

## KEEP SEEKING

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Colossians 3:1-4

1. Certain dates have significance for various reasons.
2. When most people hear 9/11 mentioned they think of that terrible day in 2001 when the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center took place.
3. I think of that too, but I also remember that 9/11/93 was the date that my 26 year old son, John Jr., died in a single car accident.
4. November 11 is significant for most Americans because it is Veteran's Day, and on Veteran's Day we honor those who have served, and in many cases have died serving and protecting our country.
5. November 11 is also an important date in my life, because on Monday, November 11, 1985, I drove 167 miles to Palermo, Maine to spend the day getting acquainted with Sandra.
6. As most of you know Sandra and I were both previously married to professing Christians who turned their backs on the Lord and on us so that they might pursue relationships with other people.
7. I had not dated anyone for over four years because it took me that long to work through issues related to the breakup of my first marriage and to come to the place where I felt I had God's permission to remarry if I chose to.
8. The day I spent with Sandra had a profound impact on my life.
  - a. Getting to know her awakened a desire to know her better.
  - b. The time I spent with her caused me to want to spend more time with her.
  - c. Six weeks later on Saturday, January 4, 1986, we were married.
  - d. Over the almost thirty-two years we have been together our relationship has continued to grow because both of us are grateful that God brought us together, both of us take our relationship seriously, and both of us understand that a good marriage doesn't just happen.
9. Our marriage has prospered because we do not take it, or each other, for granted.  
NOTE: Many of you know that Sandra is a quilter, and this is what she put on the label of a quilt she made for me some years ago, and it is a reflection of her view of marriage.  
"Making a good quilt is like building a good marriage. Both require good instructions (the Bible) and following them, fabrics that contrast, complement, and add zing, pondering, persistence, new skills (communicating, problem solving, parenting) and binding to hold it all together (God's love). I thank God for His activity in the making of our great marriage."
10. Marriages suffer when people take their marriages and their spouses for granted, and consequently do not fully invest themselves in the relationship.
11. **The same is true of our relationship with the Lord.**
12. Many professing Christians are content:
  - a. To know or think that they are saved.
  - b. With some knowledge and understanding of the Bible.
  - c. With some level of spiritual success and influence.
  - d. To know about Christ rather than actually knowing Christ.

13. Here Paul admonished his readers to keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 3:1

14. The motivation to be an earnest, life-long seeker of the things above grows out of our initial and ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ.

**15. If there is no motivation more than likely there is no relationship.**

16. However, the Bible suggests several other possible problems that may exist in the life of a believer.

### **I. A believer may underestimate the value of his or her salvation. Heb 2:1-4**

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3 **how will we escape if we (followers of Jesus Christ) neglect so great a salvation?** After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

A. The writer of Hebrews sought to exalt the Lord Jesus and His great salvation so that his readers would understand their privileged position.

B. He wanted them to know that a failure to value and take their salvation seriously would have dire consequences.

NOTE: Those who neglect their salvation can be sure that they will experience God's discipline. Heb 10:29-31

How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "**THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.**" 31 **It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

### **II. A believer who is neglecting his or her salvation suffers from a lack of spiritual maturity. Phil 3:12-16**

Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I **press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.** 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but **one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,** 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 **Let us therefore, as many as are perfect (mature), have this attitude;** and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

A. Earlier Paul had written about "the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus (his) Lord." 3:8

B. Understanding the value of knowing Christ Jesus caused Paul to:

1. Press on in the pursuit of that which Jesus Christ wanted to accomplish in and through his life.

2. Single-mindedly reach for what lay ahead.

3. Point out that his attitude showed spiritual maturity. Phil 3:17-21

Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and

now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

### **III. A believer who is neglecting his or her salvation has an inadequate view of and love for Christ. 2 Cor 5:11-15**

11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences. 12 We are not again commending ourselves to you but are giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you will have an answer for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart. 13 For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you. 14 **For the love of Christ controls (urges and impels) us**, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

- A. Paul loved Christ to the core of his being.
- B. He understood the magnitude of Christ's love for him.
- C. Christ's love, shed abroad in Paul's heart by the Holy Spirit, was a great motivating and enabling force in Paul's life.
- D. Something is seriously wrong in our lives if we profess to be a Christian and yet fail to love the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **APPLICATION**

1. Our lives clearly reveal whether or not we love the Lord Jesus.
2. Jesus stated that truth just before going to the cross. John 14:21-24  
"**He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me**; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. 24 **"He who does not love Me does not keep My words**; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me."
3. What place does Jesus Christ and His great salvation have in your life?