

The Only Hope for Happiness
International Bible Lesson
Philippians 3:1-11
Sunday, January 20, 2013
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“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead” (Philippians 3:10, 11—KJV).

“All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death, in the hope that I myself will be raised from death to life” (Philippians 3:10, 11—GNB).

“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead” (Philippians 3:10, 11—NRSV).

Those who follow Jesus Christ know that their only hope for happiness depends on their loving, gracious, and forgiving heavenly Father. Following the example of the Apostle Paul, they do not boast about a privileged birth, or good behavior, or religious attainments as reasons for going to heaven when they die. Instead, they “boast in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:3). They love to tell the old story, now unknown by many, about Jesus, the Son of God, coming into our world to teach the truth and die on a cross so God could justly judge and mercifully forgive those who trust in Him as Savior and Lord. They love to tell the good news that those who follow Jesus will someday receive a glorified resurrected human body similar to Jesus’ body when He raises them from the dead.

Jesus’ followers want to know and love Him better as they pray, obey, and study the Scriptures. They seek to live continuously in a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. They hope and pray that others will see the love and resurrection power of Jesus Christ in everything they say and do. They seek God’s ways to share the good news about Jesus Christ and His many spiritual gifts for those He forgives and saves from the power of sin, so others can trust in Jesus too. They know they may suffer or die for their faithfulness to God, but they also know that by His grace they will “attain the resurrection from the dead.”

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Thinking Further

1. What are some of truths of Scripture that Christians need to study repeatedly?
2. What might some “evil workers” in the church teach in churches today? Do you feel comfortable saying that people who promote and teach falsehoods or ideas contrary to the Scriptures are “evil workers”? Give a reason for your answer.
3. Why should we not have confidence that we are saved based on our race, background, or behavior?
4. What false confidence that they will be saved when they meet God and God judges them do some people have today?
5. How can someone have confidence that God will not condemn them after they die?