit (Rom. 8:10-11) to dispense Christ's resurrection and its power not only to our spirit and soul (vv. 6b, 10) but also to our mortal body (vv. 11, 13b; 2 Cor. 4:11).
- D. We should cooperate with the resurrecting Spirit to recognize that we have been resurrected with Christ (Col. 2:12; Eph. 2:6a) and to pursue the power of the resurrection of Christ:
  1. It is by this power of Christ's resurrection that we, the lovers of Christ, determine to take the cross by denying our self—Matt. 16:24; cf. S. S. 2:8-9.
  2. It is also by this power of resurrection that we, the lovers of Christ, are enabled to be conformed to His death, to be one with His cross—Phil. 3:10; cf. S. S. 2:14-15.

3. In order to experience the life-giving Spirit as the reality of the flourishing riches of the resurrection of Christ, we have to discern our spirit from our soul—Heb. 4:12; cf. S. S. 2:14-15.

Message Four

**Knowing the Fellowship of Christ's Sufferings  
and Being Conformed to His Death**

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24

**I. Paul aspired to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings—Phil. 3:10:**

- A. With Christ, the sufferings and death came first, followed by the resurrection; with us, the power of His resurrection comes first, followed by the participation in His sufferings and conformity to His death—v. 10.
- B. We first receive the power of His resurrection; then by this power we are enabled to participate in His sufferings and live a crucified life in conformity to His death.
- C. Christ's sufferings are of two categories: those for accomplishing redemption, which were completed by Christ Himself, and those for producing and building the church, which need to be filled up by the apostles and the believers—Col. 1:24:
  - 1. We cannot participate in Christ's sufferings for redemption, but we must take part in the sufferings of Christ for the producing and building up of the Body—cf. Rev. 1:9; 2 Tim. 2:10; 2 Cor. 1:5-6; 4:12; 6:8-11.
  - 2. Christ as the Lamb of God suffered for redemption (John 1:29); Christ as the grain of wheat suffered for reproducing and building (12:24):
    - a. The Lord, as a grain of wheat that fell into the ground, lost His soul-life through death that He might release His eternal life in resurrection to the many grains—10:10-11.
    - b. The one grain did not complete all the sufferings that are needed for the building up of the Body; as the many grains, we must suffer in the same way the one grain suffered—12:24-26:
      - (1) As the many grains, we also must lose our soul-life through death that we may enjoy eternal life in resurrection—v. 25.
      - (2) This is to follow Him that we may serve Him and walk with Him on this way, the way of losing our soul-life and living in His resurrection—v. 26.
      - (3) The way for the church to come into being and to increase is not by human glory; it is by the death of the cross—vv. 20-24.

**II. In Philippians 3:10 Paul spoke of “being conformed to His death”; this expression indicates that Paul desired to take Christ's death as the mold of his life:**

- A. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ, counting all things as loss, gaining Christ, being found in Him, knowing Him, knowing the power of His resurrection, and knowing the fellowship of His sufferings all issue in one thing—being conformed to Christ's death—vv. 7-10.
- B. Being conformed to Christ's death is the base of the experience of Christ—1:20-21a; 3:9-10.
- C. The mold of Christ's death refers to the continual putting to death of His natural, human life that He might live by the life of God—John 6:57a:
  - 1. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He lived a crucified life; by living a crucified life He was alive to God and lived Him.

2. He always put His human life to death so that the divine life within Him could flow out—10:10b-11, 17.
  3. As He was living, He was also dying—dying to the old creation in order to live a life in the new creation; this is the meaning of “His death” in Philippians 3:10.
- D. Christ’s death is a mold to which we are conformed in much the same way that dough is put into a cake mold and conformed to it:
1. God has put us into the mold of Christ’s death, and day by day God is molding us to conform us to this death—Rom. 6:3-4.
  2. Our life should be conformed to such a mold—dying to our human life in order to live the divine life—Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 4:10-11.
  3. If we put to death our natural life, we shall have the consciousness that we have another life, the divine life, within us; this life will be released, and then in our experience we shall be conformed to Christ’s death—John 10:10b; 1 John 5:11-12.
  4. In the mold of Christ’s death the natural man is killed, the old man is crucified, and the self is nullified—2 Cor. 4:16; Rom. 6:6; Matt. 16:24.
  5. If we allow our circumstances to press us into this mold, our daily life will be molded into the form of Christ’s death—Rom. 8:28-29.
  6. We are conformed to the mold of Christ’s death by the power of Christ’s resurrection—Phil. 3:10; John 11:25; Eph. 1:19-20; S. S. 2:8-13.
- E. As we are conformed to Christ’s death, we experience His all-accomplishing death:
1. By being conformed to His death, we experience Christ in His death for the release, impartation, and multiplication of life—John 12:24-26; 2 Cor. 4:12.
  2. The only way to glorify God is to be conformed to Christ’s death; the more we are conformed to Christ’s death, the more we glorify the Father—John 12:28; 13:31.
  3. When we die the death of Christ and are conformed to His death, we shall be a magnet drawing others to Christ—12:32.
  4. The more we die with Christ, the more we save our soul—v. 25.
  5. If we are willing to be conformed to Christ’s death, we shall overcome the world and defeat Satan—v. 31; Heb. 2:14.



Message Five

**Attaining to the Out-resurrection**

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:10-14

- I. The result of being conformed to Christ's death is that we may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead—Phil. 3:11.**
- II. To attain to the out-resurrection is to arrive at the out-resurrection; this requires us to triumphantly run the race for the prize—1 Cor. 9:24-26; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; Heb. 12:1-2.**
- III. The out-resurrection is the outstanding resurrection, the extra-resurrection, which will be a prize to the overcoming saints—Rev. 20:4, 6:**
  - A. All believers who are dead in Christ will participate in the resurrection from the dead at the Lord's coming back—1 Thes. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:52.
  - B. The Lord's overcomers will enjoy an extra, outstanding portion of that resurrection, a resurrection in which they will receive the reward of the kingdom; this is what the apostle Paul sought after—Heb. 11:35, 26.
  - C. The out-resurrection should be the goal and destination of our Christian life—Phil. 3:11-15a.
- IV. To arrive at the out-resurrection indicates that our entire being is gradually and continually resurrected—1 Thes. 5:23:**
  - A. God first resurrected our deadened spirit; He proceeds to resurrect our soul and our mortal body until our whole being—spirit, soul, and body—is fully resurrected out of our old being by His life and with His life—Eph. 2:5-6; Rom. 8:6, 11.
  - B. This is a process in life through which we must pass and a race that we must run until we arrive at the out-resurrection as the prize—Phil. 3:11-14
  - C. If we are conformed to Christ's death, every part of our being will be gradually resurrected; thus, the Christian life is a process of resurrection.
  - D. We can reach this goal only by being conformed to the death of Christ by living a crucified life—v. 11; Gal. 2:20.
  - E. In the death of Christ we are processed from the old creation to the new—Phil. 3:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:17.
- V. The out-resurrection is a resurrection out of the old creation into the new creation—Gal. 6:15; 2 Cor. 5:17:**
  - A. To be in the out-resurrection means to leave everything of the old creation and to be brought into God.
  - B. In the out-resurrection there is no element of the old creation; instead, everything is full of the divine element—Rev. 21:5a.
- VI. For Paul to live was Christ as the out-resurrection—Phil. 1:21a; 3:11:**
  - A. The out-resurrection is actually the dear, precious, excellent person of Christ, the One who, through crucifixion and resurrection, has passed out of the old creation and has entered into God—John 14:3, 20; Heb. 6:19-20.
  - B. The Christ whom we should live is Himself the out-resurrection—Phil. 1:21a; 3:11; John 11:25.

**VII. In Philippians 3:12 Paul had already obtained the believers' common salvation by the believers' common faith, but he had not obtained the extra portion of resurrection:**

- A. To obtain that portion he had to pursue, to run, and to finish the course triumphantly—2 Tim. 4:7-8.
- B. The Greek word for *pursue* in Philippians 3:12 is the same word as for *persecute*; this word also means *to press forward, to follow after*:
  - 1. In such a way Paul ran the race to obtain the prize and reach maturity.
  - 2. Before he was saved, he persecuted Christ; after he was saved, he pursued Christ to such an extent that he persecuted Christ, but in a positive way.

**VIII. We need to be conformed to Christ's death so that by any means we may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead; this is the only way for the Lord to go on in His recovery, the only way for the Lord to build up His church, the only way to prepare the bride, and the only way to bring the Lord back—Phil. 3:10-11; Matt. 16:18; Rev. 19:7-9a; 22:14, 20.**