



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Choosing Joy: A New Ambition

Speaker: Matt Manno, Next Gen Pastor

Scripture: Philippians 3:8-14

What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:8-14 (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

As we continue reading Philippians, Paul talks about a new type of ambition that leads us to the life that God intended for us. Paul thinks of all the things he previously boasted about and knows that none of these things could measure up to knowing Christ. He built his entire life on specific values and rules, and he realizes that all of this is worthless in comparison to knowing Christ. Paul lets the people around him know if he starts bragging, that they don't have a chance because they will never measure up to him. Paul built his life on his ambition which he now calls garbage. He knows that unless he considered certain things garbage, he would not be able to gain Christ the way he intended to. Paul removes all these things in order to pursue Jesus.

We need to be willing to take a look at ourselves and be honest. Where do you get your ambition? It is in the house that you own, your career, your degree hanging on the wall, the relationship you are in, your social media following or your weekly giving? There is no shortage of things we believe make us more valuable or seen by God. You do not need any of these things, as you are already known by God. It is these very things that Paul is calling garbage. Unless we consider certain things garbage, we cannot obtain Christ.

Paul wants more than just a blessing, he wants to experience both the power that raised Jesus from the dead and the suffering that Jesus experienced, even if it meant he had to die. He doesn't look forward to the suffering that he will have to endure but knows the fruit it will produce will draw him closer to God.

There is no resurrection without suffering. Suffering produces fruit in our lives and a greater appreciation for what God has done for us. Jesus came and died so we could have a relationship with him where we are further crafted into the image God made us to be. We must press on if we want to get anywhere near that life.

Paul knows he hasn't fully achieved this goal and doesn't know when this will end. Just as Paul pressed on, we need to keep going also. Paul knows there is nothing better than being close to Christ. We press on by continuing to pray when we don't feel like praying, speaking with others about Jesus, caring for the poor and continuing to read the Word of God.

God knows His ambition to be with us is greater than our ambition to be with Him. On this side of eternity, we can never get enough of God. We need to remember to keep on forgetting the things we are ambitious for that don't get us to God.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday Matt Manno, NextGen Pastor, continues our series through the book of Philippians. Today Matt talks about how our ambition for things can drive us to reach our goals and lets us know how we can be ambitious for that which will impact our lives in a deeper way.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, what status symbols/goals were important? What were you to present to others as the face forwarding narrative of your family?
3. What things in your life do you value that prevents you from being close to Christ? What goals take up most of your time? What certain earthly status is important to you?
4. Is there a suffering or difficulty you are currently avoiding? What holds you back?
5. What would it look like to live your life with a full ambition towards Christ? What does it look like to have His will done here on Earth?