

W524_The_Prize_of_the_High_Calling_2.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the chapter of the Open book and is dealing with the epistle to the Philippians with a special concentration on what is meant by the prize of the high calling. Up and down this country, I believe there are still in existence places which are called so-and-so's folly. A great heap of stone and cement and brick. A huge foundation. Nothing built upon it. Well, you see, it's not a foundation unless it's built upon. It's only a great mass of stuff in the way. And even though we stress fundamental truth, if it's all foundation and no building, it's just as bad. So there comes a time when a congregation of God's people whom we believe are rejoicing in the foundation truth of our salvation, that it is not of works, lest any man should boast. Go on to discover that there is a place for good works if they're in the right position. Not in the foundation, but in the superstructure. So as we find in our glorious calling, the great foundation truth is laid for us in the epistle to the Ephesians. It is followed by an epistle to the Philippians, which exhorts us to run the race that is set before us and helps us to realize that there is something more than merely rejoicing in something which God planned before the foundation of the world and be able to rejoice in something which is taking place now at this very moment in our endeavor to walk worthy of such a calling.

[00:01:58] I hope that nobody will go away and feel that we are, in any measure, speaking lightly of the glorious foundation would only saying, Let's be sure that we use it to the glory of God and do that which is in harmony with His will. Now the epistle to the Philippians has got its own construction and its own message, and there are all sorts of ways in which we may approach this question because it speaks about attaining unto a resurrection. Whatever you attain unto a resurrection, it must have something peculiar about it. We've got to look at that. But there is a principle that I'm working upon myself and have done for many years, and I commend it to you. And we find in the Scriptures that there are parallel passages. And when we read some doctrine all by itself that is from God, but that will be come across it again in some other expression. We put the two together and we realize he is an indication as to how this is to be applied and understood. So I'm going to ask you if you care to put your finger in the book, in the Bible that you have with you in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and then so that you can turn backwards and forwards this morning between Philippians and Hebrews. Now, I know that the ordinary Sunday sermon is firstly, secondly, thirdly and conclusion. And you all sit quiet and you don't bother to open your Bible.

[00:03:33] But in this particular case, we can't do that. I want you to see for yourself this principle which I'm going to introduce this morning. Now, first of all, Philippians chapter three. This. Um, 12. Philippians Chapter three. I just wanted to be sure that the of the verse. He says in verse 17 of Chapter three Brethren, be followers together of me and mark them, which walk. So as you have us, for an example. So many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Doesn't say they didn't believe Jesus Christ and Him crucified for their sins, but by their attitude, their end, it is of their very cross that saved them. Whose end is destruction? Whose God is their belly? Whose glory is in their shame? Who mind earthly things? At the point that I wanted to make is this. That we have in this passage. The word destruction. Whose end is destruction? And also we have an emphasis, as we shall find presently, on the question of going on unto perfection. Perfection on the one hand. Destruction of the other. Now, not losing Philippians, but turn to Hebrews and you will discover that there we have the same words once more in a little different context. But they are there on purpose. Chapter six, Verse one of Hebrews. Chapter six, verse one.

[00:05:30] Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection. Not laying again the foundation of repentance and dead works and the faith toward God. Let us go on unto perfection. And then in Chapter ten of Hebrews 39, it puts the alternative. Chapter 10:39. We are not of them who draw back unto perdition. Well, now we have two epistles and they both say perfection is in front of you. Or you may draw back to perdition. Would you say? That's very strange? Because I understood that salvation by grace. Made to say that you could not be lost. Now, that's because we haven't got the right meaning of the word perdition. You remember on one occasion in the Gospels, according to Matthew, the disciples murmured at this waste. That's the word perdition. It's not tortured and torment, and it's for its waste. Don't you think, Friends? It's possible for a believer who is saved by grace to have a good deal of waste about his ordinary, everyday life and witness? Nothing but leaves. The spirit grieves over a wasted life, while the Apostle is earnestly desiring that those believers who have rejoiced in the high calling of Ephesians should also rejoice in the high, as it were, exhibition of grace that he wants to be exhibited in Philippians. We shall need all the grace there is to walk worthy of that calling. But that certainly is what he said in Scripture. Walk worthy of that calling.

[00:07:22] So without more ado, let's look at a few of the things which are stressed in both of these epistles. First of all, in Philippians chapter 3:14, we have the word which is started us off. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. And if you'll keep now that passage and turn to Hebrews Chapter ten. Hebrews. Chapter ten. 35. Cast, not away. Therefore, your confidence which hath great recompense of reward for ye have need of patience that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise and also the. In Chapter 11:26 of the same epistle we read. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. In one passage, it's the prize of the high calling of God. In the other, it's the reward attached to faithful witness. So don't be afraid of the thought that God is not only a savior by grace from sin, but is also pleased to see any effort on our part, by His grace, to use all the means of his given us to walk worthy to run this race. And he even said, I'll give you a reward at the end. It's not for prize or crown that enter with the army. But the same time God says, I'll see to it that you do when that day comes. We read about even for the joy that was set before him.

[00:09:23] Endured the cross despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the Father. That's our savior. So you see, we must be so high and mighty that we have no place for recognition and reward. It's in the Scriptures. So while there's no reward with regard to being members of the Body of Christ, Philippians says Run with patience. The race set before you. Press on to the prize of the high calling of God. And there is a special resurrection there that we've got to face presently. And so I think perhaps we might look at that in the same way. If first of all, Philippians chapter three, verse 11. He says in verse ten that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, not merely the historic fact of it, 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. Now, that's an extraordinary statement. How could anybody speak about attaining to the resurrection? It's that side of your power, isn't it? Nothing to do with you. But when you look at the original, you discover that there are two little words. Ek Meaning out of the out resurrection, that which is out from among the dead. Well, now, let's look again with that in mind at Hebrews Chapter 11:35. Chapter 11:35. It speaks about those who suffered. By faith.

[00:11:08] And in verse 35, women received their dead, raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they may obtain a better resurrection. So Philippians says, attaining to an ex and resurrection from among the dead. And Hebrews says enduring, that they may obtain a better resurrection. Of course, somebody never heard anything like it'd be like before. Well, Fred is about time you did, because it's in the book. It's there. And God expects us to believe what he says. So while he's giving us wonderful grace without any response on our part yet, he does look for us to rise and walk in newness of life. And if he's held out before us, any hope of something in the sense of a reward. What a joy it will be to lay at his feet at that day when he comes. So there are 2 or 3 passages there. Well, now I've got to give Maceo that I can't possibly deal with them all. I just ask you to notice a few more. In. We've got Hebrews Open, Chapter six, verse one, chapter six of Hebrews, verse one, therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Let us go on and to perfection leaving go on. And in Philippians chapter 3:13. Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do forgetting. See? Leaving those things which are behind, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

[00:13:21] You see the parallel that is in these two epistles to two different sets and companies of God's people. It's one thing to be saved by grace. It's another thing to enter into the high calling of God and seek to go on and to perfection and leave behind the many things that hinder in that witness. There are many other things that we might look at in this matter. Take, for instance, you've got Hebrews Open, Chapter 12. If Hebrews 15 and 16, chapter 12, 15 and 16. At the end, as if looking diligently, lest any man fall foul of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness, spring up and trouble you, and thereby many be defiled, lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat swapped his birthright, sold his birthright. You see what he's warning them? You can't you can't lose your salvation. That's in the hands of God only. But this which is held out in front of you, you can lose by indulging the flesh. So he says, for one morsel of meat. Now, others, Philippians Chapter 3:19, deal with this. He says in verse. Verse 17, Chapter three, Philippians brethren before we was together of me and mark them, which walk as as you ever asked for an example for many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.

[00:15:10] Its walk. You see friends whose end is destruction. That's this word waste. Whose God is their belly? Well, that's simply saying that they are like the ones that are mentioned in Hebrews that for one morsel of meat. He sold his birthright. Don't you see The possibilities are with all the temptations with which we are surrounded in this world, to barter away for a little mean advantage. Now, for that glorious day when we shall be in his presence and receive words? Well done, good and faithful servant. So we're stressing this aspect this morning because it's there. Then there's an emphasis upon sacrifice. If you will notice why you have Hebrews Open Chapter 13 and 16. It says verse 15 by him. Therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually. That is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But if you stop there, some folks may say, oh, I can manage that. All right. But he says it's not only what you say in the fruit of your lips. I haven't finished yet. But to do good and to communicate. Forget not for with such sacrifices. God is well pleased. So you see, there's a sacrifice which has nothing to do with intruding into the one great sacrifice of Christ, which is following in his steps and not looking after number one so much as looking after others and spending and being spent if needs be in his service.

[00:17:08] So we have that stress on sacrifice. And in Philippians chapter four, verse 18. Chapter four, he says. I'll go back a little bit. Verse 13, The words of a very independent nature. Verse 13 of Philippians four. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me. Operations that I want you to feel that I'm acting like that notwithstanding. He have well done that he did communicate with my affliction. Now you Philippians know also that at the beginning of the gospel when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only for even in Thessalonica. He said once and again unto by necessity. Here comes the man again out on top. Not because I desire a gift. I can always remember myself and my mother looking at me. A child of about six and somebody who was visiting us offered me a penny. I said, No thank you. I've got a money box. This apostle added a little touch of the independence, but he felt he could ruin the work of God by stressing it. So he says, Not because I desire a gift, but I desire that there may be abound. Fruit may abound to your account, but I have all and abound. I am full having received of epaphroditus the things which were sent from you. An odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

[00:18:52] So you see the gifts of God's people in the right heart and the right spirit are just in the steps of our Savior, who offered himself in a faster way than ever we could ever be called upon to do. But there's there you see the same expression. And then again, we have two titles given of our savior. While we have Philippians open, we might notice chapter two, verse six, chapter two, verse six, Who let this mind be in you? Which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be grasped at, to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation. He is the example set before us. And when we see the form of God, we come to the Epistle, to the Hebrews, and we find in chapter one, verse three a corresponding sort of emphasis. Suppose we read the first three verses. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets have in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed, heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Who, being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins. You see. The form of God. What a position to hold.

[00:20:34] Yet he made himself of no reputation and stooped to the death of the cross as Philippians. The image of God and whole creation depending upon him. Yet it goes on to say when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand. So we have this example of our saviour. And while we have Hebrews open in front of us again, let us look again at the word in ten. Chapter 1034. Chapter 1034. He had compassion on me in my bonds and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Now that is Hebrews chapter. What was that? 11. Chapter ten. And now we look at the corresponding passage. Just wait a minute. In Philippians Chapter three. Chapter 320. Chapter 320. Just I'll go back into 19. Whose end is destruction? Whose God is their belly? Whose glory is in their shame, Who mind earthly things? For our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change this body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory, according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. At. There's many other a passage that I've got here noted. I don't want to overload the meeting. I'll just mention a few so that you may perhaps pick them out for yourselves as time goes on.

[00:22:56] We have a city. It speaks about those in Hebrews 11 who willingly gave up because they look for a city. And in Philippians, our citizenship is not here. It is in heaven. So you won't have all the blessings of a citizenship here because you belong to Christ. You may have to put up with things. And then we have the the I must get these two together. Chapter 311. Just leave them with you, Philippians. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. As we said earlier, that needs an explaining, and that's a reason why we are dealing with in this way. And the parallel passage to that is not the resurrection, but a better resurrection which we find in Chapter 11. They had, in view, a better resurrection. Well, if there's a better resurrection and if there's a resurrection that can be obtained, and if it's connected with a prize, connected with a high calling, and if it has to do with a race that's set before you and if it has to do with all these various things going on unto perfection, not drawing back to sheer waste, surely there ought to be some opportunity for the children of God to know it. It's not good enough to sit in a meeting and always be told a wonderful foundation upon which you rest and never told that it's not a foundation at all unless you build on it. So will you just tolerate a few more Sunday mornings where we seek to emphasize this other aspect of truth? It's one thing to be a member of the Body of Christ and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places that cannot be forfeited.

[00:24:49] It's another thing to know that in that day there will be some little element of a pat on the head, a little element of a reward for standing for his truth, for witnessing, for him, for running with patience. The race set before us. And if anybody objects and says, well, I think that's something to do with good works, it is friends and don't be afraid of them because they're not too many of them about. If anyone would wish to know further about these parallels, they will find them in one of the brilliant Expositors. But I have to tell you where to find them if you need it afterwards. But perhaps I've given you enough to start you searching for yourself to see that Philippians and Hebrews have very much in common something better in front of them. Something that I have to give up, something that I have to watch out for. And a reward of the high calling of God at the finish, one says about resurrection out from among the dead. The other says that they may obtain a better resurrection. And I leave that with you and say, Now, surely if that's a fact, it's worthwhile making it known at some time or the other. And we've taken the opportunity now.