

***“Paul's Letter to the Philippians — ‘The Witness of the Apostle Paul —  
The Highest Calling of All’”***

**Review:**

- ***The radical implications of being “under [the] law”:***

***Phil. 3:8-9***

*8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things [but] loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them [but] dung, that I may win Christ,  
9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of [the] law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*

- ***These words “my own righteousness, which is of [the] law”, have such a critical role in Paul's teaching here and we must take note of that before proceeding. Paul is here speaking directly to the heart of legalism.***

***Legal works are those done in accordance with a legal standard. That may be defined by the Mosaic Law or by another law. Even a so-called “Christian” law or “church” law, if the standard for our works, will give the same result — “my own righteousness”. That kind of work (even if it is called “good”) is set in stark contrast here with that righteousness which is by faith and in accord with the workings of Almighty God under grace and its fullness.***

- ***When works are our focus, we are at great risk of producing works that are “dead”. But we are so often being reminded in our day that what is most important of all is our works! But what does Paul say?***
  - ***He boldly teaches that what we do not need are “dead works”! Well, it is clear from Paul's teaching in many places that those are of two kinds: works of law devoid of faith, simply good works done fully independent of any divine work and empowering.***
    - ***So some works, even some “good” works, are in fact “dead”! That may seem to be a radical idea. But is it? We really MUST carefully consider this as Paul so strongly and powerfully teaches in Romans 7:***

**Rom. 7:8** But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence [*or. strong desire*]. For without the law sin [was] dead.

- ***Here we see why many seemingly good works are in reality vain and empty. It is because legal systems of “works righteousness” always encourage the flesh with inevitable lawlessness and that this always short-circuits the working of God’s abundant grace in our hearts.***
- ***So where then do we stand? When we have cast beside all things “legal” and the righteousness that comes from this, what do we have left?***
- ***Rewards for the Saints, Under Grace — Surely Guaranteed (1 Cor. 3 & 4):***
  - ***Rewards in the Grace Context are our theme here, and what will occur at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This is manifestly NOT the Great White Throne Judgment. The latter is for unbelievers, not for us. That should be very clear indeed.***

**1 Cor. 3:9-11**

**9** For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, [ye are] God's building.

**10** According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

**11** For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

...

**1 Cor. 3:15** *If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire*

...

**1 Cor. 4:5** Therefore judge nothing before the time [of the Judgment Seat], until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, **and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.**

- ***#1: Our works must all be based on the proper foundation - Christ alone.***
- ***#2: Then, the proper building techniques must be used always as Paul has taught - we MUST follow him [as he follows Christ]***

- **What a statement this is: “Every man shall have praise of God”: Every believer, that is, NOT UNBELIEVERS, of course. Works without law! Found [discovered] to be in Christ without anything else!**

**Without anything to be burned, is what he is saying. Nothing to be burned. Praise God!**

### **Our Scripture:**

**Phil. 3:11-17**

**11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.**

**12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.**

**13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but [this] one thing [I do], forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,**

**14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

**15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.**

**16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.**

**17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample [or pattern].**

### **Our Outline Today - Our Highest Calling in Christ Jesus**

- **Our Faithful Prerogative: The Resurrection [Out from Among] the Dead**
- **Our Faithful Practice: The Running of the Ultimate Race**
- **Our Faithful Prospect: The Winning of the Race, The Receiving of the Prize**
- **Our Faithful Privilege: The Mind Which is Above Every Mind, Embraced Fully**

#### **I. Our Faithful Prerogative: The Resurrection [Out from among] the Dead:**

**[READ ] Phil. 3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.**

- **What do these words refer to? The context is a great help, as always.**
  - **This is not the general resurrection of the “just” or a conditional physical resurrection**

- *This is not a special resurrection separate from the rest*
- *This resurrection is not a physical resurrection at all as such but a different quality of resurrection It is conditional and not unconditional as our physical resurrection and our Rapture is*
- *And, it is Paul's great desire!*

## **II. Our Faithful Practice: The Running of the Ultimate Race:**

### **[READ ] Phil. 3:12-14a**

*12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*

*13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but [this] one thing [I do], forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*

*14a I press toward the mark . . .*

- ***Note the race analogy. Our lives as believers are compared here as runners in a life-long race. Do we hear these words?***
  - ***The lack of certainty, all is tentative, EXCEPT one thing - the "apprehending by Christ Jesus". That was CERTAIN INDEED.***
  - ***The goal of the race and the "mind-set" needed for victory are all important as they always are in every sporting event.***
  - ***Don't look back or to the side, focus and much endurance will be required. Paul's words here "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before" are so relevant to this issue.***
    - ***Clearly the apostle here has no list of legal requirements in view. What is in view? Does the context tell us?***
      - ***"Let this mind . . ." is still the governing exhortation here, is it not? And the ultimate goal is "to be found in him . . ."***

- *Comment: With so much sovereignly accomplished for us it is only to be expected that there would be a great transformation in our lives as well. In fact, is it not purely to be expected therefore that everything in our lives would be focused singularly on the end point of this all, on the race's great finale? It is the Judgment Seat itself that is the next for us immediately after the meeting in the air.*

### **III. Our Faithful Prospect: The Winning of the Race, The Receiving of the Prize:**

**[READ ] Phil. 3:14b . . . the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

- *The goal is clear. It is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*
  - *So there will be winners and there will be losers. That is the simple fact that the apostle here makes clear.*
  - *The Judgment Seat is for this very purpose, to declare what works will be rewarded and what ones will be burned. The wood, had and stable will be gone forever. The gold, silver and precious stones will endure and be the basis for the appropriate "rewards".*
  - *But this specific "prize" or reward is what Paul looked so earnestly for and so deeply anticipated. This was for him very special indeed and his expectations were strong and continuing. He counted it a great and enduring privilege to assume for himself always the mind-set of our Lord Jesus Christ as we have been considering here for some time now:*

### **IV. Our Faithful Privilege: The Mind Which is Above Every Mind, Embraced Fully:**

**[READ ] Phil. 3:15-17**

**15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.**

**16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.**

**17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.**

- *This is "perfection" in an entirely different sense, as opposed to perdition. This is dispensationally distinctive. The next verses will*

*make this so clear. In the end it will come down to “imitating Paul” as you might have suspected. “Perfection” and “perdition” are opposites. We will look at the latter next time, Lord willing, for the chapter here ends with that focus. Literally, the contrast between the two is stark, between a fundamental reordering on the one hand, and an unraveling, disintegration or dissolution on the other.*

- *“followers” = “imitators”*
- *Mark them that are doing that and associate with them; for the many will surely lead one astray from the desired goal.*
  - *The influence for good or ill of friends and associates is a stark reality. Unequal yokes in marriage is an excellent example. Or failures in marriage that damage a persons walk with the Lord.*

#### **Conclusions & Application:**

- *So much depends on our “role-models”*
  - *Christ, the model for those with an earthly kingdom hope; Paul, for those with a heavenly hope*
- *The Twelve, the apostles of the coming earthly and millennial kingdom; Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles*
  - *Paul is not a member of the Twelve and does not have their inheritance himself (how do we know - Matt. 19:28)*
- *Paul was taught in and from heaven; the Twelve were taught on earth*
- *Again, all depends on our “model”. Who are you imitating or following?*
- *The Greatest Reward of All — To Be Found [Discovered to be uniquely] IN Christ Jesus:*
  - *Phil. 3:11: If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*
    - *So therefore It is all about this: Gaining Christ, Winning Him, being Found in Him, Knowing Him (with his resurrection power, fellowship, death), or, to put it rather differently, as he*

***does here, attaining to the "The [out] Resurrection the one [out from among] dead ones".***

- ***For many will have little left after the Judgment Seat of Christ has concluded. They were truly saved but did not live the renewed life much (or even any) at all. There was simply wood, hay, and stubble, as it were. So sad. They did not "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling". What awaits some though is "the resurrection of the dead" that Paul hoped for. That which was out of, apart from, all the rest. Praise God!***

***This indeed is the highest calling of all, to have that mind which is above every mind and to be found in him not having my own righteousness!***

***May all the rewards and blessings associated with the out-resurrection be enjoyed by all who hear these words today!***

***Col. 3:23-25***

23 And whatsoever ye do, do [it] heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.