

Lenten Devotional March 30, 2021

Scripture

Philippians 3:15-21

15 Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. 16 Only let us hold fast to what we have attained. 17 Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. 18 For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. 19 Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. 21 He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

Devotional

The Rev. Ben Phipps '15

We live in a culture in which most of us like to do things our own way. From ordering at our favorite restaurant to selecting an outfit for the day, many of us live by the motto "Have it your way!" We long to be our own person, to be known as unique, to be a free individual. That yearning to be unique may make it frustrating to hear what the Apostle writes to the Christians in Philippi: "join in imitating me."

Hold on. Why should we have to do things the way you do, Paul? Why can't I do things my own way and live my life the way I want to live it?

Well perhaps Paul knows a truth about human nature that our culture seems to have forgotten (or perhaps ignores), namely, that as human beings we are creatures made from dust and created in God's image. Lent is a time of year when we remember that we are creatures while also seeking to be more like our Creator. Or to put it another way, Lent is a time when we seek to imitate Jesus. We participate in his sufferings so that we may participate in his glory.

So why imitate Paul? Simply because Paul imitates Jesus. We all need someone to look toward while imitating Jesus. For the Philippians it was Paul. Who is it for you? Whom are you imitating? Does your life represent someone who is imitating Jesus? If not, how can you adjust your life so that you reflect the glory of Christ?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, show me the areas in my life where I can better imitate you. I confess that I too often follow the selfish desires of my heart from longing to be my own person rather than following you. Strengthen me and equip me to love and serve you in every aspect of my life. Amen.