

**PREPARING THE SOIL OF THE SOUL:  
WHAT DO I DO WITH MY PAIN?  
Philippians 3.4b-14**

*Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. John 12.24*

As we approach the end of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week, we transition by identifying with the suffering and death of Jesus and examining how this cultivates the soil of our souls for the resurrection to come.

**THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS:** Philippians 2.6-11

**THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL:** writing from a Roman prison near the end of his life. Paul's path through pain and ultimately death to resurrection follows Jesus' example. Philippians 3.4b-14

- Paul doesn't put any stock in his "worldly" **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**.

*But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. v 7*

- Paul commits to the God-honoring life by **KNOWING CHRIST**.

*What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ. v 8*

*...I want to know Christ... v 10*

- Paul will obey to **THE POINT OF DEATH**.

*I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. v 10-11*

**What do I do with my pain? How do I allow suffering to prepare the soil of my soul?**

1. Let go of cultural **STATUS** and **SIGNIFICANCE**.

**TO DO:** Embrace Voluntary Sacrifices:

Begin by identifying one area of privilege or comfort in your life. Create a specific plan to redirect that resource (time, money, or status) toward serving others, while maintaining a journal to reflect on how this shapes your perspective on what you truly value.

2. Get to **KNOW CHRIST** better and commit to **HIS TEACHINGS**.

**TO DO:** Reframing Personal Setbacks:

Create a regular reflection practice where you examine recent disappointments or failures, explicitly connecting them to aspects of Christ's experience. Write down how each challenge might be preparing you for a particular aspect of spiritual growth or future ministry.

3. Despite your circumstances **LOVE ALL** even to the **VERY END**.

*I pray that your love will overflow more and more ... Philippians 1.9 NLT*

**TO DO:** Pursuing Relationships Through Hardship:

When facing a difficult situation, rather than immediately seeking escape, pause to pray and ask, "How might this challenge help me understand Christ better?" Then identify one specific way to respond that reflects Christ's character in that situation.

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**What is God saying to me?**

**What am I going to do about it?**

**Love God, Love Others, Learn Jesus, DO SOMETHING!**

Today's sermon can be found on our website [beaverdambaptist.org](http://beaverdambaptist.org)