

“Attaining to the Resurrection”
Philippians 3:10-11
(Preached at Trinity, March 26, 2017)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. The context of **Chapter 3** finds as its context Paul refuting the heresy of the Judaizers. They were presenting a perverted form of the Gospel insisting that Gentiles coming to Christ must first be circumcised. They were proud of the external ritualism of Judaism.
2. In **Verses 4-6** Paul uses his personal testimony to refute the false claims of the Judaizers. The Judaizers circumcised to declare themselves the people of God and connect them to the ancient promises of Israel.
Paul contrasts his life with theirs. If anyone had the right to boast in their heritage it was Paul. He called himself, “A Hebrew of Hebrews.”
3. While they might boast in the deeds of the flesh Paul’s only boast was in knowing Christ.
Philippians 3:8 NAU - "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,"
4. Paul’s boast of righteousness was only in the righteousness of Christ. This is the nature of Christian conversion.
Philippians 3:9 NAU - "and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith"
5. A man is made right before God only by the merits of Christ.
Paul’s only boast was in Christ:
Philippians 3:10 NAU - "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death"
 - A. Paul’s greatest treasure was his relationship with Christ—to be found in Christ, to know Him, to share in His sufferings.
 - B. Paul knew that the resurrection validated the salvific work of Christ. It declared that God accepted His death on the cross as a substitute for His people. In this way Paul glories in his knowledge and the power of the resurrection.
6. There is another way we must glory in the power of the resurrection. The New Testament consistently teaches that saving faith is never void of the outward expression of righteousness in the believer. We aren’t saved by our righteousness but the Christian life is characterized by righteousness.
James 2:14-17 NAU - "What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself."

7. In **Verse 9** Paul speaks of his confidence in the righteousness not his own. His acceptance before God was based upon the righteousness of Christ.
Paul isn't saying, however, that his life was void of righteousness. Paul gloried in his relationship with Christ—that I may know Him.
But Paul's life was not void of practical righteousness. He knew he had no merit based on his righteousness, but this doesn't mean he did not possess personal righteousness.
8. Christians enjoy the blessings of both justification and sanctification.
- I. Those who know Christ are intimately united to Him. They become partakers of His death and resurrection. Those who are in Christ are partakers of His resurrection power.
Philippians 3:10 NAU - "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection"
- A. Our thoughts immediately run to the future – to the end when we shall be raised in glory.
1. Paul certainly doesn't dismiss this.
Philippians 3:8-9 NAU - "that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and may be found in Him"
Philippians 3:11 NAU - "in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."
 2. Paul's greatest joy was the surpassing value of knowing Christ. And he was overjoyed at the prospect of the final resurrection when he would see Christ face-to-face.
- B. But Paul's greater focus here on the fullness of our life leading up to the end.
1. What affect does the work of Christ have upon your life now?
 2. This is at the heart of Paul's previous statements.
Philippians 1:27 NAU - "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"
Philippians 2:12 NAU - "work out your salvation with fear and trembling;"
- C. The New Testament describes mighty power working in us that will strengthen us and preserve us until the end.
1. Those who are saved are those who endure until the end.
1 Corinthians 1:7-8 NAU - "awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."
Hebrews 3:13-14 NAU - "But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,"
 2. This is what Paul means by "attaining to the resurrection."
Our English understanding of the word "attain" means to "achieve." The Greek word carries more of the sense of "arriving." He isn't talking about some work to be performed in order to attain to the resurrection. He is merely talking about the resurrection power at work in him that will keep him until the end. This is the power of holiness.

3. We can clearly see here the “already/not yet” essence of our salvation. On one hand, we have already been raised with Christ and we are already seated with Him in the heavenlies. On the other hand, we still await our glorious resurrection at the end of the age.
- D. There are two different words used for resurrection in **Verses 10-11**
1. In **Verse 10** Paul uses the usual word for resurrection - ἀνάστασις
 2. In **Verse 11** Paul uses another word that’s found only here. He uses the word ἐξανάστασις which means “to rise again.” We can see Paul’s emphasis here. We “have” been raised with Christ but we look forward to being “raised again” at the end of the age.
 3. Every Christian must live in the reality of our present resurrection with Christ as we look forward to being raised at the end of the age.
Romans 6:4 NAU - "as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."
- II. Paul always gloried in the power of the resurrection continuously at work in him.
- A. We can read about it in Ephesians 2
- Ephesians 2:4-6 NAU** - "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,"
1. “But God” – in spite of our terrible wretched sin, God had mercy on us.
 2. Our salvation is nothing short of miraculous. It is no less miraculous than seeing a man raised from the dead. What could produce such a change? God has taken walking corpses and given us life.
 3. Notice the connection with Christ.
made us alive together with Christ
and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus
 4. This is Paul’s point here in **Philippians 2**
Philippians 3:10 NAU - "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death"
 5. The word for “power” is δύναμις. We get our English word dynamite from this word. It refers to miraculous power, mighty power. It is the power that destroys sin and creates holiness within the heart.
- B. This resurrection power has transformed us – we have been raised from sin and death to life and holiness
1. God has raised us from our spiritual death by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.
 - a. We marvel at Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. We marvel that Lazarus had already begun to decay.
John 11:39 NAU - "Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been *dead* four days.""
The KJV puts it well – “he stinketh.”

- b. We were spiritually dead. There was a stench in us that rose up to the nostrils of God; an abominable smell.
But God raised us from the dead. Paul stresses this in **Chapter 2 Ephesians 2:1 NAU** - "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins"
3. This power is at work in us. We are presently enjoying the power of the resurrection. We have been raised with Christ.
Romans 6:4 NAU - "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."
Colossians 2:12-13 NAU - "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,"
- C. Being raised with Christ has a wonderful effect upon our lives
1. The Christian life is a testimony to God's mighty power in us
1 Thessalonians 1:5 NAU - "for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction"
Ephesians 1:19-20 NAU - "*These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*"
2. We are living by the power of the Holy Spirit in us – the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.
Ephesians 2:5-6 NAU - "even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus"
3. We are seated with Christ in the heavenly places. We have been raised above this present world as we await our final resurrection from it.

Conclusion:

1. Salvation is far more than simply calling ourselves a Christian. It is far more than merely joining a church. It is far more than a person deciding to clean up his life and become a moral person.
No! It is a supernatural change. It is almighty power working in us.
Philippians 2:13 NAU - "for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure."
Philippians 1:6 NAU - "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."
2. It is nothing short of a miracle. The definition of a miracle is something that transcends the natural; something that is contrary to the natural course. It is God's working by direct agency without the use of second causes or through the use of means.
Salvation surely falls into this category. Although God uses the preaching of the Gospel in our salvation our regeneration is by His work alone.
3. But the same power that saved us is the same power that is working in us to live the Christian life. Paul prayed that the Ephesian Christians might understand this power in them—and in us.
Ephesians 1:18-20 NAU - "*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,* ¹⁹ *and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might* ²⁰ *which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*"
4. Our salvation is not simply about avoiding hell on the Day of Judgment. It is a present reality. It is a mighty working of God's power in us today!
He is working in you both to work and to do of His good pleasure. You are a partaker of the life of Christ.
5. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us.
Romans 6:3-5 NAU - "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection"