The Power of His Resurrection

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. The expression spoken.

I was a very young child. I was at a car dealership with my dad and one of his friends. And his friend was having some tires put on the car and some other things done.
And he was talking to the gentleman at the car dealership and asked if they could do a certain thing for him. And that was the first time I ever heard the expression said.
The worker at the car dealership said back to the gentleman who was there as a friend of my dad. He said, we're happy to do it. It's the least we could do.
I remember thinking, that's a strange thing to say. Why would you say to someone that's the least we could do? To my young ears, it sounded very odd.
[1:28] Why would a business tell a customer we're doing the least we can do? That's not what we are looking for. You don't go to a restaurant asking for the least good thing on the menu.

You don't go buy something and say, what's the least deal you have for me? No girl dreams of her fiance proposing with the least beautiful ring you've ever seen in your whole life.
And never have you heard a grandparent say, can I show you a picture of the least beautiful baby you've ever seen? And yet here was this salesman saying blatantly, without reservation, it's the least we can do.
I mean, aren't we usually interested in the greatest thing? The greatest news? The greatest blessing? Well, as I got older, I came to understand how sayings and cliches and expressions sometimes mean what they sound like and sometimes don't necessarily mean just that exact way.
But the truth of the matter is, when it comes to the gospel, the fact that Jesus Christ died in our place, was laid in the tomb, and He rose again, this is not the least of anything.
[2:51] This truly is the greatest thing someone could do for you. This is the greatest news that could ever be shared. This is the greatest gift that could ever be received.

This is the greatest act of love and kindness ever displayed in human history. There's nothing least about the sacrifice of Jesus, except that His grace is available to the least of these.
That's us. His gift is the greatest gift and the greatest news and made available to the least of us.
I suppose all of us in this sanctuary this morning long to live a life that is meaningful and we want to experience the greatest joys, the greatest fulfillment.
We want our lives to have the greatest impact possible. And the way that is possible for us is because of the greatest news we can have. And that great news is that Jesus Christ died and rose again.
[4:08] And His grace is available this very day to all who would believe. Doesn't always work out this way.

In fact, it probably rarely does. But in God's providence, our church has been studying through the book of Philippians, verse by verse, since last fall. I think in August when we started that, we find ourselves in chapter 3.
We left off last Sunday morning in verse 7. Friday night in our Good Friday service. Spent some more time in verse 7. And so the literal next passage we would just be in, no matter what this day was, would be Philippians 3, verses 8 to 11, that just so happened to say that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection.
It's not often we can just stay in the next verse and hit exactly where we are in the year, but this could not be more perfect for us. We find ourselves at the verses I read to you a moment ago in verses 8, 9, 10, and 11.

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As we consider this truth from Philippians 3, that there is power in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If you want to take notes with your sermon insert there, let me give you three things I'd love for you to remember and to take away when you leave at the end of this service.
[5:37] Number one, having friendship with Jesus is the greatest gain. Having friendship with Jesus is the greatest gain.

Look with me in verse 8. He says, What the text says here is that there's nothing in this world worthy to be considered equal to knowing Christ.
He says here in verse 8, I count everything as loss. Same idea as in verse 7 that we looked at Friday night, but whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.
There are things that are gain, and there's things that are loss. There's things in the accounting world that would be in the profit, and there are things that would be in the loss column.
And the scripture says there is no greater gain than to know Christ. To know Him. Not just know about Him.
[6:53] Not just know of Him. But to truly know Him. This speaks to not just knowledge and information, but to a depth of relationship that is real and genuine.

Life-changing. If you're a member of our church, you know my wife Marcy. We've been married in May next month for 30 years.
And many of you, if you're a member here, most of you know her. You know what she looks like. You know her personality.
You know her skill set. You know her. But you don't know her. Not like I do.
You know her. But I can sometimes see the way she's cleaning the kitchen, and I know what you don't know.
[8:05] Marcy has an upset clean. There's a way she cleans the refrigerator because it's dirty. There's a way she cleans the refrigerator because she's trying to talk herself out of who knows what's in her mind.

I know that look. I know that clean. You know her. And you may ask her how she's doing on some given day, and she may say, I'm fine.
But I've lived with her for 30 years. I know sometimes when what's felt in the heart is different than what may be spoken on the lips.
you know your children that way. If you're married, you know your spouse that way. You know them in a unique, personal way that someone outside of that intimate relationship just wouldn't know.
There are so many people in churches, even this morning, who know something about Jesus. They know of Jesus.
[9:23] They're familiar with some facts and dates and data. But they don't know Him. Paul says that I may know Him.

Different than just having someone read a story to you. Different than just hearing someone preach a sermon to you. The greatest gain in the world would be to have a true, personal, intimate friendship.
A real, deep relationship where you don't just know of or know about, but you could say, I count everything else as loss compared to knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.
Do you know Him? Do you understand what it means to have your life changed by His grace?
Do you understand what it means to have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you? Do you know Him? If it's nothing more than songs and events and a day on the calendar, you may know of Him, but you would not truly know Him.
[11:01] But to those whose lives have been changed by His grace, who have been forever changed by the forgiveness offered only by Jesus Christ, they are the ones who would say, as verse 8 says, compared to knowing Christ, everything else is as loss.

Christ Jesus my Lord, the text says. Christ is His title. Jesus, His name, Lord, His rule. Now the amazing thing is, and if you're new to the church or you're new to the Christian faith or you're new to your Bible, you may not understand why this is so staggering because the Holy Spirit inspired all of the Bible to be written, but He used men to write it.
And the man that's used to write the book of Philippians is a man named Paul. And this same man named Paul, who says, there's nothing better than knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, used to oppose the things of Christ.

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He used to hate the things of Christ. In fact, listen to Acts 26, verse 9, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus.
And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priest, but when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.
[12:44] And I punished them often in the synagogues. And I tried to make them blaspheme. And in raging fury against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

And that same man who had encountered the risen Christ and had his life changed by the grace and mercy of Jesus, now, in Philippians 3, says, there's nothing in the world better than knowing Christ.
Do you know Him? He goes on to say in verse 8, for His sake, I have suffered the loss of all things. And this is true. When Paul was converted and he went from a persecutor of the church to a child of God, he would lose his standing in his home, he would lose his friends, he would lose his associations.
And yet, though he lost all of that because of Christ, he would say, I've gained everything. Because friendship with Christ is the greatest gain.
[14:16] In fact, let's just look carefully here in verse 8. If you have a Bible in front of you, look at it here with your own eyes at verse 8. For His sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and I count them as rubbish.

It's a strong statement. It's meant to be a very jarring term. The term translated into English as rubbish is a word that could refer to trash or dung, something entirely worthless.
And the emphasis here is Paul is saying that everything I did and anything I had apart from Christ is rubbish.
It's worthless. It's not just worthless. So the word here, skubalon, the word means it's not just worthless, it's actually offensive, it's filthy.
Everything he had accomplished, everything he had achieved without Christ, compared to the glory of knowing Christ, he says, it's not just worthless, it's filthy.
[15:41] Now there are some things in your house that are worthless, worthless, but they're not filthy. They're just of no value.

You may throw it away, or you may keep it. Old pair of shoes, worthless, worthless, and you'll throw them away someday, just whenever you get around to it.
Or your spring cleaning days. The stuff you throw out in spring cleaning usually isn't filthy stuff, it's just stuff that's kind of worthless, that's just hung around.
Go look in your junk drawer today. It's filled with worthless stuff, and you intend to throw it out, and one day you very well may. Worthless stuff sometimes kind of hangs around, but not filthy stuff.
You don't say, oh my goodness, did you throw the diapers out from last week? I can't remember, did we throw those out? No, those get immediately discarded. They're not just worthless, they're filthy.
[17:00] You don't let filth just casually hang around. Paul is saying here, it's not just that our good works apart from Christ, our earthly efforts apart from Christ, it's not just that it's worthless, it's that it's offensive.

It's not just of no value, it's offensive. to think that you could earn your way to heaven, to think that you could improve upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is to say, God, I know you sent your only son. Jesus, I know you left the glory of heaven. I know you came to earth. I know you took on human nature. I know you suffered in our place. I know you were put to death on a cross.
I know that you suffered the worst agony and pain imaginable to people. I know you did that for me out of love, out of grace, to purchase my salvation.
I know you were laid in the tomb. I know you were raised back to life on the third day. I know you did all of that that I could not do. Now, with what you did, and with what I can add to it, we might have something here.
[18:21] That's not just worthless. That's offensive. filthy. That's the word Paul uses.

For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things, and I count them as rubbish. It's repugnant to think that my works could improve upon the finished work of Jesus Christ.
But he goes on to say, in order that I may gain Christ. Take everything he had, take everything he could possibly hope to ever achieve, compared to knowing Christ, everything else is of no value. Christ is that great. This is the greatest gain he could ever know.

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Having friendship with Christ is the greatest gain. Make note in verse 9 of a second truth. Being found in Jesus, is the greatest grace.
[19:56] Being found in Jesus is the greatest grace. I get this just straight from the text here in verse 9. Verse 8 ends, in order that I may gain Christ, verse 9, and be found in him.

To be found in him is to be possessed by him, to be a part of him, and he a part of you, to be hidden with Christ, and to be linked with him for all eternity.
And the question is, how can I be found in Jesus? This really is what it's all about today. How can a person, a sinful person like we all are, how can we be found in him?
Well, he tells us, keep looking in verse 9. To be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law.
Now, that's important. You're not going to be able to be good enough to earn this. Your rule keeping, your law following, your attempt at obedience is not going to be good enough for you to gain heaven.
[21:12] He's really giving us a contrast here of two ways, and essentially only two ways, that people have ever tried to deal with the fact of their own death.

Either you're going to do something that's going to warrant you gaining heaven, or it's going to be the work of Christ and Christ alone.
And the history of humanity is filled with all kinds of man-made religion, religion, but all have at least this in common, that there's some human effort, some human attempt, something in and of yourself you're doing to try to earn this prize at the end.
Christianity alone stands apart from all the other religions of the world, because religions of the world are men trying to work their way up to heaven.
Christianity is about God coming down to man. And here's your two options. It's either the righteousness that comes of your own doing from the law, or the righteousness that comes from God that we have through faith.
[22:29] That's really what it comes down to. To be found in Jesus is the greatest grace, and the way that you receive that grace is not by your works, grace, but just through faith in Him.

And here's the problem, friends. The problem is that the Bible is very clear on this. There are some parts of the Bible that are harder to understand.
That's true. There are some things and some doctrines in Scripture that take some time for our minds and our hearts to grasp. There are things that are difficult.
That's true. This is not one of them. This is very clear to understand. All of us, the Bible says, have sinned.
All of us have done wrong. That's not real complicated, is it? We understand that. We don't only understand that philosophically.
[23:35] We understand that personally. It's not just that we understand the concept that all of us have done wrong. We understand it personally. You don't have to convince me that I've done wrong.

I know that. And I suppose no one has to convince you either. We've all done wrong. So the question becomes, how does a sinner, how would they ever be good enough on their own to make it to heaven?
Well, the problem is more complicated than you even think, because the Bible tells us in Isaiah chapter 64 in the Old Testament that your best attempts at obedience if you don't truly have faith in God is filthy rags.
Pretty similar idea to the word used here that we looked at as rubbish. It's something that is worthless and filthy. It's something that is repugnant. So how good do you have to be to be good enough to go to heaven?
Well, you can't ever get started because your best attempt is just a filthy rag. It is a worthless, repugnant, filthy thing.
[24:57] so you can't ever even get started. And not only can I get started, your guilt is more than you even think it is. In James 2, in the New Testament it says that if you're guilty of breaking one part of God's law, then you're guilty of breaking all of it.

In other words, you're more guilty than you even know. Which leaves us in a terrible predicament. I am more guilty than I know, and I have less chance to ever be good than I think.

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Which leaves us nowhere. And if left to ourselves, we would be nowhere. Here's the great news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
That Jesus did for us what we could not do for ourselves. That's why it's called grace. Being found in Jesus is the greatest grace.
grace. Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ. The righteousness from God that depends on faith.
[26:09] Saving faith is a gift from God. That's why when somebody is saved, all the glory goes to God.

all of it. We sinned. We deserve judgment. Grace is God giving to us what we did not deserve.
So we see in this text that having friendship with Jesus is the greatest gain. Second, being found in Jesus is the greatest grace. One more thing I want you to see in verses 10 and 11, that experiencing forgiveness in Jesus is the greatest gift.
Experiencing forgiveness in Jesus is the greatest gift. Verse 10, that I may know Him. You say, now wait a minute.
I thought Paul already said he did know Him. Why does he say that I may know Him? I mean, does he know Jesus or not?
[27:31] Now, here's a great test for your heart to see if you truly belong to Jesus. In our culture, here's part of the danger. So many people consider themselves to be Christians because they go to church or consider themselves to be Christians because their family went to church or consider themselves Christians because they know a few stories about Jesus.

Here's a great test for your heart. What we learn from Scripture is that those who do truly know Jesus long to know Him more.
Those who truly do know Him want nothing better than to know more of Him. If you know some facts and details and stories about Jesus and your heart does not long to know more of Him if you know of Him but don't long to know more of Him that may be a good indication that whatever you have with Jesus is short of true saving faith because those who truly know Him know there is nothing better than to know more of Him it was A.W.
Tozer who said to have found God and still pursue Him is the soul's paradox of love one of the greatest evidences of genuine conversion is an increasing desire to know more of God so I told you a few moments ago I've been married for 30 years I know Marcy really well 30 years of joy 30 years of excitement 30 years of blessings 30 years of if there's pain for one there's pain for both 30 years we've enjoyed all of it and all the hard days we've gone through together!
And I'll tell you the most thrilling thing to me is every day after 30 years I wake up and think I love this woman more than I did yesterday!
[30:17] And if the Lord should so bless us with 30 more years I know in 30 more years I'll look back and think I hardly even knew her 30 years ago which today feels crazy because I can't imagine I can know her better but every day I learn more of her the great evidence that you truly know Jesus is the greatest desire of your heart is to know more of him he's so great he's so glorious he's so vast you cannot exhaust the knowledge of who he is the Bible says God's mercies are new every morning lamentations three which means every day of your life you have new reasons to praise God new reasons to be thankful new reasons to worship and though you know him truly you continue to learn more of him because he's that good but keep looking that

I may know him and the power of his resurrection this is an amazing thing the fact that Jesus was raised to life isn't only historical fact it is the most powerful truth in the universe this is how a sinner like me can become a child of God this is how an imperfect person like you can have peace with God because of the power of his resurrection the resurrection of Jesus shows that his truth and his grace and his mercy is stronger is more powerful than sin more powerful even than hell it is the strongest force in the universe and Paul says I want to know you and I want to know the power of your resurrection this isn't just facts data and information this is life changing transformation that only the grace of God can bring in a human soul
I want to know him and the power of his resurrection let me speak very honestly and directly to your heart this morning if you know facts about what Easter Sunday is all about and you don't experience the power and the freedom from it you do not know him you may know of him you do not know him because the resurrection is the most powerful truth in the universe sinners deserving of judgment forgiven set free and called his own but it's not just that he wants to know the good things he wants to know so much of Christ that no matter what life brings to him

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Christ would always be preeminent look again in verse 10 that I may know! Him and the power of his resurrection and may share in his sufferings he says I'm not just in this for the easy part Paul's life has been so changed so radically changed by grace that whether it's days of victory or days of suffering either way he says I just need Christ imagine living with that kind of freedom imagine I'm the kind of freedom and power inside you that says even if it's a day of suffering even if it's a day of persecution even if it's my day of death if I know Jesus I've got everything that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and share in his sufferings becoming like him in his death even if it's your day of trial to know
Christ is to have the greatest gain and the greatest grace and the greatest gift verse 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead in other words Paul says because he lives I live because Christ lives we live and this isn't a statement of doubt verse 11 is not wondering is this true this is just a restatement of his own personal unworthiness and his continual amazement at what Christ has done this is Paul saying it's unbelievable it's still unbelievable to me that I could be who I was and by no work of my own and all the work of Christ that I can live in such a way that every day the power of his resurrection is alive within me and even if it's my day of suffering or even my day of death the only thing I need to know is that
[36:01] I know Christ and Christ knows me and if that's true even if I die I live because he lives my friends that is an assurance that you cannot fake you either know him or you simply know about him and in this short passage here verses 9 10 and 11 there's some really rich theology these may be new terms for some of you for others maybe not verse 9 speaks of our justification how we are made right with God verse 10 speaks of our sanctification how we are becoming like

Christ verse 11 speaks of our glorification what awaits us in other words the entirety of our salvation from justification to sanctification to glorification all because of the work of Christ there's nothing else you need all accomplished by Christ so the big question on this day is how can a person receive resurrection resurrection when they die verse 11 says my aim is that I would attain the resurrection from the dead how does that happen it's just another way of saying how do you have eternal life it's another way of saying how do I make it to heaven it's another way of saying how can I avoid hell and judgment and know for sure that when I die and this life on earth is over how can I be certain that
I will be with Jesus that's why the entire Bible was written for us so that we can know the answer to that question in our culture today it's become so trendy to say things like how could we ever know we can't be sure you have your truth I have my truth this kind of weak soft!
lack of assurance unbelief masquerading as humility it's not humble to be uncertain where God has been clear that's disobedience and can I remind you in the gospel of John chapter 20 verse 31 it says these words these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name not maybe not possibly not will wait and see you can know what it means to be!
in him but my friends it'll never be because I'm good enough it'll never be because I did enough things!
[39:27] my spiritual resume could never be sufficient to save me neither could yours in fact to even try would not only be worthless!

it would be a filthy thing because Jesus paid the price for us so suppose you're here this morning and maybe even when you entered in if someone would have asked you do you know Jesus you would have said yes because you do know about him maybe you even could tell the story of the empty tomb with the best of them today but maybe it's this very day you've come to understand you've never truly known him and maybe even this moment you sense the Holy Spirit working in your heart drawing you to a place of repentance drawing you to a place of faith drawing you to a place of turning away from all of your works and all of your achievements and saying all
I want is Christ the Bible tells us if we would believe in our heart as we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord we will be saved all because of the work of Jesus and even this moment right where you sit even this moment if you would in your own heart pray to the Lord and say Lord would you forgive me a sinner I'm trusting in you alone the power of the resurrection would come inside of your own soul and change you forever and forever and you would leave this place no longer knowing of a man but truly knowing him not just so that your
Sunday morning was changed but truly that your eternity would be changed because you would have resurrection life amazing I pray for nothing other than that you would know him and the

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promise of the gospel is not the least someone can do for you this is the most that could be done for a human soul what we would ask you to do this morning is if even this morning this moment if you have in your heart ask the Lord Jesus to save you if this day you've come to understand that you need to repent of your sin and trust in
Christ and Christ alone our greatest desire would be to sit down with you as a follow up and pray with you and talk with you answer questions for you not in a rushed and loud place but in a quiet way that we could just sit down with an open Bible and encourage you guest or member if that's you today would you just tear out that connection card and let us know and just say that you've trusted Christ as your Savior today we'd love to respond with you we'd love to pray with you we'd love to be able to sit down and help you as you begin your walk with the Lord you may have questions about what it means to know Christ as your Savior and you want someone to talk to about how you can do that about what that means would you just give us your name whatever contact information you would want to give us and let us follow up with you to answer questions or maybe today you just say I need someone to pray with me I know the Lord but I need to be walking with the Lord I trust Jesus but I need to be a better follower of
[44:08] Christ whatever it may be however we can pray for you or serve you guest or member let me encourage you to make note of that on that connection card and on your way out just drop that in those giving boxes so that we can respond back to you and take time to pray!

with you to counsel you to shepherd you to help you in any way possible we would love to do that let you pray for us then I'll just give a very brief forward of announcements before dismissed Lord we thank you today for your word and pray that it would work in our hearts powerfully even this day we thank you Lord for your son and the work of the cross and we give you glory for the power of the empty tomb in Christ's name Amen

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