



# KING'S CHAPEL

## Daily Devotional - Philippians Study

Week 4 - Day 2

### Approaching God

#### Read Psalm 139:18-29; 23-24

*How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you. Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

The people who know their God deeply pray something like this: “Father I want to see the world, and others through your eyes - to see things the way you see them.” We tend to relate to the world and others through a lens of self-protection and anxiety, but David sees the freedom in being caught up in the searching and inexhaustibly rich wisdom of God. The more we know God and see others the way God sees them, the greater our love will move us out. And that starts with seeing *ourselves* the way God sees *us*. Talk to the Lord this morning about the way he sees things. Thank him for his precious thoughts and ask him to search you this morning so that you might align your anxious thoughts with his steady vision and love.

### Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Philippians 3:1-6

**Slowly & carefully read the passage 2 or 3x's before taking notes & answering questions**

*Ancestry and all that went with it was very important in the ancient world, as it is in man societies in our own day. Jews of the first century, who could trace their ancestry back for 2000 years to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and who knew which of Jacob's sons they were descended from - such people were understandably proud. What are some things you have treasured in or benefited from?*

**Philippians 3:1-6** - **1** Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. **2** Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. **3** For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh-- **4** though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: **5** circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

**Start with Engaging the Text:** Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. Which words or phrases stand out to you as significant?

## Daily Study Questions

Try using the A.B.C. method for studying & meditating on a passage of scripture. The questions below will get you familiar with this method

### To Study the Passage:

- What are some things you learn or observe about God in this passage? (Father, Son, Holy Spirit?)
- What might this passage reveal about you, your neighbor, human nature, people?
- Are there any commands to be obeyed or things to be avoided, or examples to follow?

***Now choose the verse or truth that is most striking and helpful to you so far. Paraphrase the thought or verse in your own words.***

### Meditation & Reflection Questions

- How would believing this truth or taking it seriously change your life? If it were fully alive and effective in your innermost being - what might be different?
- Why might God be showing you this truth today? What might be going on in my life that he would bring this to my attention?

### Close in Prayer:

**Rejoice:** - What 1 or 2 things can you praise and rejoice in from today's study?

**Repent:** - What 1 or 2 things do you need to confess and ask for forgiveness?

**Request:** - What 1 or 2 things do you want to ask God for today as a result of your study?

### Commentary on Philippians 3

#### Philippians 3:1-21 - Opponents of the Gospel: Where Does Righteousness Come From?

Paul begins this section by calling the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord (v. 1) but then warns them about the Judaizing opponents (people who insisted that Christians had to obey all the OT ceremonial laws) of the gospel (vv. 2–3). In contrast, Paul has renounced his spiritual and ethnic privileges for the sake of knowing Christ (vv. 4–11); his righteousness comes through Christ, not the law (vv. 12–16). One of the greatest obstacles to applying the gospel to ourselves is our human tendency to depend on our own resources. In these verses Paul demolishes any dependence on human ability for righteousness. The “dogs” who “mutilate the flesh” (v. 2) are Judaizers who taught that circumcision was necessary for salvation. He then calls the Philippians to follow his example of commitment to Jesus as Lord (vv. 17–21).

The vocabulary of ch. 3 is reflected in the rest of the letter, and its themes of “progress” and “example” are central to Paul’s overarching purposes. While the Judaizers hold out a promise of spiritual progress through adherence to the rules of the old covenant, Paul holds himself out as an example of someone who knows that real progress consists only in being increasingly conformed to the image of Christ’s death and resurrection. Paul’s conflicts with the Judaizers can be seen in greater detail in Acts and Galatians (e.g., Acts 15:1–19; Gal. 2:15–21; 3:6–4:31), as well as in the rest of his letters. Their teaching that Gentiles must first become Jews and obey all the OT laws in order to be saved was abhorrent to Paul. Not only did it show a lack of welcome (in complete contrast to God’s own attitude) but it also sought in effect to divert Gentiles away from Christ into a covenant that could never save them.

While the law might be “holy and righteous and good” (Rom. 7:12), the old covenant pertained to the age before the giving of the Spirit, and thus inevitably brought curse rather than blessing since human beings were unable to keep it. The “righteousness” it offered could only be an incomplete, superficial righteousness, in contrast to the perfect righteousness given as a gift to believers by virtue of the life and death of Christ. The fury of Paul’s response in these verses was fueled by his thankfulness for his own deliverance from this system.

Paul’s opposition to the Judaizers was not because he himself in any way lacked a Jewish “pedigree.” When it came to the things of the flesh—the whole system of life that held sway before the coming of Christ and the giving of the Spirit—Paul had perfect credentials. He was circumcised on the eighth day in accord with OT law (Lev. 12:3). He was an ethnic Israelite and knew the tribe from which he came. “Hebrew of Hebrews” probably indicates his descent from Jewish ancestors, and many think it also means that he spoke Aramaic (the national language of Israel in his day), even though he came from Greek-speaking Tarsus. He was from the strictest religious sect—the Pharisees (Acts 26:5). His zeal was such that he had even been a persecutor of the church. He probably had thought of himself as following in the footsteps of Phinehas (Num. 25:11) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:10, 14) in his zeal. If anyone could be said to be blameless in following the law, it was Paul. But before God it was no righteousness at all, for though Paul thought he was pleasing God, in persecuting the church he had shown himself to be the “foremost” of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).