

# **S**ession 11: Be an Ambassador for Christ!

## **“A Representative of Christ Jesus”**

### **Philippians 3:12-14...Press On Towards the Goal**

*“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”*

### **We haven’t arrived yet!**

*1John 1:8-10, “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*

**Paul knew he wasn't there yet. He knew he was far from perfect. But he kept pressing on, kept persevering in the Christian walk.**

**He uses the descriptive language of someone striving forward, pressing on, and reaching out.**

Picture a hiker trying to make it to the peak of a mountain; a runner trying to make it to the end of a marathon; a swimmer trying to cross the English Channel or, an Olympic cyclist trying to win the race.

**Remember...There is no greater defeat than to dwell on what you've already passed...how many miles you've already gone, how many steps you've already taken.**

Paul says that he was forgetting what lay behind and kept reaching forward.

**This is how to avoid a trap in our Christianity. The past doesn't matter - it's already passed.**

Are you growing in Christ now? Are you ministering now? Are you praying now? What matters is where you're at in the Lord today.

**Don't rest on the growth you experienced in the '90's.**

**Ask yourself, "How much am I growing now?"**

**Remember, Philippians 1:6 ... "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."**

**God wants you to keep growing, to keep serving Him.**

**Philippians 3:15-16, "All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained."**

**Having the Right Attitude**

**The people who are in the place where they know they are growing but haven't arrived should have the attitude of pressing on to the next step; to keep growing in God.**

**The Lord will not let us stagnate in our spiritual life without prompting.**

- When Adam fell into sin, the Lord entered the garden and asked him, Gen. 3:9 ... "Where are you?"
- When Elijah ran away in fear and was hiding out in a cave, the Lord came to him and said, 1Kgs. 19:9 ... "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
- Jesus asked His disciples, Luke 6:46 "...why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"

**Does the Lord see our attitudes of being content where we are and not growing in our spiritual maturity...and prompt us?**

**That's not okay with Him, and He will challenge us** - "Where are you? What are you doing here? Why do you call Me 'Lord' if you won't do what I say?"

**If the Holy Spirit is living in us, wouldn't we want to satisfy the desires of his heart...not ours?**

**"Be careful of the things you say; Keep them soft and sweet. For you never know from day to day which ones you will have to eat."**

*Also...watch what you think and what you do. Make sure they line up with what is approved by the Holy Spirit...for He lives in you if you are one of God's children.*

**Are our actions lining up with our credentials and resume?**

**Is our appetite longing for the desires of this world...or do we hunger and thirst after righteousness?**

## **ARE WE STRETCHING TOWARD THE MARK OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD?**

**The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly Examples of a Christ-Follower**

**Philippians 3:17-19**, "Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. <sup>18</sup> For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup> Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things."

**It is important that we imitate the faith of people who are like Jesus.**

**Hebrews 13:7**, "Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith."

- **Good apples and Bad Apples...There are those who claim to be walking with Jesus, but in reality are sold out to their fleshly desires.**

- Today, we see these people in the form of those who are selling "cheap grace." Those who say, "Since I'm saved by grace, I can do what I want. All things are lawful for me." But the true Christian does not abuse God's forgiveness and grace in this way.

**How can you know if you're deceiving yourself? How can you make sure that you're not an enemy of the cross of Christ?**

**We need to ask ourselves some questions! It is what we are to do when we are getting ready to take communion.**

**You are "to examine yourselves" and take heed as to cleansing your body, soul, and spirit before you partake.**

**1 Corinthians 11:27-32**, "So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. <sup>29</sup> For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. <sup>30</sup> That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. <sup>31</sup> But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. <sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world"

**Do you live your life to serve your appetites for money, power, or sex?**

**Do you follow after whatever you desire, no matter whether it's right or wrong?**

**What do you glory in and what do you brag about regarding the Christian life? Is it that even though you're a sinner, Christ loves you and forgave you? Where is your focus? Are you consumed with the things of this world...the cares and desires of this life?**

*God doesn't want you to waste your precious life obsessing about the matters and pleasures of this life - it's so temporary. Is money your focus? Is it sports? Is it success? If your mind is set on this earth and its treasures, you're in a bad place as a Christian...because this isn't supposed to be your permanent residence.*

This world is not our home. We are aliens, strangers, pilgrims, and sojourners in it. We are people passing through. People who are traveling don't pack heavy. They don't get weighed down. They only bring what they need, and they accomplish their purpose.

**Peter said**, “*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe {them,} glorify God in the day of visitation,” 1Pet. 2:11-12.*

We are too weighed down and too over-burdened. Many of us have forgotten our purpose for being here. It is to grow in Christ and lead people to Him. It is not to find fame and fortune.

### **It is the enemies of the cross who have their minds set on earthly things.**

The writer of Hebrews lists great people that had great faith in God, and then says that they “...confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own” Hebrews 11:13-14.

**We must remember that we are not of this earth. This world is not our home. We are aliens, strangers, pilgrims, and sojourners in it. We are people passing through to get to our permanent residence...heaven with the King!**

**Philippians 3:20-21**, “*But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*”

## **Heavenly Citizenship**

**Our citizenship is in heaven, not here.**

*Col. 1:13, “For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.”*

**Jesus Christ is coming back to this earth to take us to heaven.** At the airport when you are awaiting flight to get you home, you don't set up a tent for the long-term...the airport is simply a stop-over, a place you are temporarily in, but you're headed home.

**Most of us need this new perspective in relation to this earth.**

Jesus Christ is coming soon, to bring us home.

Are you watching and waiting?