

February Teaching Theme: Lent

讲员 Speaker: Pastor William R. Horne

题目 Topic: "Who Are We Becoming?"

经文 Scripture: Philippians 3

Monthly Theme: This month we are going to spend time reflecting upon matters of spiritual formation, discipline, and the process of sanctification in light of Lent season. This month for much of the Church in the world begins a season called "Lent," from February 17th to April 3rd this year. Lent is a time to "travel with Jesus towards his death." In this season, we spend extra time in repentance through self-examination and renewal through identification with Jesus on his journey. This season is characterized by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (generosity). Much of the Christian life and spiritual formation is the battle of living like Jesus and not participating in evil (sin). Growing into the likeness of Jesus is both the work of the Holy Spirit and the choice to submit to the Holy Spirit in the choices we make. We kicked off the series this month, spending time reflecting on "Who We Are Becoming" and with whose eyes we see the world, ourselves, and others.

二月 February – 四旬期 Lent

7th – Who Are We Becoming? (Phil 3)

14th - 舍己的争战 The Battle of Self-Denial (罗马书 Romans 7:7-8:1-2 and/or 诗篇 Proverbs 5) (四旬期 Lent)

21st – 祈祷与谦卑的争战 The Battle of Prayer & Humility (路加福音 Luke 18:1-14) (四旬期 Lent)

28th – 爱的争战 The Battle of Love (约翰一书 1 John 4:7-21) (四旬期 Lent)

Resources:

[Sermon Video](#)

[Sermon Slides](#)

[Sermon Manuscript w/ Translation](#)

Discussion Questions (Pastor William R. Horne):

- (1) Read Philippians 3 together. What observations do you make and what stands out to you? How would you summarize the passage? What is Paul's core ambition?
- (2) Paul has many reasons to put confidence "in the flesh," in both his born-privileges and his hard-earned accomplishments and status, but he considers them all loss for the sake of "knowing Christ." What temptations to "put confidence in the flesh" do we face? How can we combat those temptations?
- (3) Review Philippians 3:8-9. Paul in his pursuit to *know Christ* recognizes he has no righteousness of his own but finds his righteousness in Christ, granted to him through faith (allegiance). What does it mean to you that our righteousness is found in Christ alone? How does this beautiful reality change our approach to "spiritual disciplines"?

- (4) On the journey to *maturity in Christ*, there are many “competing stories” trying to capture our attention, imagination, and ultimately our allegiance. What are some “competing stories” to the Gospel and the Scriptures, you have seen on the journey?
- (5) During Lent season, many give up things as a sort of fasting, and others try to integrate something new into their lives. It is a good season to rethink how we live and to let some things go, or maybe even to develop some new holy habits. Spend some time to think of a new “holy habit” to implement or something to give up during Lent. Share these ideas together and pick a practice to be accountable to each other with. (Remember, Lent, is Feb 17th-April 3rd this year).

Important Notes (Pastor William R. Horne):

Context of Philippians 3:

Paul commands us to “Watch Out” for adversaries (Christians formed by another story other than Jesus) with destructive beliefs and practices. Those who become “enemies of the cross” were not atheist but likely people who genuinely acknowledge God, but were formed by another story. They have abandoned the pursuit of the heavenly prize, in favor of what belongs only to the present scheme of things. If we are not attentive to the stories that form us, we will become “enemies of the cross” while thinking we are friends of Jesus.

Notes on Q3: When we anchor our journey of spiritual formation in the profound Gospel truth that our righteousness is found in Christ alone, our motivation and drive on the journey becomes to “know Christ” and “becoming like him in his death,” instead of trying “to earn our righteousness.” For Paul, this good news of King Jesus was so good, his whole life became defined by the pursuit to “know Christ.” If we grasp the true beauty of the Gospel message, we too will be compelled to do the same. To become like Jesus “in his death” is to take on the same posture as Jesus willing to suffer (and even die) for the good of the other. This is a profound call, that we can only do in submission to the work of the Holy Spirit.

Notes on Q5: Practicing Spiritual Disciplines is better when done in a community of both accountability and encouragement. One way to do this activity would be to choose a spiritual discipline to practice all together during Lent or you can choose individual activities and check in with each other each week. Practices during the season of Lent can be temporary (like a type of fast) or implementing a new life long habit (also a good thing for Chinese New Year :)).

Sermon Summary (Dr. Michael Hungtao Chen): **For Sermon Summary See Translation Document Link Under Resources**