

Joy in Sanctification  
Philippians 3:12-16

Intro: Last week, we started chapter 3 and saw how Paul found Joy in Salvation - How? (not dependent on him - Jesus did all the work) - Big sigh of relief.

- That is of great comfort to me - I mess up a lot (thoughts, actions, words)
- Can't earn right standing before God (righteousness) or salvation
- Last week - speech, movies, shows - Glad you're here and that you didn't cast me out as a heretic - sets the stage for today - Far too many Christians put emphasis on our speech... in the wrong place (salvation vs. response) - today, Paul is going to tell us why we should change these things
- Sanctification - process by which we are changed to become more and more like Christ
  - o Hard work, dedication - comes from a response to what Jesus has already done for us
  - o Process - progressive sanctification

Vs. 12-13a - Truth: none of us will ever be perfect in this life (Paul is example)

- Some traditions teach you can become perfect (Christian should reach a point where he does not willfully sin against God) - not true - Paul
- Wrote nearly ½ of NT books, 28% of words in NT
- Met Jesus, 3 missionary journeys, planted numerous churches - not perfect
- Not satisfied though - satisfied in Christ, but not w/ spiritual attainments

Are you satisfied with your spiritual progress? Obvious answer: "no"

- Didn't want to be embarrassed, what I want to hear (spouse)
- Perhaps you do have a desire, but does it stop there at words?

You are here this morning - 1 hr per week won't cut it

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- This is why people leave a church for not feeling 'fed'
- What are you doing outside of church? GC, Bible reading, prayer, service...

Press on: intense endeavor - hunter eagerly pursuing prey (Jesse)

- Hard work & commitment

Careful - Paul is referring to knowing Christ (personal, time & proximity)

- Knowing about is different - impersonal (read book)
- Knowing is more than head knowledge (gnosticism)
- Transformative - More I know Melissa, more I can love her
- Mt. 1:25 Joseph did not know Mary (intimate)

Paul recognized he wasn't perfect, but he eagerly pursued it. Why?

- Out of response to Jesus
- The Gospel changes us - Who we are and what we do (hesitant with unchanged)

Vs. 13b-14 - One thing - completely focused on one thing- growing in Christ

- Everything Paul did revolved around that one thing
- Elite athletes: laser focused
  - o Simone Biles (best gymnast) - never dated, no prom - 1 thing
- Not saying we should become monks - Jn 17 - Jesus says we are sent here
  - o Point to Jesus
- Get too busy with other stuff - spiritual progress takes back burner
  - o Sports, family, work, church - God can use these
- DL Moody (19<sup>th</sup> century evangelist) - before Chicago fire in 1871
  - o Sunday School promotion, YMCA, evangelistic meetings & other

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- After - exclusively evangelism

Laser focused - like Paul - not concentrating on the past

- Forgetting does not mean failing to remember (who could do that?)
- No longer being influenced by or affected by
  - Paul persecuted Christians