

Joy in Standing Firm - Philippians 3:12-4:3 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

According to GolfChannel.com, the greatest game of golf ever played was in 1986. Jack Nicklaus, at age 46, became the oldest man to win the Masters Tournament by shooting 9 under par, a score of 65. Anyone reading this who really understands golf knows that's incredible. Let's put it this way: he played a golf game many wish they could play once in a lifetime. But, what's crazy is, a perfect game of golf is considered to be a 54. Let's put that into perspective: Jack Nicklaus would have had to have played even better than the greatest ever on at least 11 of the 18 holes in order to get that score. That's a tall order, and so far, has never happened in golf. Ever.

Our Christian walk is a lot like the great game of golf: we spend days, weeks, and years improving, only to realize that, at the end, we can never be perfect. Perfection seems so far away, and truth be told, it is. Paul, in our text this week in Philippians 3:12-4:3, gives us encouragement to strive toward perfection. Paul tells us that his goal is to "press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me His own." The goal of the Christian life, knowing that we are bought by Christ, adopted into the family of God, and made heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven, is to then become like our savior, Jesus.

This process, called 'Sanctification', is the journey from looking more like the devil to looking more like Christ. Paul tells us in Romans that 8 that all things work together for our good, because we have been foreknown by God, predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ, justified, and finally glorified. Becoming more like Jesus is the end goal, but that process involves us. The Holy Spirit gives us the power, and we participate by striving toward that goal. Paul tells us that those seeking after the upward call of Christ are "mature", and that is what we want to press toward: Christian maturity.

How do we get there? What steps can we take to strive toward this high calling? Paul tells us a few things:

- 1) Seek after and follow those who walk "according to the example you have in us. In other words, find those who are already striving, and follow them.
- 2) Avoid those who are self-centered, who are constantly seeking after earthly things.
- 3) Realize your citizenship is in Heaven, and long for and await our Savior who is from there.
- 4) Eagerly await the moment when our flesh is eliminated, and we have new, glorious bodies that are perfect.

Paul ends this whole section with one of the most beautiful statements he makes about the church. He calls her his "joy and crown" and tells them to stand firm. Paul loves this church passionately and deeply. At Genesis, your elders love you and want the best for you. Where we imitate Christ, follow us. Where we exemplify Christ in our lives, in our theology, and in our practice, follow us. You are our joy and crown, as much as the church in Philippi was Paul's. Let's work together toward holiness, toward passionate obedience to Christ, toward a deep relationship with our Savior. That is our calling, and let's strive towards it together!

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Joshua 22	Joshua 23	Joshua 24	1 Peter 1	1 Peter 2	1 Peter 3	1 Peter 4

Reading from this past week: Philippians 3:12-4:3

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Philippians 4:4-9

Family Worship

Grace Alone - Modern Prophets version

<https://youtu.be/jG--heg6m68>

Gospel Project

Story: Jacob and Rachel

Story Point: Laban tricked Jacob into marrying both Leah and Rachel.

Big Picture Question: Does God keep His promises?

Answer: God always keeps His promises because He is faithful.

Scripture: Genesis 29-31

New City Catechism

Question 46: What is the Lord's Supper?

Answer: Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him.

Verse: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Scripture

Philippians 3:12-4:3

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Prayer

*Give thanks for your family, and rejoice for the time you will spend with them this week.

*Pray that God would help you run the race and endure to the end.