

Labor Day Conference 2010

Subject: Christ, Christ, Christ

Message 4: Christ - the One We Pursue for the Prize

- I. For those who pursue Christ, the primary focus should be to gain the prize.
 - A. The pattern of our Savior, Jesus Christ - He endured the cross for the joy set before Him (Heb. 12:2).
"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."
 - B. The testimony of Peter - He charged the elders to shepherd the flock to receive the unfading crown of glory at the manifestation of the Chief Shepherd (I Pet. 5:1, 2, 4)
"The elders who are among you I exhort...Shepherd the flock...being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away."
 - C. The declaration of Paul - "I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward." (Phil. 3:14).
 - D. The assurance in John - "We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is." (I Jn. 3:2)
- II. The course of the pursuers who desire to gain the prize.
 - A. Knowing the power of His resurrection (3:10a).
"To know Him and the power of His resurrection" (RcV)
 - B. Having the fellowship of His sufferings (3:10b).
"and the fellowship of His sufferings" (RcV)
 - C. Being conformed to His death (3:10c).
"being conformed to His death" (RcV)
 - D. Desiring to attain to the out-resurrection from the dead (3:11).
"If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead." (RcV)
 - E. Pursuing, that they may lay hold of that for which they also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus (3:12).
"I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus." (RcV)
- III. The testimony of the ones who pursue to gain the prize.
 - A. Forgetting the things behind (3:13a).
"I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind" (RcV)
 1. Their victories and failures.
 2. Their strength and weakness.
 3. Their human talents and spiritual gifts.
 4. Their faithful labor and its effect.
 5. Their commitment in the previous stage.
 6. Their maturity in life and truth.
 7. Their ministries.
 8. Just as Christ did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped and emptied Himself, they are willing to lay aside everything they have possessed (even spiritually) to gain more Christ.
 - B. Stretching forward to the things before and pursuing toward the goal (3:13b-14)
"and stretching forward to the things which are before: I pursue toward the goal for the prize..."(RcV)
 1. Christ is our goal - The origin of our pursuing is Christ, the process of pursuing is Christ, and the destination of our pursuit is Christ.

2. As a group of runners, the Lord's word is a lamp to their feet and a light to their path, illuminating their goal (Pas: 119:105).
"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
3. Christ and the church are their vision and commitment.
4. Their commitment is not sacrificed for a specific Christian work, the number of their congregation, or their expansion; rather they are filled with the fruit of righteousness, which is through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God (Phil. 1:10).

IV. Those who are full-grown pursue toward the goal for the prize of God's high calling in Christ Jesus (3:14-15a).

"I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward...as many as are full-grown, have this mind;" (RcV)

A. They are heavenly citizens who eagerly await their Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (3:20).

"For our commonwealth (citizenship) exists in the heavens, from which also we eagerly await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (RcV)

B. They understand that He will transform their body of humiliation, conforming it to His glorious body (3:21).

"Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself." (RcV)