

“...walk worthily...” from the Book of Philippians

Scripture Block: Pp 1:1-11

Theme: GOD’S EXPECTATION OF FRUITFUL SERVICE

Life verse: Pp 1:9-11

Today’s passage: Pp 1:6

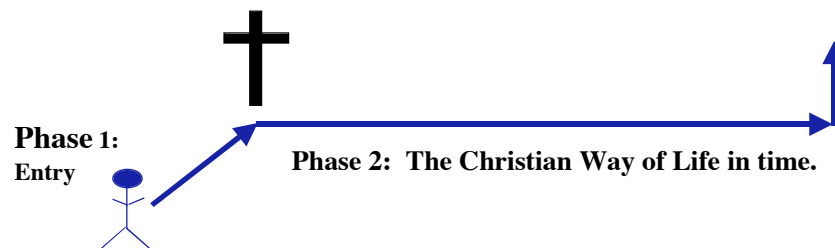
Notes

Application

By focusing on our lives, between the point at which we exercised faith in Christ and our yet future eternal home, Paul is trying to teach us several very important lessons about the Christian Way of Life (CWL). The first, is an understanding of sanctification.

1. For the purposes of understanding and discussion, we can break God’s plan of salvation into three components.

Phase 3: Eternity!



To connect with our passage, God began a good work at the point of entry into the family of God, and will finish what he has started as we spend eternity with him with a resurrection body like His. However the focus of this passage is on the CWL in time, i.e. the days the Lord has appointed for us to represent him on this earth.

2. Like a number of other truths, sanctification, as it relates to the CWL, has both a positional and experiential component.

- For example, when Paul calls the believer’s in Corinth “saints” in 1 Cr 1:2,30, he is referring to their position—the fact that they have been set apart, in Christ, for God’s purposes. They certainly were not yet set apart in their experience, as they were guilty of all kinds of sinful behavior.
- On the other hand, Heb 10:14 shows us both aspects of our sanctification: **“by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever, those who are being made holy.”** “Made perfect” refers to our position, while “being made holy” is a reference to experience.

3. There are two important points to understand about experiential sanctification, right from the outset:

- The goal of experiential sanctification is always the same → to be holy as God is holy (1Pt 1:15). In other words, God’s intent is unmistakably that our experience steadily move in the direction of conforming to our position!
- Second, positional truth is meant to act as an anchor—something to which we can always return. We are irreversibly related to our Lord and Savior, and even on days of discouragement and failure, we must learn to always rest in this truth. However, as mentioned above, the way we live out our position does matter. God intends, and is always working toward, a life experience that matches who we are in Christ.

4. Let’s make sure we are clear on the specific “target”, or better yet role model, for our sanctification. It is none other than the person of Jesus Christ.

For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (Rm 8:29)

This is the “good work” described in our passage—that God is at work conforming us to the image of his Son!

5. Now here is the key question for our study of vs. 6: “Who is the one performing and completing the work?” The context calls for the immediate answer: “God is!”

- This passage is meant to be both a deterrent from occupation with self, and an encouragement regarding God’s work on our behalf.
- As was true of “phase one” of our salvation (entry into the plan of God), God is both the architect and provider of the CWL. This makes it another facet of grace!

We will continue our discussion of experiential sanctification in our next study.