

“...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 1:11

Notes

Comments

We have been discussing the means by which we are to live the Christian Way of Life—a means that is a grace provision of God. We will continue to reinforce this essential topic for one more day. Let’s recap and then move on to a point of application.

There are two ways to attempt to live a life that is pleasing to God:

- 1) There is man’s way, which is to focus all one’s energies upon improving self—trying to conform to what a “Christian” is supposed to be. We might call this the “religious” approach.
- 2) Then there is God’s way, which is to recognize self as incurably corrupt! The only way to deal with such an influence is to set it aside—and this is precisely what God did at the cross when he crucified us (our old nature) with His Son (Rm 6:6).
- 3) The power of the old man was broken and now we are to walk in newness of life—the life of Christ to which the Holy Spirit ministers (Gal 2:20, Rm 8:4).
- 4) So where does that leave us? In a situation that requires our dependence upon the provision of God—the crucifixion of the old and the Spirit-enabled new (Rm 6:11), until we are one day liberated completely from the sin nature’s presence (Pp 3:21).

Application

One way to better understand the above is to realize there is both a “direct” and an “indirect” approach to living the CWL. Let’s make application via Jn 14:15,23.

“If you love me, you will obey what I command.” “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.”

1. After reading these verses, spoken by Jesus, what would the “direct” approach look like? We might make a listing of the commands of Jesus, catalogue his teaching and then do our best to be obedient. Failure would only lead to a redoubled effort in order to “force” obedience.

2. Now how about the “indirect” approach? Let’s apply what we have just learned about God’s provision to produce the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ.

- To begin, we would recognize that obedience to the commands of Jesus is descriptive of the new life in Christ. Any failure is to fall short of what God intends for his children.
- However, it is also to realize that we have not the ability within ourselves to force out obedience. In fact, there is a conflict warring inside each believer between the desires of self and the desires of the Spirit (Gal 5:17)
- The role of the believer, as always, is to walk by faith—faith in the provision of the cross to break the power of the sin nature and in the Spirit enabled new life to achieve what God desires, i.e. a loving relationship with our Savior whereby we obey what he commands. Even when our struggles with the sin nature cause us to doubt the truth of Rm 6:6, our calling is always the same—to labor to reach that point where we are resting in the truths of the Word of God.

This is going to take time, repetition and further development. We will have the opportunity to investigate this further when we reach Pp 2:12-16. In the meantime, use the summary truth of Pp 1:11 as a starting point to become thoroughly familiar with and meditate upon the truths of Rom 6-8.