

Philippians_Wk6_Mindset for Success

Philippians 3 NIV

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Over the last few weeks we've been discovering that our **Mindset Matters - but not just any kind of mindset will accomplish the purposes of God in your life.** You need the **mindset of Christ.** The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to Christians in the region of Macedonia known as the Philippians, and in the portion of that letter that we are reading from today, we see yet another expression of the importance of our mindset.

Three weeks ago we talked about the importance of having the **mindset of Christ while you suffer for him and in your relationships.**

Last week we talked about having a **mindset for the mission** of Christ. If you aren't prepared with the right mindset, you'll never accomplish the mission.

This week we are continuing with that theme by talking about how having

The Mindset for Success Jesus way.

In light of how the past week has gone, I realize that for many of you, your idea of success is closely exemplified by how your political party fared during the election.

But think beyond the realm of politics...what are the things you have categorized as your greatest successes?

Maybe write them in the comments if you are feeling bold enough.

Maybe it's a degree, an income level, a person or people you associate with, a personal goal, recognition, etc.

Now before I go on - please hear me clearly - there is nothing wrong with personal achievements, degrees, hitting an income level etc...So I'm not setting you up for a smackdown, but I am going to try and make a point.

Life can be broken down into a lot of wins and losses.

The thrill of victory makes defeat unacceptable.

The temptation is to want all the wins because we have come to believe that winning is everything. And while that may be true on the sports field, it is far from true for a follower of Jesus.

Jesus LOST EVERYTHING so that he could honor the will of his Father in Heaven and so that we could have life...so that we could have victory...so that we could WIN.

Jesus invites you and I to partner with him in being losers in the world's eyes so that we can be ultimate winners in his eyes.

Now again, don't confuse your definition of a loser and Jesus definition of a loser.

Because here's the big difference: **losers for Jesus are those who gain the most.**

Jesus said, what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world (what comes to mind that you have wanted or earned of worldly value?) but loses his soul?

Paul, the writer of the letter to Philippi is mirroring that message and modeling that message for us.

A couple of quick points to observe before the message:

1. Paul is using himself as an example of what to do - he's not arrogantly boasting about himself, but he is so convinced of the power of God through Jesus Christ at work within him and through him that he calls on the Philippians to follow his lead. That's bold, but that's his leadership approach.
2. Paul knows that the political environment that the Philippians are in is very volatile. He knows that within the church there is conflict and powerful insecurity. He also knows that there are people in the church who are trying to create confusion through false teachings.
3. Paul knows that the human tendency is to fall back on our own goodness, our own morality, and our own ability to make something happen - and he confronts it with a message that was counter-cultural then and is also counter-cultural today.

Here's how to develop the **mindset for success Jesus style**

1. Gains come from losses

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything [greek word for everything, literally means, everything!] a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in[a] Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. 10 I want to know Christ—yes, to

know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Do you see what Paul is doing? He's measuring everything against Jesus.

Earlier in this passage Paul lists all of the reasons he has to brag about his success and position; and then he says, "I have lost it all!" ANd he's glad about it!

This passage came alive for me about a year ago while I was traveling to Rochester for a series of meetings. Our Board of Administration had just received an estimate for the building project that blew our socks off in all the wrong directions and we were devastated. We quite literally had to begin at square one. While i was driving and grieving the loss of opportunity and grieving the lost momentum that we had seen begin - the Lord gave me this passage in my prayers.

So while I'm driving, I'm screaming out my frustrations, and then all of a sudden I find myself praying these words. The Holy Spirit began to change me so that the loss was no longer a loss, but instead it was a gain.

But listen - just because you lose something for Jesus doesn't mean the gain is going to happen instantly. Just because Jesus calls you to be a loser doesn't mean he's going to immediately bring about some kind of crazy victory.

Often times there is a season of necessary grieving because our pride and our identity is so wrapped up in the perception of winning and success that to not achieve that is a major blow.

But as the Lord heals, as repentance of sins happens, as you become aware of your own greed and impure motives - the Lord begins to show you the other way...the way of the winner.

So - back to my personal illustration...after I prayed this Scripture back to Jesus, do you know what he said to me?

"Everything you need is found in me" - I've got this. I've got you. I've got your church. I've got your family. I've got your staff.

Jesus needed to change my mindset...he needed to teach me that everything I saw as a gain needed to be reoriented around what true gains are...and all gains are Jesus and more of him. Everything else is extra, but the real treasure is Jesus alone.

Remember what Paul said,

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Some of you listening right now you are holding onto something so tight...a dream, a person, an expectation, a job, your own goodness and your own morality...and Jesus today is inviting you to let go of all that you are trying to be on your own so that he can become your righteousness. So that he can become to you what Paul discovered him to be for himself.

Other's of you know this to be true - and here's what I'm going to ask you to do - **TELL YOUR JESUS STORY** with boldness.

We have an entire generation of people who do not know God, do not think they have a need for Jesus, because they have not seen or heard from the generation before them of all the ways in which God has turned what might have been success in the eyes of he world into a loss, but after the loss how amazing a gain it really was in light of Jesus.

2. Your past does not determine your future

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. **13** Brothers and sisters, 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, **14** I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

I have misunderstood Paul quite a few times. I think that many people have - he can be a tough guy to keep up with and make sense of at times. But listen to the humility Paul displays and then the mindset he models:

First - “ I am not all put together.” I have not ‘arrived’. But here is what I do - **I press on to take hold of that for which Christ took hold of me.**

Let me ask you: **Do you know why Christ took hold of you?**

Because he loves you and he wants to give you life and purpose **IN HIMSELF.**

He took hold of you so that you can bring glory to him. He knows that the only possible way for you to have the fullness of life that he can give is through your total surrender to him.

But there are voices telling you a different story.

Because we all have a past.

I have one. You have one. And can we be honest, they are all pretty are they? For some of you, the past night is your past and you are regretting it.

For others of you, it was decades ago.

Our spiritual enemy will use your past to derail your future in Christ by whispering into your ear that you are disqualified, you are too far gone, you did too much, there's not way....

For Paul - his past was quite awful.

Paul was a pious man, a religious elite, he knew more than most, had the entire Old Testament memorized, and the dude was a brute on top of that.

In fact, he was so confident in his own moral goodness and religious prestige that he could not fathom how anyone could worship this Jesus of Nazareth. And so, he began orchestrating the murder of Christians.

Talk about a past.

But in a miraculous encounter, Jesus intervened in Paul's life and invited him to new life - HIS LIFE.

Paul was never the same and all of his personal achievements paled in comparison to the power and majesty of Christ.

But the problem was, the people who didn't like Paul's message, they would bring up his past.

Some of you right now are dealing with whispers from hell, reminding you of your past. Some of you, you are rightfully broken and remorseful over the choices you made, and the person you were, but in Christ you are now a new creation and you have a new identity and a new calling and...

So you press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called you heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Let me tell you - the powers of Hell don't play fair and you will be in a brawl, friends.

3. Bring heaven to earth

17 Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. **18** For, as I have often told you before and

now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. **19** Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. **20** But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** 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.

The last component to a Mindset for Success Jesus-style is that we are not merely waiting out this life to get to the next in eternity.

Paul again does a comparison of those who are trying to impress the world with their earthly prestige and plaudits, and then says - listen, because of their warped mindset they are ENEMIES OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

This is super bold - but let me tell you something...there are a lot of people who know a lot about Jesus and the church and yet they are living as enemies of the cross of Christ because they are so consumed with themselves that they won't deny themselves for others.

Paul makes a statement that in our English language doesn't really communicate the full meaning or scope of what Paul writes. But when Paul says that our citizenship is in heaven, He's not just implying about that place we go when we die.

What he is describing to you and I is that as followers of Jesus we are citizens of his kingdom, and wherever we are, there the Kingdom of God is. Because of that, we are bringing heaven to earth.

Listen, for Christians to be successful in our modern day, it's not good enough to go to church; it's not enough that you simply read your Bible - in everything we do we are to work to bring about - to make a new reality, but embodying the Jesus way here on earth.

The Mindset for Success as a follower of Jesus is backwards, upside down, and supernatural.

Listen, Encounter Church exists not to make a name for ourselves, but to make a name for Jesus.

The building we are building and that we are continuing to raise funds to complete - that isn't just for us, it's for the generations that come after us, it's for the people in our communities that need the life of Christ to bring them to new life, it's to equip people to leave their past in the past and lay hold of the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus.

You - whoever you are and wherever you are - true success is not found in all the ways you are told it is found; true success is found when you discover that Jesus is the source and sustainer of everything and that he is your all sufficient Savior.

So you want to be successful?

Be a loser for Jesus and discover lasting victory.