

Summary

Pastor Paul explores Philippians 3:1-21, focusing on Paul's transformation from a religious zealot to a follower of Christ. The sermon emphasizes how Paul's righteousness shifted from law-based achievements to faith in Christ. Paul describes his former credentials as a Hebrew scholar and Pharisee, but now considers them worthless compared to knowing Christ. The pastor discusses the honor-shame culture of Paul's time and how Christ's crucifixion and resurrection completely flipped worldly values. The goal for Christians is resurrection in Christ, which requires pressing on despite failures and shame. The sermon challenges the congregation to see beyond surface appearances, like Magic Eye pictures, to understand God's true perspective on power, violence, and salvation.

Intro Prayer

Lord, we come before You today with open hearts and minds, ready to receive what You want to teach us through Your Word. Help us to set aside our preconceptions and be willing to see things from Your perspective, even when it challenges our comfortable ways of thinking. Give us the humility to receive correction and the courage to apply what we learn. Open our eyes to see the deeper truths You want to reveal to us in this time together. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

Share about a time when you discovered you were completely wrong about something you were confident about. How did it feel to realize your mistake, and what did you learn from that experience?

Key Verses

1. Philippians 3:7-9
2. Philippians 3:10-11
3. Philippians 3:12-14
4. Philippians 3:20-21
5. Revelation 5:5-6

Questions

1. Paul lists his impressive religious credentials in verses 4-6, then calls them 'rubbish' compared to knowing Christ. What 'credentials' or achievements do we sometimes rely on for our sense of worth or righteousness?
2. The pastor mentioned that Paul lived in an 'honor-shame' culture. How does understanding this cultural context change how we read about Christ's crucifixion and resurrection?
3. Paul says his righteousness comes from God through faith, not from following the law. How do

we sometimes fall into the trap of trying to earn our righteousness through our actions?

4. The sermon used the analogy of Magic Eye pictures to describe seeing spiritual truth. Can you think of a time when you suddenly 'saw' something in Scripture that you had missed before?
5. Paul talks about 'pressing on' toward the goal despite not having reached it yet. What does it look like practically to 'press on' when we fail or fall short?
6. The pastor emphasized that the New Testament mentions resurrection 300 times compared to crucifixion 35 times. Why do you think we as Christians tend to focus more on the cross than the resurrection?
7. Paul warns about 'enemies of the cross' who seek earthly power and violence. How can we as Christians avoid falling into this trap of seeking worldly power instead of following the 'slaughtered lamb'?
8. What does it mean practically to live as 'citizens of heaven' while still being responsible stewards of this earth and its people?

Life Application

This week, identify one area where you've been trying to earn righteousness through your own efforts rather than resting in God's grace. Practice 'pressing on' by choosing humility when you fail, asking trusted friends for honest feedback about blind spots in your life, and focusing on resurrection hope rather than dwelling on past mistakes.

Key Takeaways

1. Our righteousness comes from God through faith in Christ, not from our religious achievements or good works
2. Christ's crucifixion and resurrection completely flipped the world's understanding of honor, shame, and power
3. The Christian goal is resurrection in Christ, which requires pressing on despite failures and setbacks
4. True spiritual maturity involves seeing beyond surface appearances to understand God's perspective on reality
5. As citizens of heaven, we follow the way of the 'slaughtered lamb' rather than seeking earthly power and violence

Ending Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the example of Paul who was willing to count everything as loss for the sake of knowing Christ. Help us to have that same perspective, valuing our relationship with You above all earthly achievements and credentials. Give us the strength to press on toward the goal of resurrection in Christ, even when we stumble and fall. Help us to live as true citizens of heaven, following the way of the slaughtered lamb rather than the ways of this world. May we be lights in the darkness, showing others the upside-down kingdom values of Your love and grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.