

AIM HIGHER

THE **AIMSERIES 2015**



Thank you for being apart of the first ever AIM Series!

Our prayer is that God uses this video series to inform, encourage, and challenge students to greater faith.

Our theme for The AIM Series 2015 is “AIM Higher”. This series will lead students through a study of the book of Philippians.

OUR OFFICIAL HASHTAG...

With The AIM Series, we would like to create an online discussion about these videos. We want to encourage students to tweet and post big ideas, points from the lessons, and quotes that encouraged and impacted them. We will have an official hashtag for The AIM Series, and that hashtag is #AIMhigher. This hashtag will also be posted in the corner of each video. Please encourage your students to use this hashtag.

Thank you so much for being apart of The AIM Series 2015!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us by email (theaimstuff@gmail.com), or call any of the AIM guys. Our contact info is listed below.

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AIM FOR JOY

JEREMY HALL

Early Roman Emperor Julian rejected Christianity because of lifeless Christians without zest and joy. Still today some believers are wrecking the modern Julians, sending them running from Christianity. Christians talk about joy, some have it, but all too often the common experience is one of discontent. Call me radical, but I find it hard to accept that as the "abundant life" Jesus said He came to give us. The feel-good approach doesn't work. Drugs/alcohol wear off. The "don't feel at all" approach is worse. We have cpus & phones that cater to our every whim. Marketing says: there's nothing money can't buy. Of course, Christianity says materialism is wrong & happiness cannot be found in things or pleasures. So then why is it that so many believers are also firing blanks when it comes to true joy?

Paul wrote about real joy. 6x in Philippians, Paul uses "joy" as a frame of reference & he was writing in less-than-perfect conditions. Prison! It was dark, cold in winter, sweltering in summer, & filled with disease. Food was scarce & there were no bathroom so survival was an everyday issue. (Phil. 4:11-13)- internal attitudes are more important than external circumstances. I'm convinced the most important choice you make everyday is your attitude. Because the outCOME of your life will be determined by your outLOOK on life. And the proper outlook is one focused on grace.

(Phil 1:2/4:23)- Paul begins & ends the letter of Philippians with grace. & that's fitting because it's really the beginning and ending of our joy.

Notice that Phil. 1:2 says "grace & peace." The order is theological: grace comes before peace.

If my house burns down, my bank account goes empty, & my friends desert me, it could be worse. How? What if Jesus never came? What if, no matter how much we tried & how much we cried & how much we prayed or screamed to the Heavens, God would not listen or accept us & the possibility of ever having pain & suffering ended was impossible? What if there was no Heaven? What if there was no possibility of eternal life? What if Hell was inevitable no matter what we did?

I don't want to lessen the severity of any difficulties in life but compared to THAT condition, we have NOTHING to fear here.

So when you feel like all is lost, imagine grace was lost. When you feel like you don't have a friend in the world, imagine you didn't have grace either. When your bank account says 0, imagine your level of possible grace & forgiveness from God was 0.

This mindset will change your mind about how bad things are when you know how infinitely dreadful they could be without the grace of God. So when God says, "my grace is sufficient", it really is.

But here's another thing: we were never meant to experience that grace and peace alone.

(Phil. 1:3-5)- Paul expresses joy in Philippians followed or preceded by thoughts of the brethren.

Consider: Instagram works as a media tool but I fear many Christians have an Instagram relationship with joy that doesn't work. They experience snapshots of joy in life but not fully.

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Consider: what if no one saw each others' Instagram? Useless, right? It defeats the purpose. EXACTLY. What makes the moments we capture in pictures joyful after the moment itself is gone are the people we share them with who aren't gone. Genuine participation in the family of God will instantly begin to change your level of joy from snapshots to something constant.

If we want joy that is constant, lasting, & reliable, the SOURCE must be constant, lasting, & reliable. One of those sources is the giving of praise. Praise is a matter of finding God's handprint on everything that happens & to seek God's purposes anywhere and everywhere.

In that frame of mind, joy can be had at every moment because God is available to be praised & glorified at every moment, in any situation, under any circumstance.

Is daily singing, study, prayer, & meditation missing from your life? If so, likely true joy is as well.

Many people live dead lives because they have yet to realize the grace of God that moves us to aim for something MORE from life, MORE from each other, & give us MORE reason to praise God.

But when we begin to think higher, we begin to live higher, & we can experience higher levels of JOY.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think many Christians still experience just as much discontent in life as those of the world?
2. What's the one thing that gets you down the most and stands in the way of joy in your life?
3. What would life be like if you knew there was no Heaven? How does that possibility, and knowing better, change your perspective on how bad things are in your life?
4. Since praise raises our levels of joy, when you examine your life, is daily singing, study, prayer, & meditation missing from your life? If so, why?
5. What are some of your most fond memories with your Church friends? Family? What made them so special? Would they have been as special if you had experienced those moments alone?

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AIM FOR LIFE

ANDREW KINGSLEY

Intro: Yogi Berra, the well-known catcher for the New York Yankees, and Hank Aaron, who at that time was the chief power hitter for the Milwaukee Braves, were playing each other in the World Series. As usual, Yogi was keeping up his ceaseless chatter, intended to pep up his teammates on the one hand, and distract the Milwaukee batters on the other. As Aaron came to the plate, Yogi tried to distract him by saying, "Henry, you're holding the bat wrong. You're supposed to hold it so you can read the trademark." Aaron didn't say anything, but when the next pitch came he hit it into the left-field bleachers. After rounding the bases and tagging up at home plate, Aaron looked at Yogi Berra and said, "I didn't come up here to read."

I realize it's a big jump to go from ancient baseball smack talk to Scripture. But Hank Aaron knew what he was there to do and he did it. He aimed to hit the baseball and he did.

I wonder sometimes if we have as clear of a direction in our lives. What are aiming for in our lives? What goals have we pointed ourselves toward? As a follower of Christ, what should be the object of our aim?

The series is intended to study the book of Philippians from that standpoint. You're going to discuss how a Christian should aim for things like joy, humility, love, peace, righteousness, etc. based on the text of Philippians.

Tonight our topic is aim for life. Based on Philippians 1:21. But before we get into our first let's look briefly at the context.

Paul is under house arrest in Rome writing the letter to the Philippians in order to give him an update on his situation and to give them some encouragement. Paul had a special relationship with the church at Philippi. He begins his letter with customary greeting followed by a section of thanksgiving and as soon as he gets into the body of the letter he starts talking about his imprisonment. He tells the Philippians not to worry about him because his imprisonment has served for the advance of the gospel.

This is the context where we find our verse for tonight, Paul wondering aloud about his future. Whether he will live or die. This is where Paul's statement made: For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

I want to look at our topic in 3 parts: Life in Christ, Life for Christ, and Life With Christ.

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DISCUSSION: CHRISTIAN LIFE

Life in Christ

- **In Him is Life.** Christ is the source of life. He is the author of life. He is the sustainer of life. If you want to aim for life, aim for Christ. There is no life apart from Him.
- *The Source/Author of Life.* John 1:1 – 5. He was involved in the creation of the world. He created life!
- *The Sustainer of Life.* Colossians 1:16 – 17. In Him, all things hold together. Without Christ, there is no life. Period. GOD holds our very breath within his hands (Daniel 5:23).
- If you're aiming for life, you're aiming for Christ. Plain and simple. Now what does that look like practically? How can we aim for Christ? This is what leads us to the first half of Paul's statement, "For to me to live is Christ."

Life for Christ (To Live is Christ)

- **Paul's Aim.** Paul's aim in life was never in question. It was always GOD.
- *Former life in Judaism.* Standing on trial before the Jews, Paul revealed to his former brothers that he had lived his entire life to the day with a clear conscience towards GOD (Acts 23:1). Even during his days as a Pharisee, Paul was still focused on GOD. In fact, he was very zealous for GOD: zealous enough even to capture and imprison anyone who dared to blaspheme the name of GOD.
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- *New Life in Christ.* Once Paul realized that he needed Christ, Christ became everything to Paul. Gal. 2:20. Gordon Fee puts it this way, "Christ; the name that sums up for Paul the whole range of his new relationship to God; personal devotion, commitment, service, the gospel, ministry, communion, inspiration, everything."¹ Phillips' translation renders the verse, "For living to me means simply 'Christ.'" Roper provides more insight, "Christ was the beginning of Paul's life, the challenge of his life, the motivation of his life, the strength of his life, and the goal of his life."² Paul's attitude about baptism in Romans 6 clearly shows Paul's attitude on life after being baptized into Christ. We die to ourselves and become alive to GOD in Christ (v11)! You do that by v12 – 14! Don't let sin rule over you. Live as Christ lived. Live as an instrument for righteousness (v13). Everything in life on earth now has to fit into this aim of Christ! What exactly did life for Christ mean to Paul? It meant the following:
- *Eat, Sleep, Breathe, Imitate.* Christ was behind everything Paul did. He lived, ate, drank, and slept Jesus! Literally!

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- 1 Corinthians 8:13, “Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.” 10:31 – 11:1, “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to the Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” Whatever we do has to be done with the focus on Christ.

Life with Christ (To Die is Gain)

- **More than an Escape.** Death is gain for Paul for one reason: the hope of an eternal life with Christ. Death wasn't just a way out of trials for Paul. Consider Fee's comments: “This expresses neither a death wish nor dissatisfaction with life nor desire to be ‘done with troubles and trials’; it is the forthright assessment of one whose future in terms of ‘life in the flesh’ is uncertain, but whose ultimate future is both certain and to be desired. Death, after all, because it is ‘ours’ in Christ Jesus has thereby lost its sting. It should go without saying that such a statement has meaning only for the one to whom the first clause is a vibrant, living reality. Otherwise death is loss, or ‘gain’ only in the sense of escape.”³
- **Eternal Life with Christ.** Paul's statement is based on his ultimate future of eternal life in Christ! In speaking of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul says in v19 - 22, “If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has also come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” Just as Christ was raised from the dead and now lives with the Father, we expect to be raised from the dead and to live with the Father! This is the ONLY life that will last! This is the life that Christ came to bring to us! This is why Paul can say in the verses immediately following our theme verse, “My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.” (v23). This is our ultimate goal!

This. is. life. Aim for it.

¹ Gordon Fee, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, 141.

² Jay Lockhart, David Roper, *Truth for Today Commentary: Ephesians and Philippians*, 415.

³ Fee, *Philippians*, 142.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Ask yourself, "*For me to live is [what]?*" What things are you most concerned with in your life right now? Where does all of your time go? On what do you spend most of your energy?
2. How can we change some of our daily habits in order to really "aim" our lives at Christ?
3. Paul was so focused on Christ in his life that it even affected his diet (1 Cor. 8:13)! How should our focus on Christ affect little things like the clothes that we wear, the drinks that we drink, the movies we watch, etc...?
4. Take a minute to contrast Adam and Christ. How does Paul's reference to the sin/death of Adam add to Paul's claim that Christ has brought life? What kind of life is Paul talking about in Philippians 1:22?
5. Paul says "*My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better*" in Philippians 1:23 but what did Paul ultimately decide was better for him to do (see v24-26)? What do these three verses say about Paul's attitude of selflessness?

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AIM FOR *HUMILITY*

CHUCK MORRIS

#AIMHIGHER

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AIM FOR LIGHT

ANDREW ITSON

"that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world."

-Philippians 2:15

Discussion Questions

Question #1: Paul pictures a world in darkness, but he also sees you as light in that world. There is a conflict between darkness and light. Billions of people are living in darkness. How does this make you feel?

Question #2: If you are called to be light. Why is it still so dark?

1) Light understands its source.

Question #3: "all things were created by Him and FOR HIM." -Colossians 1:16. Yet don't we live as if everything was created for us?

2) Light reflects its source.

Question #4: Who would draw attention away from the light of God's throne?

3) Light represents its source.

Question #5: Would you say that your life is being transformed by God's Word? What changes do you need to make in order to LIVE the truths that you will be teaching other people?

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AIM FOR *RIGHTEOUSNESS*

PHILIP JENKINS

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

What is right?

Who gets to define righteousness? Is it up to me? Is it up to you? Is it up to your parents? Is it our court system? Is it the Constitution that defines what is right? Is it the POTUS?

Paul had his own view of righteousness (what was right in his own eyes), and then God literally blinded him, and corrected his vision. And the next time Paul opened up his eyes, he saw things in a completely different way.

- Read Philippians 3:5-9.

Paul came to an understanding that righteousness did not come from me or from the law. It came through a faith in Jesus Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

Paul says, my own righteousness wasn't right.

When everybody does what is right in their own eyes, the nation loses perspective of what is actually right. But that's not just the story of Judges, and it's not just the story of our nation, it's the story of what happens to individuals.

When someone rejects God's Authority, they remove Him from the throne of their life and they start sitting in His seat and they start to think they're smarter than God and they call the shots. "I'll do whatever is right for me. I'll just use my own righteousness."

The irony here is, there NO SUCH THING AS YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

AIMING FOR GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN A SELF-RIGHTEOUS WORLD

1. As you aim for righteousness, make sure it's His righteousness that you're aiming for.

It's really easy to get sucked into an "I think/I believe/In my opinion" game, but that game leads nowhere. Truthfully, it doesn't really matter what we think. What matters is what God says. The next time you are tempted to get into an "I think" argument, remember that when things become "I think, I think, I think" there is no authority in the conversation. God's righteousness is supreme.

2. As you aim for righteousness, aim with humility.

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Spoiler Alert: from time to time, you are going to believe some things that are flat out wrong. The question is, will you humble enough to admit that and to allow God to course correct your life?

2 Chronicles 7:14 “If my people who are called by my name humble themselves (that’s the first thing God mentions because it all begins with a humble heart!), and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

Humility happens when fall down at God’s feet and we say, “LORD, you are the King and I am your servant! I don’t make the rules. You do. And when I do I mess things up. Help me to submit to your will, even when I don’t like it, and even when it’s not popular.”

That’s humility. It’s reading God’s Word and following it whether you like it or not. Will you be humble enough to submit yourself, your mind, your actions, your beliefs, to the LORD?

A heart that is not humble will not be willing to submit to God’s righteousness.

3. As you aim for righteousness, aim to be a loving, truth-teller.

Ephesians 4:15 says Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ...

We’ve got to love people enough to give them the truth in love.

There are a lot of posts on social media that are really loving, but are not truthful at all. There are also a lot of posts that really truthful, but are not loving at all. Neither is good. We’ve got to give truth and love. And if you want to share the truth in love with someone, do it privately, Priscilla and Aquila style. It’s much more effective (and Biblical!).

4. As you aim for righteousness, know that you can’t get your life right without Jesus Christ, the Righteous.

You heard somebody say this before? Well, I want to become a Christian, but I’ve got a lot of things that I need to get in order in my life first. I really need to do better first, and then I’ll follow Christ.

If you’ve been thinking I’ll just get my life together and then I’ll give my life over to Christ, I want to be a loving, truth-teller: that is so backwards. That is so the opposite of Christ’s plan. Instead of getting your life together and giving it over, Christ says “Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

Not get it together and then we’ll talk. Not get it fixed and give it over. But give it over, and I will give you rest, and forgiveness, and life.

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Discussion Questions

1. First things first: is the dress black and blue or gold and white? (Take it to vote)
2. Now that we've established that fact, what are some of the ways that people decide what is right today?
3. What do you think is more important: being right or being loving? (Answer: both!) Read Ephesians 4:15 again for emphasis. God doesn't just want us to speak the truth. He doesn't just want us to say loving things. He wants us to communicate truth lovingly.
4. One of people's favorite verses to use (the better word is abuse) is Mt. 7:1 where Jesus says "Judge not, that you be not judged."

Why do think people love to quote this verse so much? (It's a cop out!!!)

5. Here's another verse that Jesus spoke that nobody seems to know exists! John 7:24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with righteous judgment."

What is Jesus saying? What is righteousness judgement? (So you're telling me that Jesus said we need to judge using righteous judgement? I'm not telling you that! Jesus is!!!)

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AIM FOR HEAVEN

JON PODEIN

Intro – What is the greatest place on earth in your eyes? Got it? Each of us probably chooses something that we can relate happiness or joy to. It could be the beach, an island, Disney, or a hundred other things, but they all fail in comparison to the greatest place for the Christian, Heaven.

I. Paul spends the last 2 verses of Chapter 3 reminding the Philippian Christian where their true home is.

- First he says that our citizenship is in heaven.
 - We often think of citizenship of a country like the United States. However, Paul clearly states that we are a colony of heaven here on earth.
 - Jesus himself said as much when Pilate was questioning him (Jn. 18:36)
 - This statement would have had special meaning because Philippi was a Roman colony
 - A Roman colony had certain privileges, but also corresponding responsibilities. The citizens of a Roman colony owed allegiance to Rome. Their conduct was governed by its laws and their hope was centered in its glory. They were expected to colonize – to spread Roman culture and thought
 - As Christians, we are strangers and exiles
 - Like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Heb. 11:13)
 - And the Christian mission is to go out and “colonize” ie. The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20)
 - It is more than a mission trip; it is a lifestyle of reaching the lost for Jesus to bring them into the colony of God.
 - Our names have been recorded as citizens in the book of life in heaven and our home on earth is just a temporary address.
 - We sing, “This World is Not My Home”
- Next, Paul says that we eagerly wait
 - Jesus promised a return (John 14:1-4)

- Angels told those watching that Jesus would return (Acts 1:11)
 - The early Christians lived in a state of expectancy, realizing that the Lord could come at any time. The 2nd Coming of Christ gave their lives meaning especially with the persecution and trials that they had to endure within the Roman Empire.
- Paul points out that one of the exciting events of the 2nd Coming is the redemption of the body. To know that one day this body that is imperfect must put on immortality
 - Transforms: emphasizes the completeness of the change
 - 1 Cor. 15:35-57
- Power over all things-it is by the same power that raised Christ from the dead
 - This is God's guarantee that He is indeed capable of raising us from the dead and changing mortal, fleshly bodies to immortal, spiritual bodies through His heavenly power

Discussion Questions

1. Realizing that our "home" and our "citizenship" is in heaven, does that affect the way that we live? If so, how?
2. How does recognizing that we are citizens who are to colonize for the Kingdom of God change our view toward evangelism and the lost?
3. Paul says that the Christian is "eagerly" waiting for Jesus to return. Do you believe this to be the case in the 21st century? Why or why not? If not, how do we change that mindset?
4. In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus gives us a glimpse of judgment in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. If everyone is called to stand before the throne of God, describe how you think it would be to see heaven 1 time and not be able to enjoy the place which God has prepared for His children?
5. Is Heaven a place that we honestly look forward to seeing?

AIM FOR PEACE

ANDREW HOWELL

What do you want more than anything from God right now?

- Moses tells God that they don't want to go unless God's presence will go with them. It is God's presence that makes them distinct from all people on the face of the earth (Exodus 33:16).
- Philippians 4:4-9
 - Paul knew what Moses knew. That the thing we need more than anything in our lives is God's presence.
 - Paul says that the peace that God offers surpasses understanding.
 - Often times, we want God's peace to bring understanding. But real peace goes beyond knowing why something is happening.
- Two disciplines that will help us develop the peace of God.
 1. Thinking about godly things.
 - Some think the way to peace is by getting rid of the negative thoughts OR to not think about it.
 - The peace of God is not in the absence of some thoughts - it is in the presence of God himself.
 - "the God of peace will be with you" (4:9)
 - Christian peace is not getting rid of negative thoughts.
 - That's not realistic. There is no peace in not facing the facts of life.
 - Instead we get a living power that allows you to triumph over and through these facts.
 2. Thanking God for doing good in all things.
 - Paul says, "Don't be anxious" (4:6). So, what should we do? He says to pray and thank God.
 - Seems backwards. Feels like the process should be: 1)Make request 2) Get request 3) Thank God.
 - Not so. Paul tells us to thank as you make the request.
 - Paul says you will never be content until you make the request, acknowledge it is in his hands, and you thank him for whatever He is going to do.
 - Peace is trusting in God's plan and that he will work good in all things (Romans 8:28).

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- Imagine that you were there on the day Jesus was crucified.
 - You might have thought, “No way God could bring good out of this.”
 - You might have looked at the greatest thing God has ever done toward the redemption of the world, but at the time you might not have been able to see how this was beneficial.
 - The degree to which you believe in God’s control is the degree to which you will have peace in all situations.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you want more than anything from God right now?
2. *“Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?”* (Exodus 33:16 ESV). What makes Christians distinct from everyone else on earth?
3. *“The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:7 ESV). Which would you rather have: the peace of God that gives understanding OR peace of God that goes beyond understanding? What is the difference? Why does God offer one, but not the other?
4. *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God”* (Philippians 4:6 ESV). What seems backwards about making your request to God and thanking Him before you get the answer? Why would Paul say to do this and what does this have to do with peace?
5. In Philippians 4:12, Paul says that he knows the secret of how to be content in all situations. What would you say that secret is? What would the world say that secret is?

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AIM FOR JESUS

DAVID SHANNON

1. It ultimately is all about JESUS! From the first words of the N.T. to the last, it all focuses on Jesus, His People and how they wait upon His return!

- a. Paul would have one mission if he walked into your class tonight --
-- 1Co 2:2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.
- b. --1 Cor 15:1-4 First thing he presented was the core of the Gospel – Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection.

2. Review this AIM series with Christ in Mind: BUT PAUL’S ULTIMATE AIM IS CHRIST ---

Through Christ they found ULTIMATE JOY

HE is the GIVER of LIFE,

HE is the epitome and example of HUMILITY,

HE is the LIGHT and STANDARD OF Righteousness.

HE is the BUILDER and ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN –

HE is the PRINCE OF PEACE

CHRIST is our AIM

3. You can only put one thing in the box – what will it be? “Half Time” by Bob Buford

What would you put in your box? A sport, text book, video game, the most likes, most followers-- on social media, being most popular at school, all that matters to me is to get into that certain school, Bob Buford had to decide what to put in his box. What would you put in your box if you could only put one thing?

CHRIST was Paul’s ONE THING in the BOX

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

1. JESUS WAS HIS AIM / “I can do ALL THINGS”

Philippians 1: 20-24

- a. Vr 20 – in the way he lived and died – Paul wanted to “all things” to magnify Christ.
Application: Do people see Christ is what you do and how you do what you do? Example: Do people see Christ is the way you “do social media?” ... “play sports?” ... “dress?” ... “intelligence?”

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- b. Vr 21 - "To live is Christ" is another way of saying, "all things" are going to be about Christ. He is the one thing in the box.
- c. Vr 22-24 "to remain in the flesh is more needful for you." In other words, Paul is saying, that while I live I am going to help you put Christ in "your box." Are you a blessing to others spiritual life or not? In other words, are your friends closer to God, because of your friendship, or are your friends moving away from Christ because of your influence in their life?

2. JESUS WAS HIS AIM / "I can do all things THROUGH CHRIST"

Philippians 3:3-4, 8, 10, 14

- a. Vr 3 Paul wanted to live his LIFE THROUGH CHRIST. Once he became a Christian he stopped having confidence in the flesh. As a young Jewish man, he could have won a bragging contest with any other young Jewish man (vr 4). Instead he decided that if parts of his life were contrary to Christ – he would give them up. And all other aspects of his life would be used for Christ's glory. Application: Give up sin and things that distract you from serving the Lord (Heb 12:1-2). Then all that God has given you, use them for His glory! Play ball in a way that all see Christ living in you. Show your intelligence in a way that God is living in you. Let your beauty be overshadowed by your love for Christ. Don't be more concerned about who is "following" you than whether or not you are following Christ!
- b. Vr 8 Paul lived to "gain Christ." That was HIS AIM.
- c. Vr 10 Three things Paul wanted
 - i. Know Him – how well do you know who you love?
 - ii. Know the Power of His Resurrection – He is our only hope beyond the funeral!
 - iii. Fellowship of His suffering – Paul was a partner with Christ EVEN in SUFFERING. That commitment is required of all followers (I Peter 2:21).
REVIEW: If we are going to do "all things through Christ" we MUST know Him, know His power (all power, even over death) and know we are ready to suffer with Him (2Cor 11:22-33; II Tim 4:6)
- d. Vr 14 Paul set Christ as his Goal. He "pressed" toward the goal. This word means to pursue with the willingness to suffer deeply. In this one chapter this word is used three times translated into three different English words (NKJV):
 - i. 3:6 "persecuting"
 - ii. 3:12 "I follow after"
 - iii. 3:14 "I press"

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3. JESUS WAS HIS AIM / “I can do all things through Christ WHO STRENGTHENS ME”

Philippians 4:11-13

- a. Paul found his strength in Christ to be greater than any situation he found himself in. Another application of this is powerfully seen in 2Corinthians 12:7-10.
- b. Vr 12 If Paul was “abased” (to be deeply humiliated) or was in a situation to “abound” (super abound or overflow like a river in flood stage) he was content.
- c. Vr 11-12 In both of these verses Paul said he had to LEARN to be CONTENT

- d. Paul’s learned to be CONTENT with CHRIST. No matter what happened around him or to him (humiliated or abounding) he “Learned” to be with Christ (in “all things”/Phil 1) and to live “through Christ” (Phil 3) so as to not miss his ONE AIM -- CHRIST (Phil 3:14). As long as Paul was on “aim” toward his mark of CHRIST – he could persevere through the best of days and the worst of days. The only thing he could NOT do was to live the day without Christ! In that he was discontent! Paul made a formal statement of this in Galatians 2:20.

Discussion and Application

“I can do” - Paul’s confidence in all things was through Christ!

“All Things” – Are all things in your life for God’s glory?

“Through Christ” – Are you making your life about HIM?

“who Strengthens me” – Are you finding strength in Christ that is greater than any situation you are in?

Go back through things you might have considered in your box. Put Christ in your box and then allow him to influence everything you do and who you are (your identity).

#AIMHIGHER