

Philippians 3:10-11

Outline for Congregation

(scripture reading is 3:1-16)

“that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” (Phil 3:10-11)

Attaining the Resurrection

- The hope of the resurrection from the dead is the goal that should define the life of the follower of Christ

Knowing God

- Paul (the writer of Philippians) hopes in the resurrection because there he will know God more fully than he can in his life
- Paul was against Christianity until he met the risen Christ (Acts 9)
- We may struggle to know God (or to even understand what it means to know God – John 20:29-31) but that priority is the mark of mature Christian thinking (Philippians 3:15)

Sharing in His Sufferings

- Suffering is not good, but if our priority is to know Christ then suffering helps deepen our bond with him
- Paul has gained the mind of Christ and wants us to do the same by following his path (Philippians 2:6-11)
- The resurrection has “power” because the future hope becomes a present reality as we live by faith

Questions for reflection:

1. If you are not a Christian, what do you find appealing in Christianity (what things, if any, draw you)? If you are a Christian, what first drew you to Christianity, or what is it that you like that keeps you committed to the Christian faith?
2. If you *really* want to know Christ, how could that change your perspective when you experience difficulties and sufferings?
3. What is most difficult about the thought of “knowing God”? How does a person experience a relationship with Christ?
4. What is the “power of the resurrection” Paul writes about in Philippians 3:10? Is it something you can have?
5. Paul writes “if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those who also have fallen asleep [ie died] in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.” (1 Corinthians 15:17-19) What would Christianity be like if it didn’t include the message that Jesus rose from the dead? What difference would it make for the average Christian if they do not have any real hope that they will be raised from the dead?