



A Worship Series of Franklin United Methodist Church (Franklin, MA)

discuss

Mr. Rogers once said that “Each day there’s something else to listen to, something new to see and touch, something more to find out. You can learn what things are and how they work. You can ask people to help you, and you’ll discover a lot for yourself.”¹

What things have you given up on? Why did you give up on them?

What do you refuse to give up on? What keeps you striving toward your goal?

scripture

Philippians 3:3-14
New Revised Standard Version

³ For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh—⁴ even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ.

⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not 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. ¹³ Beloved, 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, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

“The tension between what Christians already are and what they are called to be is neatly expressed in Paul’s use of two words with the same root, first, to declare that he is not yet “perfect” (v. 12), and second, to appeal to those who, like himself, are “mature” (v. 15). John Wesley was only one person among many who have believed that Christian perfection is not only a proper aim but real possibility—but Wesley was nevertheless skeptical about those who actually *claimed* to be perfect! It has been well said that the mark of true maturity is to know that one is *not* yet perfect. In this life, the goal always remains beyond us, demanding our continual endeavor, beckoning us forward”²

Are you striving toward—refusing to give up the pursuit of—Christian perfection?

What does it mean to be perfect as a Christian?

- 1 Mr. Rogers as quoted in the *Mister Rogers’ Songbook* (New York: Random House, 1970), p.32.
2. Morna D. Hooker, “Philippians 3:12-4:1 Reflections” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, vol. XI (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), p.537.

next week

Offer H.O.P.E: Hospitality