



SERMON TAKE HOME- Philippians 3:1-16-Maturity in Christ

One of the greatest evidences of our conversion is desire towards Jesus Christ-A desire to know Him, to grow in intimacy with Him, and to be conformed to His image. When our hearts were made new through regeneration, they brought new desires/affections. A continual indifference towards intimacy with Jesus or conformity to Christ-likeness should raise a red flag of concern regarding our assurance of salvation.

It is God's will that we be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29 *For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son*). We are not to remain spiritual babes, but to grow to mature followers of Christ. (1 Peter 2:2, Eph 4:13, Heb 5:14)

Philippians 3v15 says *Let those of us who are **mature** think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.* In this chapter there are 5 characteristics of mature believers.

1. V1-11 A deep and growing understanding of who you are in Christ. Not trusting in your own works, but in the finished work of Christ.
 - Not trusting in feelings/emotions but rather believing what the Word of God says
 - The mature believer preaches the gospel to themselves daily
2. V12A *Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect*-A humble recognition of their imperfections.
 - Note this-It is merely a humble recognition of their imperfections but how they deal with their imperfections.
 - i. Note how Paul's imperfections do not derail him or send him off course.
 - ii. Paul doesn't see his imperfections and go to despair and become fixated on his sin. Why? He knows he is right with God in Christ (v3-11).
3. V12B *I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own*-
 - Some may say "I don't go to despair when I see my sin because I am resting in the finished work of Christ, so I must be mature". Be careful here, and make sure you resting in the finished work of Christ does not lead you to idleness or indifference regarding sin.
 - Paul acknowledged his imperfections, didn't despair but it lead to a "pressing on" to become more like Jesus, not an indifference towards sin. This is a sign of maturity. True resting in grace leads to intense pursuit of conformity to Christ (not to be accepted by God, but b/c you are accepted by God in Christ.)
4. V13 *Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind*
 - As we mentioned before, Paul does not go to despair as he realizes he is not perfected. He looks to Christ, and knows his sins forgiven. When you see sin in your life, repent and confess your sin believing 1 John 1:9. This is not to say that we are indifferent to sin, or that we use God's grace as means to continue in knowing sin (Rom 6:1).
 - In addition, we need to be careful that we are not living in the past regarding our spiritual victories. It is good to testify of God's working in our past, to the degree that it produces a humble appreciation for His grace, but not to the degree that we are living in the past to avoid the reality of the present.
5. V13b-14 *straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*
 - The mature believer is focused on Jesus Christ (intimacy with Him and conformity to Him). He is the object of their desires and affections.
 - Meditate on 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
 - In all of your pursuits spiritually, your goal is be Christ. If you want to be a better husband/wife, then seek to be like Him and you will be. Do not take your eyes off of Jesus Christ!