

LESSON 6: PHILIPPIANS 2:12-3:11

Imitating Jesus (cont'd)

1. What is the Christian's worthy response to the example of Christ? "Always obey" (v. 12). Obey who, what, and when? Whose obedience is the example for you to follow (v. 8)? Can you be obedient as far as the Son was obedient? Is there any lesser standard? "Continue to work" (v. 12). Who is responsible for your personal spiritual growth? As an obedient Christian, are you continually translating into action the principles of the gospel that you have believed? How? "With fear and trembling" (v. 12). What does the fear of God mean? Is this the fear of a lost sinner before the holy God, or the fear of the true child before the most loving of Fathers?
2. "Do everything" (v. 14). How total is the work of God (v. 13), and how total is your work (v. 14)? What kind of obedience is being talked about in these verses? You are commanded to do "all things," but is there any one thing that you must do first? Rather than a specific course of action, what are you called to? (See John 6:28; Matthew 6:33.)
3. What then is the basis of Christian ethics? Is it a list of do's and don'ts, or a call to be what you are in Christ (v. 15)? What are you to be? As a child of God, what three kinds of characteristics are you to exhibit?
4. How are you to discharge your responsibilities as a child of God (v. 15)? How can you "shine as a star" (v. 15)? What is the "word of life" which as a shining star you are to hold out (v. 16)? How are you not only to hold onto, but also to hold out the word of life?
5. How is the intrinsic life of the believer measured (v. 17)? Is your faith prompting you to sacrifice your life in obedience, holiness, and witness as your priestly service to God?
6. How has all of this been playing out in the lives of Timothy and Epaphroditus (vv. 19-30)? Are their lives worthy of the Gospel, and in what ways?

That Which Marks Us As God's People

1. Can you see verse 3:1 as a command? Why should you rejoice in the Lord? How does this joy this safeguard us from the world – from everyone and everything that the world constantly throws at us?

2. How sure is Paul that he is right (v. 2a, 4a) and that his opponents are wrong? How sure is he? Would you call your opponents “dogs”? Should they be called that? And... who are these “dogs”?

3. Who are the covenant, the circumcised, people of God? What are the characteristics of these people (v. 3)? What does it mean to you to “worship by the Spirit of God”? What does it mean to you to “glory in Christ Jesus”? What does it mean to you to “put no confidence in the flesh”?

4. What had been to Paul's profit (vv. 4b-6)? How much is this a description of one who lacks any relationship with Jesus Christ? How much loss is found here? Can this be a universal definition?

5. Paul “glories in Christ Jesus” and “the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord” is everything to him (v. 8). What does it mean to you to know Christ? Is this a static situation that came full and mature when you accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, or is there more? (See John 16:13.)

6. What does it mean to you to be “found in him,” and in nothing more (v. 9)? For Paul, Jesus Christ is such an attractive dwelling that he cannot bear to be away from home. Do you wish to be “found in him in the same way? Do you wish that whoever looks on you will see Christ?”

7. What does it mean to you to have a “righteousness that comes from God and is by faith” (v. 9)? Where does the righteousness that meets the requirements of God come from? How else can you stand under divine scrutiny and be right with God?

8. What does it mean to you “to be like” Christ (v. 10)? If you have been given the gift of God's righteousness, which implies consequent right living on your part, what should that salvation elicit from you (v. 10)? If you are satisfied with him for your salvation, is it possible for you to rest until you are “like” him?