

## Spc158 – Make A Life’s Resolution – Philippians 3:5-14

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Did you know that making New Year’s resolutions goes back over 3,000 years to the ancient Babylonians? For 3,000 years people have been saying, “*This year I’m going to stop smoking and lose some weight*” and for 3,000 years New Year’s resolutions have been failing.

So, I want to talk about a resolution today. But not a “New Year’s Resolution.” Instead, a “*Life’s Resolution.*”

Let’s pray. *Lord Jesus, we need you to reveal this to us, to inspire and convict, Lord. To impress this on us, to open our eyes to show us the infinite value of making a life’s resolution to follow you. We pray your Word would speak, lit alive by your Holy Spirit. For your glory and in your name, Jesus, amen.*

If you have put your faith in Jesus Christ as your savior, if you have received Jesus as Lord of your life, then John Chapter 1 says you have been *born again* – not with a physical birth but with a new spiritual birth that comes from God.

And in this new spiritual birth, God has accomplished *all* that you need  
For your SALVATION – from the penalty of sin  
For your TRANSFORMATION – in this life  
For your GLORIFICATION – in your eternal life with God.

God has actually ACCOMPLISHED ALL that we need in all of those areas *on our behalf*. God has PROVIDED ALL that we need for us to live a *new life* in Jesus Christ. God has *accomplished it all* and God has *provided it all*. And yet, there is equally *an our part -part*.

The our part -part is a resolution. Not a New Year’s resolution, but a *life’s resolution*. Not a *cyclical* resolution. Not a *bi-polar* resolution (which is on today and off tomorrow).

But a rock-solid, all-in, no matter what – absolute *life’s resolution*.

The word “resolution” means:

*A Determination*

*A Decidedness*

*A Purposefulness*

And that is what it takes to live in a “Life’s Resolution” to know and follow Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, I'm afraid, the *need* for a life's resolution *in our following of Jesus* may not be made *clear enough* to many people who initially make a decision to *receive Christ*.

The "*God has accomplished it all*" part and the "*God has provided it all*" part – those parts are usually made *very clear* because those are the parts we love to *hear*. And God *has* accomplished it all and God *has* provided it all. BUT we absolutely have a "part" in appropriating all that God has *accomplished* for us.

We have a role in *possessing* (in a *practical* way) what God has *accomplished* for us (in a *positional* way).

And our part (our role) is the "life's resolution" part. It is living a *determined, decided* and *purposeful* life of *knowing* and *following* Jesus.

The truth is, the *only* commitment "option" Jesus offers is the *full "life's resolution"* option.

All twelve Apostles lived out the full life's resolution option. But certainly the "life's resolution" that we have the most information on in the New Testament is that of the Apostle Paul and his life's resolution is found in Philippians Chapter 3.

Paul actually had everything in his life – all "right" *before* he realized his desperate *need* for Christ and he shares all that was "right" with his life in Philippians 3:5-6.

**Philippians 3:5-6 (NLT)**

***5 I was circumcised when I was eight days old*** (legitimate Jewish birth). ***I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin — a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law.***

***6 I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church*** (the highest level of religious loyalty). ***And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault.***

By appearance (on the outside) Paul didn't seem to have any need in his life right up until that crucial moment when Paul *encountered* Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus and his life changed forever. And it was there, face down in the dirt, that Paul made his commitment to make Jesus Christ Lord of his life.

*Have you done that?* Have you made that commitment to make Jesus Christ Lord of your life? *If so... what kind of resolution have you made following that commitment?*

If you've had a rocky start to your life with Christ or if you've experienced that dual life of living the *new life* – then *old life* – then *new life*, etc. It's *not* because God hasn't *accomplished* (on your behalf) all that is necessary for you to *possess* that new life. It's *not* because God hasn't *provided* all that is necessary for you to *live* that new life. It is almost certainly – a *life's resolution* problem. Meaning – it's a problem with *determination, decidedness and purposefulness*.

We basically see two types of people who make commitments to Christ. One person makes a commitment to Christ then follows it with a genuine *life's resolution* and you *see the evidence* of Jesus Christ *transforming* their life. A second person makes a commitment to Jesus Christ but *never* makes a genuine *life's resolution* and we can watch that second person's *commitment to Christ* and their *life in Christ* – both fade away. We've seen it over and over again.

The Apostle Paul *did make* an *all-in* life's resolution and we have it recorded in Philippians Chapter 3. When the Apostle Paul *realized* his true *need* for Jesus Christ and the true *worthlessness* of his own efforts, he says this in Philippians 3:7.

**Philippians 3:7 (NLT)**

***7 I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done.***

Paul *realized* what he was *trusting in* – or *chasing* – might actually be *worthless* compared to *knowing* and *following* Christ. Paul says ***the things I once thought were valuable, I now consider worthless – because of what Christ has done in me.***

And then, in verse 8 he *further clarifies* his life's resolution.

**Philippians 3:8(a) (NLT)**

***8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord . . .***

Have you heard of “values clarification?”

Values clarification is basically *deciding* what is *most important* to you then *making decisions based* on what is *most important* to you. A life's resolution to know and follow Jesus Christ is a values clarification that sets the *ultimate direction* of your life.

And here is the ultimate “values clarification” for a Christ-follower.

**Philippians 3:8(a) (NLT)**

***8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord ...***

When we come to the *realization* that nothing in this world ultimately can *compare* to the *value* of *knowing* Jesus Christ *then* we are “well on our way” to making a genuine “life’s resolution.”

And then we start making *life’s decisions* based on our *life’s resolution* which is exactly what we see the Apostle Paul doing here.

**Philippians 3:8(b)-9(a) (NLT)**

***8. . . For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ 9 and become one with him.***

The word “discarded” means to “*willingly throw overboard*.” Paul is saying I have “willingly thrown overboard” anything and everything that may *keep me* from *gaining Christ* and becoming *one* with him.

*THAT is a genuine life’s resolution.*

And then (verse 8) Paul makes it even clearer. He says, ***I have counted everything else as GARBAGE, so that I can gain Christ and become one with him***

Paul’s talking about *other* things in this life that he may’ve *put* his *trust* in; that he may’ve *put* his *confidence* in. And he says compared to the value of gaining Christ and becoming one with him . . . ***anything else I would grasp for (or hold on to) in this life - is like GARBAGE***. This is a life’s resolution that is *determined, decided and unshakable*.

*Nothing compares* to the surpassing value of *knowing* Jesus Christ and *becoming one with him*.

So, after reminding us in the rest of verse 9 that our righteousness before God can *only come through faith* in Jesus Christ Paul then encapsulates his life’s resolution in five powerful words at the beginning of verse 10.

These five words are my life’s verse.

**Philippians 3:10(a) (NLT)**

***10 I want to know Christ . . .***

I want to... *really* know Jesus Christ. I want to know him *personally*. I want to know him *experientially*. *I want to know Christ!!*

The Greek word used here for “know” describes perfectly what Paul is talking about. The word Paul uses here for “know” is GINOSKO.

GINOSKO is best defined as: *An ever-increasing, relational, experiential knowledge*

Paul says whatever I was holding onto *before*, I *willingly discarded* it in order to *gain* an *ever-increasing, relational, experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ*. That is taking full inventory of your life and saying whatever I’m putting my hope in right now, I’m throwing it out in exchange for an *ever-increasing, experiential, relationship with Jesus Christ!!*

And then, as verse 10 continues Paul elaborates on what it means to know Jesus at this level.

**Philippians 3:10 (NLT)**

***10 I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death,***

*This is the life’s resolution that drove Paul every year/month/week/day.*

*I want an ever increasing, experiential, relationship with Jesus – in ALL circumstances of life*

*I want to experience the same mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead*

*AND - I want to suffer with him, Even to the point – of sharing in his death*

This is an absolute determination to *know* Jesus Christ *no matter what!* To know him in the *power of the resurrection moments* and in the *fellowship of suffering moments*. I want to *know Jesus* in every *moment* of my life.

And then Philippians 311 says,

**Philippians 3:11 (NLT)**

***11 so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!***

Paul’s not questioning his own resurrection here. He’s saying *at all costs, no matter what* the path, one way or another, it *does not matter* as long as *I experience* the resurrection from the dead. Paul is saying the circumstances and the path of this life are *not* his *primary* concern. What *is* his primary concern is *knowing Christ* and *becoming one* with him on *whatever path* this life brings. As long as I’m on my way to *sharing his resurrection* with him then everything is going to work out *just fine*.

And then Paul makes it clear our life's resolution is meant to always be *driving us forward* in our walk with Christ. He says in Philippians 3:12,

**Philippians 3:12 (NLT)**

*12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.*

Paul says, I haven't *arrived*. I'm not *there*. ***But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.***

I love that line! Listen, please. Jesus Christ has first *possessed* you for an eternal purpose. But you must also *take possession* of that for which Christ Jesus first *possessed* you. To do that you must *press on* and not be taken out by *the enemy* and not be side-lined by *sin*.

We have got to be pressing on all the way to the finish line to receive the heavenly prize for which God – *through Christ* – is calling us.

Look at the incredible summary verses from Paul in Philippians 3:13-14.

**Philippians 3:13–14 (NLT)**

*13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward (straining) to what lies ahead,  
14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.*

We are not done. We have not arrived. But this one thing we will do – forgetting the past and pressing forward to what lies ahead, we will press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God – through Christ Jesus – is calling us.

*That is a determined, decided, purposeful commitment to know Christ more and more in every circumstance and every situation and to keep pressing on to possess that for which Christ first possessed us. That is a life's resolution!*

The greatest thing you can do in this life is to make a *determined, decided, purposeful* life-long resolution to know Christ more and more and to possess that for which he first possessed you. *That is a life's resolution to follow Christ* and I pray you would make that commitment right now.

Let's pray. *Lord Jesus, make that real to us. Bring that home to us. That this life with you, Lord, isn't a quick ticket punch and hope to get to heaven. This is a radical, supernatural, eternal life lived in a temporal world where the creator God is empowering*

*us and transforming us and driving us and using us for your glory. For your kingdom's sake. And we want to be part of that. And so, Lord, inspire us to make a life's resolution.*

And if you've never done that, today is the day. If you've never asked Jesus Christ to forgive you of your sin and come into your life, start with that. Best prayer that is actually in the Bible for salvation, is this one. "*Lord, save me.*"

*Lord, save me. Save me from my sin. And save me from the eternal consequences of my sin. And come into my life, Lord.*

And then, launch into a life's resolution. If's you've never made a life's resolution, make it now. Just as I give you one minute, make a life's resolution. Say, *Lord, I'm tired of having one foot in the world and one foot in heaven. I'm tired Lord of playing a game of not being sure if I want you or the pleasures of this world. I say today, Lord Jesus, you are infinitely more valuable than anything else I could chase. And so, I commit today to chase after you. To know you better, in every circumstance, in every situation. To sense your presence and to seek your face all of my days. I make my life's commitment today. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit and carry me to the finish line – all in no matter what. I commit to know you and follow you. For your glory Jesus, and in your name, amen.*

If you just made a life's resolution commitment, I want to give you some initial encouragement.

First, following Jesus at *this* determined level is a *daily commitment*.

*Your life's resolution occurs each day.*

Every day you can know Jesus better and every day you can ***press on to possess that for which Christ Jesus first possessed you***. You cannot live this life's resolution once or twice a week, and a bi-polar resolution is the worst of all – where you're committed to Christ some days and committed to your self and the world other days. The first encouragement is you have to learn to live your "life's resolution" on a *daily basis*.

Second, you need someone to help you learn *how* to follow Christ each day.

*Your life's resolution requires discipleship.*

Discipleship means simply "*Learning to follow Jesus.*" You've got to put yourself in an environment where you are learning *how* to follow Jesus. You've got to become an active part of a small group of believers who are helping one another follow Jesus together.

Around here we call those groups *Discipleship Groups*. And we would love to help you get connected to a discipleship group and through that group you can learn how to live in your *life's resolution* – daily.

And if you are listening or watching a part of the Word By Mail family or the Calvary Chapel Nuevo family, I would encourage you to watch or listen to three series.

- *Alone With God*
- *Why Discipleship*
- *Growing in The Holy Spirit*

Guys, God loves you enough to send his son to *die in your place* and then to send you his Holy Spirit to *live inside you* for the power to *live for him* every day.

God *has accomplished* it ALL.

God *has provided* ALL you need.

Your part is to make a life's resolution to know him in *every circumstance* in life and to *possess* what he has *possessed* you for.

Let's pray again. *Thank you, Lord, for accomplishing it all and for providing all we need. Help us to make this life's resolution to know and follow Jesus Christ a daily commitment in every circumstance and every situation. Thank you for the power you give us to live for you every single day and in every single moment. For your glory, and in your name, Jesus, amen.*