

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2011**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST**

Message Thirty-Four

In Philippians

(1)

The Pattern and the Goal of the Believers' Pursuit

Scripture Reading: Phil. 2:1-16; 3:1-16

I. Philippians 2:1-16 reveals that we may experience and enjoy Christ as our pattern:

- A. We need to experience Christ in His humiliation; that is, we need to experience Him as the One who emptied Himself and humbled Himself—vv. 6-8:
 - 1. Christ, the Son of God, had a very high position; He possessed the form of God and the right to be equal with God—v. 6a.
 - 2. He did not regard equality with God a treasure to be grasped but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men; Christ gave up His high standing and took the form not only of a man but also of a slave—vv. 6b-7.
 - 3. Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto the death of the cross—v. 8.
 - 4. As such a person, Christ is the pattern for our experience and enjoyment.
- B. The mind that was in Christ Jesus should be in us—v. 5:
 - 1. This kind of mind, this kind of thinking, was in Christ when He emptied Himself and humbled Himself—vv. 7-8:
 - a. Christ did not consider equality with God a treasure to be grasped—v. 6.
 - b. Rather, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men, and then He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross—vv. 7-8.
 - 2. To have in us the mind that was in Christ Jesus requires us to be one with Christ in His inward parts—1:8.
- C. Christ is not only the pattern for us; He is also our life, and this life is a crucified life—Col. 3:4; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21a:
 - 1. The seven steps of Christ's humiliation are all aspects of the crucified life; His being obedient unto the death of the cross was the crucified life lived out in a full and absolute way—2:6-8.
 - 2. Whenever we experience Christ and live Christ, we live the One who is the pattern of a crucified life—1:21a.

3. If we did not have Christ as the crucified life within us, we could never live according to the pattern presented in Philippians 2; only the crucified life can live such a pattern—vv. 5-8.
- D. Working out our salvation is the result of taking Christ as our pattern—v. 12:
 1. The pattern is our salvation, and this salvation is God Himself operating in us to save us in a practical way—v. 13.
 2. The God who operates in us is actually the Spirit of Jesus Christ—1:19:
 - a. Only by the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ can we take Christ as our pattern; by the Spirit of Jesus Christ we can be as humble as Jesus was, and by the Spirit of Jesus Christ we can consider one another more excellent than ourselves—2:3-4.
 - b. Christ as the pattern is in us, living Himself out from within us as the Spirit of Jesus Christ—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:5-8; 1:19-21a.
 - c. When we cooperate with God's operation, we take Christ as our pattern and live a self-emptying and self-humbling life, as He did—2:3-8.

II. In Philippians 3:1-16 Christ is presented as the goal of the believers' pursuit; for Christ to be our goal means that He is the highest enjoyment:

- A. Since our goal is to gain Christ, we should forsake all other things and pursue nothing but Christ—vv. 4-8:
 1. The "all things" in verse 8 must certainly include the three categories of religious things, philosophical things, and cultural things—vv. 4-7.
 2. Paul counted all these things as loss because they were substitutes for Christ, hooks used by Satan to keep people from Christ and from the experience of Christ—v. 7.
- B. In order to take Christ as our unique goal, we need to have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ—v. 8; Gal. 1:15-16:
 1. Like Paul, we should have the knowledge of Christ in His excellency.
 2. This knowledge refers to a revelation, a vision, concerning Christ and His excellency; we need to have such a vision of the preciousness of Christ.
- C. In pursuing Christ, Paul desired that he would be found in Christ, living as "a man in Christ" and having Christ as his unique expression—Phil. 3:9; 2 Cor. 12:2:
 1. Paul aspired to have his whole being immersed in and saturated with Christ so that all who observed him would find him fully in Christ.
 2. Concerning the aspiration to be found in Christ, Paul said that he wanted to have not his own righteousness but the righteousness which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith—Phil. 3:9:
 - a. Not having our own righteousness but having the righteousness which is out of God is the condition for being found in Christ.
 - b. Paul wanted to live in the righteousness of God and to be found in such a transcendent condition, expressing God by living Christ—v. 9.
 - c. The righteousness which is out of God and based on faith is the righteousness that is God Himself lived out of us to be our righteousness through our faith in Christ; such righteousness is the expression of God, who lives in us—2 Cor. 3:9; 5:17.