

Marks

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

of Discipleship

Symbols indicate **Mark** highlighted that day. This resource can be used by individuals, groups or families.



**Bible
Reading**

Day 1: Philippians 3:10-11

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

When we want to know something we can either analyze it or we can learn how it came to be. In Paul's use of the term "know" it is different than these two. He is referring to how Christ is working in his time and how Christ will be in the future. Paul knew that the power of the Resurrection (the power of life) was manifested (seen) as he lived out his new life in Christ. Living out this life meant that he preached to anybody and ministered to anybody.

Question: When have you ever shared in suffering with other people?

Challenge: Paul implies that we cannot know the Resurrection until we know Christ's death. What do you think?

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 2



Service

Day 2: Philippians 3:12

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

Paul knew that he was not done on this earth yet. In fact he would never be done until either Christ came or he joined with God after death. Paul came to understand that Christ took hold of him because there was a world that needed to feel the love of God. Paul came to know (from early on) that Christ appeared to him not because He wanted Paul to have a good experience but because He wanted Paul to be in mission. Paul's mission was preaching to the Greeks the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul was commissioned by God to offer them Christ.

Question: What do you think that Paul means by being made perfect? Is it possible?

Challenge: Make a commitment to offer Christ to someone this week.

Scripture: Matthew 5:23-48



Prayer

Day 3: Philippians 3:13-14

Brothers, 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.

In our Christian life we never complete our race and obtain the goal until either Christ returns or we leave this earth. I have seen individuals a few days before the end of their life give hope and blessing to others. I knew a woman dying of cancer (many years ago) who blessed me just a day before she went into sleep. God has given us the gift of being a blessing up to the time of our death. It is a sad note that sometimes we as individuals allow the forces of evil to make us hard and embittered so that we do not want to give the blessing we are able to give.

Question: Do you find yourself a person that looks mostly to the next day or to the one that has just passed?

Challenge: Take an inventory of your attitudes. See what needs to be changed so you can be a blessing until the end of your life.

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-11



Day 4: Philippians 3:15

All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

The term mature is used by Paul to say, those who are of one mind. This does not mean that all agree on everything but that all have the same attitude. In Philippians 2:1-8, Paul describes the attitude we ought to strive for in life. Paul believes that even if we do not all agree if we have the "mind of Christ" then we will come to the correct conclusion. Paul firmly believed that the Spirit of God will provide for us the answer if we listen in humility.

Question: When you disagree with someone how do you come to an agreement?

Challenge: Read Philippians 2:1-8 and see how close you are to the mind of Christ.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-14



Day 5: Philippians 3:16-17

Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

Paul is now being encouraging to the Philippians. He says that he hopes to live up to the lofty ideals he has preached and that he looks to others to help him live up to those ideals. We cannot grow in our faith as a solitary person. We need the help and example of others to assist us. We are at times the example to others and at times we need the example of others. In Christ we are humble enough to take direction and bold enough to give it.

Question: Do you live according to a plan or do you live for each day?

Challenge: Who can you be an example to that someone could follow? If you cannot think of someone then what do you have to do to become an example?

Scripture: II Thessalonians 3



Day 6: Philippians 3:18-21

For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Paul concludes this section by warning us against those who do not have the mind of Christ. They work for their own gain and nothing else. Their words may sound good but watch and see if they really have the attitude of Christ. This song picks up rather well how Paul felt about this world and the one after:

This world is not my home, I'm just passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue. The angels beckon me from Heaven's open door and I can't feel at home in this world anymore. They're all expecting me and that's one thing I know. My Savior pardoned me and now I onward go. I know He'll take me through, though I am weak and poor and I can't feel at home in this world anymore.

Question: How do we become a citizen of heaven?

Challenge: What is wrong with having one's mind on earthly things?

Scripture: I Corinthians 15:35-58