

## A GOOD WAY OF LIFE

### Int.

1. Aim: To show that this is the best way of life.
2. Phil. 3:13-14 "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
3. Philosophy - purpose of life
4. Solomon sought to find the purpose for life - In the book of Ecclesiastes
  - a. He tried to find the best way of life in pursuing pleasure
  - b. He sought all kinds of material things
  - c. He attempted to find meaning of life in acquiring knowledge
  - d. But finally he came to the conclusion Ecl. 12:13-14 "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. 14. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."
5. In our Text Paul shows his successful way or philosophy of life
  - a. Paul lived in such a way that he could be imitated. 1 Cor. 11:1 "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."
  - b. We know that he lived a successful life - 2 Tim. 4:7-8
6. In order to be successful as a Christian we must forget some things and concentrate our efforts and have a goal in mind.

## Discussion

### I. THE WISDOM OF FORGETTING -

A. Phil. 3:13 "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, *forgetting those things which are behind*, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,"

B. Forget

1. Forget [Greek] = to lose out of mind; by implication, to neglect
2. Forget [English] = Cease to think of
3. Opposite of remembering -- disregard
4. The past is so completely forgotten that it is not allowed to have any bearing or influence on present action
5. Forgetting is one of the fine arts of living life at its best

C. Early Life

1. Paul had to forget his life before he became a Christian - Phil. 3:7-9 "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"
2. He had a position of honor and security -
  - a. Phil. 3:4 "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:"

- b. Gal. 1:14 "And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."
  - 3. He had counted all this as "loss" for Christ - Phil. 3:7
  - 4. He had to forget his opposition to Christ and the Church
    - a. Phil. 3:6 "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."
    - b. Paul had been an enemy of the cause of Christ - Acts 26:9ff
    - c. He had made "havoc" of the church - Acts 8:1-3
    - d. He had persecuted the church - Gal. 1:13 "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:"
- D. Paul had to forget his past achievements as a Christian
  - 1. He had done much good work - converted many - established churches - withstood persecutions
  - 2. He had to forget these things so he would not become satisfied with what he had done
- E. APPLICATION: We need to forget..
  - 1. **Forget Forgiven sins**
    - a. If God forgets these sins then surely we should also forget them
    - b. Heb. 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." - forgive yourself
    - c. The forgiven must forget their past sins lest they be discouraged

## 2. Forget past defeats

- a. We have been defeated in times gone by
- b. We must forget lest we become discouraged and despondent
- c. Learn from failures

## 3. Forget past accomplishments

- a. We must forget the past so that we will accept the challenges of the present and future and keep on being diligent.
- b. 2 Pet. 3:18 "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."
- c. If we do not keep on growing we will become lukewarm and stagnant - Rev. 3:16,17
- d. We should remember the past with gratitude for what we have learned but we should forget it so that we will not be thinking that there is nothing more which we should try to do.

## II. STRETCHING FORWARD

- A. Phil. 3:12-13, 15 "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."
- B. Phil. 3:15. "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

### C. Reaching

1. A term that describes a runner who "stretches forth"
2. The runner has his eye on the finish line
3. He stretches every nerve and muscle as he makes every possible effort to win
4. "It describes him with arms almost clawing the air, with head forward, and with the body bent and angled to the goal. It describes the man who is going, as we might put it, flat out for the finish." {Barclay}

### D. Paul reached for...

1. Perfection
  - a. Phil. 3:12,15
  - b. Perfect = means full grown or mature
  - c. I Cor. 2:6 "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:"
  - d. Heb 6:1 "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,"
  - e. Heb. 5:14 "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."
  - f. The mature person recognizes his imperfections and the need for growth
  - g. We strive to be like Christ.

2. A deeper knowledge of Christ - Phil. 3:10 "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;"
3. A right relationship with Christ and maintaining it - Phil. 3:9 "Found in Him"

E. Application - We must reach and stretch forward to:

1. Maturity - full grown - no such thing as old babies
2. More Bible knowledge
3. Right relationship with Christ - Please

### **III. We must have a GOAL**

- A. Phil. 3:14 ASV "I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
- B. Press = means to pursue
- C. Prize = this is connected with God's high calling
  1. God calls people unto himself - Acts 2:39-40
  2. God calls men into the Christian vocation - Eph. 4:1 "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,"

D. Application - We must have a goal - Heaven

1. Called by the gospel - God calls men by the gospel - 2 Thes. 2:13-14 "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14. Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
2. Abundant Entrance - Those who make their calling sure will have an abundant entrance into heaven - 2 Pet. 1:10-11
3. Crown of Life -
  - a. 2 Tim. 4:7-8 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
  - b. James 1:12. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Paul said, "This one thing I do." Phil. 3:13
  - a. A successful life requires a concentrated effort
  - b. The early disciples had a singleness of heart - Acts 2:46
  - c. Paul wanted the Colossians to "set their affection on things above." Col. 3:1-4
  - d. In this busy world of making a living it is hard for us to always put first things first.
  - e. We must get our priorities straight.
  - f. A sign on a desk read: "The main thing is to make the main thing the main thing"
  
2. With this kind of concentration Paul could:
  - a. **Forget the past** - the blunders, failures and mistakes that God had forgiven and forgotten - He could forget about the successes
  - b. Then he could **reach forth** for the things before - Great possibilities of present Christian living.
  - c. The **goal of His life was Heaven** - Press for the prize!
  
3. This is a good philosophy of life which gives us an abundant life [John 10:10] and the hope of an abundant entrance into eternal life in heaven [2 Pet. 1:10]
  
4. Character is the only thing which we can carry with us out of this world. The right kind of character can only be built and developed by having the proper ideal before us.
  
5. We are dying men in a dying world. This life is not forever. Prepare for heaven.

6. III. A young man was about to graduate from high school. His good friend asked him:
- "What do you intend to do with your life? What will you do after graduation?"
- a. The young man answered, "Oh, I will go to the university and study for my chosen profession."
  - b. His friend asked, "Yes, what then?"
  - c. "I will go out into the work place and earn a living?"
  - d. "Yes, and what then?"
  - e. "I expect to meet a young woman and marry, have children and a good home."
  - f. "What then?"
  - g. "I am going to work hard and distinguish myself and enjoy a great success in the marketplace."
  - h. "What then?"
  - i. "When I am older, I will retire on a good income and enjoy my sunset years."
  - j. "What then?"
  - k. "What then? Well I guess on some distant day my body will wear out and I will die."
  - l. "Exactly," his friend replied, "and what then? What then?"