

This is Enough

Philippians 3: 4- 14 (October 8, 2017)

Philippians 3: 11-14

11if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. 12Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Historical Context

Paul mentions his status and achievements within the Jewish tradition. In the ancient world, one's social status was determined by one's honor. This could be ascribed honor, which was due to the reputation of family. It could also be acquired honor, gained through certain achievements.

Theme: This is Enough

The average American house size in the 1940s was 1,200 square feet. In 1983, it was 1,725 square feet and by 2013, it was 2,600 square feet. So, since 1940, average house sizes have more than doubled but our average family size has decreased! At the heart of the story Americans tell themselves is a close link between progress and material goods. Work leads to money and with money we can buy things. And in these things we seek to find comfort. But, as Pope Francis said: "A constant flood of new consumer goods can baffle the heart and prevent us from cherishing each thing and each moment."

When the Apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians, he was not contemplating many earthly possessions. He was writing from prison! Though the Philippians were citizens of the Roman Empire, Paul instructs them to claim their citizenship in heaven. Citizens of heaven must be critical of societal values, though not totally detached from culture. Citizenship in heaven leads to questioning conspicuous consumption.

"The good life - the one that truly satisfies - exists only when we stop wanting a better one. It is the condition of savoring what is, rather than longing for what might be. Satisfaction comes when we step off the escalator of desire and say, "This is enough. What I have will do. What I make of it is up to me and my vital union with the living Lord" (Charles Swindoll, *Living On the Ragged Edge*, p. 21).

Gospel Story as a Case Study (Matthew 21:33-46)

In the parable of the landowner, Jesus is referred to as the Cornerstone. The function of a cornerstone is to keep the building properly aligned during construction. With an imperfect cornerstone nothing is square and the structure is unsafe. Without Jesus as the cornerstone, life will always be a bad fit, vanity and striving after wind, and unsafe for the future. It is crucial that we build our lives with Jesus as the Cornerstone and not the ideas and practices of man.