

Let us look at Phil. 3:10. Perhaps you could keep this place in your Bibles because though we may look at some other passages we may keep returning to this. (Phil. 3:10) "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his suffering and becoming like him in his death." I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings.

It is very important in the Christian life, that which was stressed in the hymn we just had: trusting Christ. We trust Him for salvation. We trust Him every step of the way. Our relationship of complete trust in Christ is one of the most important things in the Christian life. But this morning I want to go a little beyond that. That is absolutely essential, but it's not all to the effective Christian life. Certainly not all in the life of one who is training to be a servant of Christ.

We notice in this v. as it goes on in the following vv., that there is another element stressed. Not simply to know Him. Not simply to trust Him. But in v. 12, he says, "Not that I have already obtained all this, or already were made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold, but one thing I do forgetting what is behind and straining for what is ahead, I press on toward the goal, to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward. . . I press on. I strain forward."

Certainly the trust in Christ, the quiet confidence in Him is the absolute essential of the Christian life. But the one who lives a successful Christian life also has responsibilities to press on and to go forward. As Paul says in the v. with which we began, he said, I want to know the power of His resurrection. We are to press on. We are to learn to have that power. We are to choose == to use that power.

Now the pressing on, the pushing forward, the straining to accomplish that has also its place in the Christian life is what I want to speak about this morning. I want to speak about it under two heads: two aspects both of which are very important. The first of them is that which most naturally occurs to us: the goal of serving Christ effectively; the goal of accomplishing what He wants us to accomplish. Certainly we need the power of His resurrection to do this. He wants us to press on, to step out, to accomplish for Him.

Jesus said to the disciples, The fields are already white unto harvest. He didn't say, Go and see if you can get somebody to give you a job somewhere, and he'll pay you so much for preaching twice on Sunday and holding a prayer meeting. We are not training you here for a job. We are not training you so that you can fit in a niche. We are trying to train you to go in God's directions for your life -- His Word -- to learn to understand that Word; to learn to find in it His message for you, His message for the conduct of your life, His message for your accomplishment, your service. We are trying to prepare you not for a job, a position of a vocation, but to be an effective servant of Christ.