

Rejoicing: Glad Glorifying in Christ Jesus (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] Humbled my weakness. Frustrated by that, but glad to be here. Thank you for the prayers. Even did the COVID test, so good to go there.

I think that means you never have to test again, right? I think the president told me that, didn't he? I don't know. Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Philippians chapter 3.

We come to one of the most unique passages of Paul. We never find him so personal, so intimate, so confessional.

It's really an unveiling of his heart. And this really also is the heart of the message of Philippians about joy in the Lord.

Now he comes to it. He's talked about joy in circumstances, joy in expectations, joy in affliction, all these things. Now he talks about joy in the Lord.

[1 : 12] It's really the heart. It's the fountain of all our joy and what it looks like. And it's not like you might think. Paul begins to kind of peel it back here in this passage.

And though we're quickly going through Philippians by comparison to how we go through other things, we've slowed down. Roger predicted it. We slowed down.

It's kind of like Philippians chapter 3 is kind of like hitting the red letters in the Gospels. You know, whenever Jesus speaks, people listen. So this is kind of Paul kind of heart unbarred.

And so I wanted to slow down. There's a lot here. So let us read it. And then we'll pray that God would grant us understanding in it.

And we'll dig in. So if you're able, please stand. I'm going to read from Philippians 3, 1 through 11. Today we're going to focus on verses 4 through 9.

[2 : 16] Philippians 3, 1. Finally, finally, my brothers, excuse me, rejoice. Keep on rejoicing in the Lord.

To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and it is safe or a safeguard for you. Look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers.

Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh, if anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more.

For we are circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, the Hebrew of Hebrews.

[3 : 23] As to the law, a Pharisee. As to zeal, a persecutor of the church. As to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord.

For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish. In order that I may gain Christ and be found in him.

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.

That I may know him and the power of his resurrection. And may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

[4 : 43] That by any means possible, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. So reads God's word.

Let us pray. Father, we pray that you would help us to enter into Paul's, not just his thinking, but his value system.

His change of heart. How this happened. Father, show us. As we look at Paul, help us to reflect on our own gains and losses.

Help us, Lord, to look at this as a means of evaluating ourselves and our value of you. So, as always, Father, we pray that you would renew our mind.

That you would revive our soul and that you would pierce our heart. Do this in the name of Christ, we pray. Amen. Please be seated. So, Paul talks about gains and losses.

[5 : 58] What do you consider as your earthly gains? You know, what are your earthly achievements?

Things that you have confidence in and trusted in because you have achieved them. You know, how do you stack up with Paul?

Well, circumcised, okay. Yeah, I got that. But not on the eighth day, but, you know, right there in the hospital, apparently. Of the nation of Israel. Well, I can't say that. Although my mom claims we're Jewish.

Don't know about that. Can't trace it. Tribe of Benjamin. I think there's better tribes, but, you know, when it comes down to it, of the twelve.

Benjamin was faithful with Judah. And Benjamin's land, technically, is where the temple sits. Not pretty good.

[7 : 01] First king, not a good king, but first king came from Benjamin. Law. As to the law of Pharisee. Eh, no, I didn't go there.

As to zeal of persecutor of the church. What kind of zeal do I have? Am I a doer? See, Paul wasn't just a talker. He was a doer. He didn't just have the name, the title Pharisee, who sat around in robes and talked on the corners.

He wanted to be out there doing it. And when they needed a hit man, he was the man. As to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Okay, come on. How many? Come on. Not talking about internal, just according to the law, just external. You know, he didn't cross any of those gates. Haven't murdered anybody.

Haven't lied. You know, never took God's name in vain. Always kept the Sabbath. La-da-da, la-da-da. No? Hmm. Thought those were our moral laws.

[8 : 13] No, we haven't done that. So, that's Paul's kind of list of accomplishments. And understand, he comes from a different world than we do. Grew up a Jew, right? Grew up a son of a Pharisee. So, his father was a Pharisee.

He's a Pharisee. He's going to surpass everybody. He claims, right here, anybody can claim confidence in flesh. I can beat him.

I am not only a model Jew, I am an exemplary Jew. I'm the Jew that every Jew should aspire to be. I didn't just think the law was important.

I was scrupulous as to the law. I was advancing. I was under the best rabbi in the land. I was going to say Galileo. No, that's not right.

Wrong time. Gamaliel. I mean, wow. You've got good training. So, his values, his gains, his advantages are different than ours.

[9 : 16] Ours would be a little different. But, you know, the first ones he talks about are really family related or legacy related, heritage related. So, we might talk about family pride.

We might talk about, you know, my family's legacy goes back, you know, grandpa and his father before him. And, you know, we don't have that as much today. But, you know, there used to be pride in, well, you know, we're purebred Cherokee.

Well, I haven't heard that said much, but that's as close as I could come. You know, we're Italian. My best friend back in college was fully Greek.

I love that family. I really went to a big fat Greek wedding. But, he married a non-Greek. Broke the legacy.

His mom and dad were fine. They were awesome. Cleaned everything with Windex. You know, the whole thing. No. He had some other odd traits, but he didn't do that.

[10 : 22] You know, that's kind of rare, but you can hear of that. You know, people talk about their legacy, their heritage, their family, their pedigree. Well, that's kind of for Paul.

We think more today, more in maybe our kids' success. How have our kids done? I feel pretty good about our kids. Our kids are, you know, here and there and whatever. Or, we're worried about our kids.

Oh, no, they're not where I want them to be. School performance, if you're a student, you know. I mean, it's natural to be confident in school performance, athletic performance.

Job advancement, career advancement, goals for job advancement, goals for business, goals for achieving more efficiency, more success, higher rate, higher pay grade.

Those are all things maybe we think about. And it's natural to find joy and delight in our accomplishments. It's natural.

[11:27] Yet, Paul. Paul lists all these accomplishments, these advantages. And then says, no, there's a greater joy. Those brought me some confidence.

Those brought me some pride. But I forsake all of that. Not just I've lost those. I forsake those. For a greater joy.

A joy that lasts. A joy that matters. A joy that actually has meaning. So, here we are in Philippians 3. Paul calls us to rejoice in the Lord. Verse 1. And he then gives some applications of what that looks like. In verse 2 and 3.

Verse 2. He talks about the joy stealers. The things that are the opposite of finding joy. Look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers.

[12:22] Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. He's talking about people that put confidence in the flesh. And he's using sarcasm to talk about the same group of people who are the Judaizers.

The people trying to get them to do a fleshly thing as a badge of acceptance. They're the ones who want to have... They believe in Jesus.

But they believe Jesus is more of an add-on than a change. So, they still want to keep the law. They want to have Jesus and the law. And so, you still have to get circumcised.

You still have to follow the law. And that's who Paul is calling the dogs. Who they would call the Gentiles. But Paul's saying, no, they've twisted it all up. They don't understand Jesus.

They've twisted it all up. So, they're the dogs. And they're the evildoers. They think they're the good doers. But they're really the evil doers. Because they're trying to get people to put confidence in themselves instead of in Christ. They don't get it.

[13:18] This is the kind of person that Paul's referring to that he used to be. I'm a doer of the law. I have confidence in myself.

And Christ revealed to him that that was nothing. So, he's saying, stay away. Keep alert to the joy stealers. People put confidence in themselves instead of in Christ.

That will steal your joy. Putting confidence in yourself. Thinking I have to do things in order to be okay with God. God will now accept me. Because I've lived up to a certain standard.

By contrast, verse 3. So, he talks about three things to watch against. Now, he gives three characteristics in verse 3. Of those who are the true circumcision. Not externally circumcised.

But circumcised of heart. They've been changed from the inside. Even the law, Deuteronomy 30, talked about what you really need is circumcision of the heart. You're doing this thing to obey me.

[14:20] That's good. That's a sign of your faith. But be circumcised of the heart. That's what really needs to change. And so, here's what the true circumcision looks like. Verse 3.

Three characteristics. Worship by the Spirit of God. It's not worship by this temple. Not worship by physical sacrifices. Worship by the Spirit of God.

Moved and inspired and enabled by the Spirit of God. Two, glorying in Christ Jesus. Or more literally, boasting in Christ Jesus.

Not boasting in myself. But boasting in Christ. And thirdly, putting no confidence in the flesh. Which I think is a flip-flop of boasting in Christ versus boasting in self.

Confidence in Christ. Trusting in Christ. So, those are the things he says. Why would we boast in Christ?

[15:17] We recognize Christ has given us all. You kind of weigh what we have in Christ versus what I accomplish myself. It's no match. He's given us righteousness.

Justification. Redemption. Holiness. He's given us the Holy Spirit who empowers us and enables us. So, we boast in Christ. We glory in Christ.

Because we recognize that I can't accomplish really nothing compared to what he accomplishes for us. So, now we come to verses 4 through 9 where I think Paul takes his theme.

Which is rejoicing in the Lord. And I would simplify it. Rejoicing in the Lord by boasting in Christ. The heart of rejoicing in the Lord is recognizing that all our confidence is in Christ.

Boasting in Christ by the power of the Spirit. Putting no confidence in the flesh. So, what does that look like? How do I glory in Christ Jesus? How do I boast in Christ Jesus?

[16:18] If that's a key in the heart of rejoicing in the Lord. Finding joy and delight in the Lord. How do I do that? What does it mean to glory in Christ?

Boast in Christ. So, in verses 4 through 9, I think Paul gives us two things. He reveals two things about himself. He's going to illustrate it from his own life.

How this looks in his life. And it comes out in two determinations, I'm going to call them. Two changes, two decisions.

I think determination is a better word. He, first of all, is going to regard all as loss because of Christ. Verse 7.

Verses 4 through 6, he names his accomplishments, his gains. And then he says in verse 7, so all of that, all that gain, all that advantage, I consider loss because of Christ.

[17:15] So, he's going to regard, he's going to determine and regard it, calculate it as loss because of Christ. All that was an earthly accomplishment. And then secondly, verse 8, he goes another step.

He says far more, or indeed, our translations totally miss the transition. It's far more, in fact, contrary, not just that I regard all as loss, but I go another step.

I forfeit all. Because I know Jesus, I forfeit all. I willingly surrender all of that. I don't just say, oh, it's loss, oh, too bad.

And I regret those losses. No, now he's saying, no, I willingly reject them. I forfeit them. And regard them, not just loss, but, use as a new word, dung.

That's not just loss. No, they're dung. They're worthless. All that I thought was everything in life, I now consider useless.

[18:26] In terms of my understanding of what I value, what I treasure. And that's a key to joy. Making these determinations.

So, first of all, verses 4 to 7, because of Christ, he says in verse 7, whatever gains I had, I count as loss for the sake of Christ.

So, determination number one is because of Christ, I regard all earthly gains as loss. Because of Christ.

Because of Christ. I regard, I calculate, I consider all earthly gains as loss. So, first of all, notice the cost.

Verses 4 through 6, he describes what he now were gains for him. He now considers loss. And he calls them, these were gains.

[19:24] Now, he begins to describe it about confidence in the flesh. That one of the characteristics of a changed believer is not focusing on externals, but also putting no confidence in myself.

No confidence in the flesh. I don't trust in myself. I don't trust myself. When it comes to walking with God. Therefore, I need to rely on faith and trusting in him.

So, he says, I have confidence. I could have more confidence than anybody about fleshly things. Begins to name them in verses 5 through 6.

Seven things he talks about as his gains, his advantages. So, I have circumcised in the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, Hebrew of Hebrews.

First 4, talk about lineage, pedigree. He's got a pure pedigree, a pure lineage. He can actually trace his lineage.

[20:29] I don't know how many Jews today can actually trace their lineage. I think it's very, very few. Very few. You know, the northern ten tribes virtually disappeared.

Way back a long time ago. Came out as Samaritans. So, even by the time of Christ in the first century, there were still some tribes.

We got Judah. We got, because Jesus came from Judah. We got Benjamin still there. Paul's a Benjamite. We have a few other tribes that are mentioned.

Of course, the Levites are there. But most are not mentioned. In fact, you go to Revelation, one tribe's completely gone. So, I don't know.

How many can trace? But he could trace it. I mean, that's kind of cool. He could trace it. And he can trace all the way back to Abraham. That came from Benjamin, who came from Jacob, who came from Isaac, who came from Abraham.

[21 : 39] Who, go back to Genesis 10, came from Eber, where we get our name Hebrew. Yeah. Yeah. Hebrew of Hebrews.

I mean, I'm purebred. I got all the, I can check all the boxes. Now, he can't have pride in being circumcised. I mean, what did he have to do with being circumcised?

Well, I cried when it happened. I assume. I don't know. But so, those first four really are, you know, that's lineage.

That's a blessing. That's an advantage. And the game means an advantage. The advantage that I had. I came from this great lineage. I can check all the boxes.

But then, in verse 5, at the end of verse 5, he names three things that he accomplished. Three things he achieved. They start with the as to.

[22 : 38] Right? As to the law, a Pharisee. So, when it came to the law, keeping the law, I was a Pharisee, which meant, now, we're tainted about what a Pharisee is because we see them as bad guys.

But you've got to understand, the motivation of a Pharisee, it came from back in historically times. Real verbal today.

I've been out of practice for a while, so. You know, Israel had fallen off. Israel had not kept the law. Remember, God kept, you know, there you go. So, this group of guys raised up and they become the Pharisees, which means the separatists, which means we're going to keep the law.

We're not going to get kicked out of the land anymore. We're going to take God's word serious.

That's the Pharisee. They were devoted. They were disciplined. They were totally into keeping the law.

Now, it goes too far. But understand, their motivation is, hey, we want to please God. We want to do what God says. We don't want to get kicked out again. We're taking it seriously, not like our fathers. So, that's what a Pharisee is.

[23 : 45] Somebody serious. And then as to zeal, I wasn't just one that sat around or stood on the corner. I'm a doer. When it comes to zeal, I'm a persecutor of the church.

When the church first started, Paul, as a Pharisee, saw the church as heresy, as blasphemy. How could somebody start a group where the leader says, I'm God?

That's blasphemy. We've got to get rid of this. This is terrible. So, Paul is literally dragging people by their hair into prison. He describes himself as a violent aggressor.

He kind of liked the violence, I think. Was standing there when Stephen was stoned. Right? Paul's leading the charge on that. So, that's who I am.

And then he's, as to righteousness that comes by the law. Not righteousness that comes by God, but a righteousness that comes by the law. Blameless.

[24 : 46] Blameless. How can he say that, by the way? How can he say he's blameless? Really? Well, blameless word means something that's observable. Something that he could be called to account on.

So, he could be a politician and, you know, you couldn't get anything on him. He'd actually be squeaky clean. That's what it means. Externally.

Observably. It's not a measure of his heart. Because we know his heart. His heart was not measured by that. So, as far as what I do.

What I can be saying. Blameless. Man, I did everything I was supposed to do. And didn't do the things I wasn't supposed to do. So, in that sense, he had confidence.

So, what changed? So, now in verse 7, he talks about this radical change. A total reorientation of his life.

[25 : 44] He says, verse 7, Whatever gains I had, I count, I regard, I calculate as loss for the sake of Christ.

What changed that? Well, we know. We read back in Acts 9, Paul's setting out to just persecute the church. And what happened?

Light from heaven. Paul's blinded. God likes to mess with people that way. He's like, you think you see?

Now you're blind. Now I'm going to give you new sight. You think you understand righteousness? You don't understand righteousness. You think you know who this Jesus is? You don't know who this Jesus is.

And it comes to this Damascus Road experience where his life has radically changed. He is going this direction. God acts. All of a sudden, he's going this direction. Paul wasn't a seeker of Jesus. [26 : 45] He was a persecutor of Jesus. And God changed his mind by acting upon him. It had to be very unsettling. Who are you, Lord?

I am Jesus. Oh, I thought I had you. Spends, what, 13 years in the desert researching the scriptures, likely, to figure out how he had it all wrong? Goodness. I can't imagine how. So he's converted. He's changed. And now he sees all those gains, all those earthly things as loss. And its value system changed.

See, he says, I count. He uses this word three times. He uses it verse 7 and twice in verse 8. I count. I regard. I calculate.

It's an accounting term. In other words, he's saying, after I weigh, here's Jesus and here's all my accomplishments. If I put those things up against, I put them on a ledger, you know, and I kind of, okay, what X is out?

[27 : 55] What is better? You know, the pros and the cons or whatever you want to say. When I weigh Jesus against what all those things that I had, and I had a lot. It's like, after weighing everything, that stuff's loss.

That stuff's no good. In fact, the word loss means harmful. Damaging. So if I put my trust in all those earthly things in my confidence, that's actually what he's saying is loss is also damaging, harmful for me.

Because if I put my trust in myself, that takes me away from Christ. That damages me. It harms me. It's a loss. But he considers it a loss.

Yeah, I see what that is now. He lets it go. So why change? Well, he says, for the sake of Christ. For the sake of Christ.

In other words, Jesus is the decisive difference in his life. Jesus is the one who met him on the Damascus road. Jesus is the one who talks to him later when Paul has the, 2 Corinthians 12 talks about the thorn in the flesh.

[29 : 12] Remember that thorn in the flesh Paul had? He says, I asked the Lord three times to remove it. Right? Okay, I should have prayed longer, but apparently I didn't. Why? Because I got an answer. God said, no.

I got a purpose for that thorn. And the purpose is to humble you. Because you've got all this knowledge. You've got all this revelation. You've got all. You're starting to get a big head. So it's time for you to come back to earth.

Giving you the thorn in the flesh to humble you. And remember Paul's response to that? That was another meeting. It was another humbling. Another loss. Well, I'm good with that because God says...

Help me quote it. It's gone out of my head. Somebody help me quote it. Why? Why? My grace is sufficient for you.

My grace is sufficient for you. For my power is perfected. Thank you very much. It was all gone. Okay. It was like, oh. And then Paul's like, oh yeah. Then I'll boast of my weakness.

[30 : 17] Because really what I want is Christ elevated. So if it's about humbling me. It's about breaking me. That's good. Because that makes him stand out. That makes him look glory.

That's glorying in Christ. I glory in Christ because of my weakness. Because God shows himself in spite of me. Shows himself through my weakness.

That's glorying in Christ. And I don't get elevated. I don't boast in me. But I boast in him. And look what he did again. Look what he did again. I'm always grateful when I go to meetings and I pray beforehand.

I just say, God, you know, it's kind of this pray before. Give me the wisdom. Show me what to say. And I determine not to set an agenda for the meeting.

There might be things I know we've got to talk about. But I won't set, you know, right at all. Okay, I've got to communicate this and then this. Better hit hard on that one. Lately I was really tempted on that.

[31 : 16] And I just did. Okay, Lord, I'll trust you to bring up whatever needs to be brought up. Or you'll bring back to mind if there's anything. And it happens. And often the conversations go much better than I thought they were.

Because I thought they were going to be confrontive. You know, because if I had done it my way, it would have been confrontive and probably harmful. And I find, no, he just kind of sweetly moved the conversation here.

I heard better. Instead of just talking, I heard better. I'm always grateful for that. Because it's like, well, I can't glory in me.

I have to glory in him. I didn't plan that. I didn't, you know, it's always better than I thought. Well, not always better. Good.

Good. So no confidence in any achievements. Because of Christ, I consider this. I've made this calculation.

[32 : 18] And so now I have no confidence in any of my achievement. I don't trust in myself. I know what I will do naturally.

I don't trust myself. So I don't trust in my advantages. Those things have no real meaning. So Paul says, because of Christ, I regard all earthly gains as loss.

Well, did Jesus ever talk about this? Did Jesus, you know, did Paul just get this out of nowhere? Jesus describes this as well. He described it in a parable, several parables actually, in Matthew 13. He says, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. What are the kingdoms like? The real kingdom, not the earth, the kingdom. The real kingdom is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and then covered back up.

Then, watch how he describes it. Then in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has to buy the field so that he can have the treasure. So he finds a treasure somewhere.

[33 : 31] It's lost treasure, right? Just happens to find it. What? Ethical person, he's not going to steal it.

He's going to buy the field to have the treasure. Okay? So he covers it back up. Probably paces it off. Marks it. You know, I don't know. Makes a treasure map. Goes and sells everything to have that.

Why? Because that's way better than everything I have. I'm actually getting it a good deal. Right? Because the owner doesn't know there's a treasure hidden in that field.

Same thing. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls who, finding one, one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had so he could buy it.

I mean, we'd do that, right? Good night. That's what Jesus is comparing it to is the kingdom of heaven. Do you see the kingdom like that? Do you see how valuable the kingdom is?

[34 : 34] Do you see how priceless, how incredibly beyond everything in this world, a walk with Jesus is? Do you see it that way?

Or are you like the Judaizers? Yeah, Jesus is just an add-on. Not the Bible, but you know, that's good. Okay, I got my eschatology now.

Okay, good. Again, it's not just New Testament believers who come to this.

Old Testament people of faith did the same thing. Remember Moses? He's described in Hebrews 11. By faith, Moses. Now, watch, this is striking language. By faith, Moses, when he was grown up, watch, did three things.

He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Lineage, heritage, pedigree. He's just like Paul. I reject it. Two, choosing.

[35 : 39] Willingly, purposefully choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

Man, I could stay in the palace in Egypt. Prince of Egypt. Okay, probably won't get to the throne, right? I'm not the big prince, but I am a prince. All the riches, everything I want.

One, chooses to be mistreated with the people of God rather than enjoy fleeting pleasures of sin. Chooses that. Who does that?

Who wants to be with God's people in the wilderness? The complaining, nagging, grumbling, murmuring. That wasn't fun. Rather to be mistreated.

And then third, he considered the reproach of Christ. Greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt. In other words, he understood it was Christ-related, this being associated with the people of God, being called by God, being redeemed out.

[36 : 42] He understood it was Christ-related. Why? For he was looking for the rewards. He's looking for the real thing. He knows that the treasures of earth are just passing.

The treasures of earth do bring pleasure. They're fleeting pleasures, though. See, it's more than just, it's not an emotional response. It's a calculated, understood choice. He's looking for the real reward. David understood the same thing. Joshua understood the same thing.

Daniel understood the same thing. Ruth came to understand the same thing. Boaz understood the same thing.

Those are great folks. They got it. All right. Why is Moses willing to suffer? Because he calculated Christ was greater.

[37 : 43] He wanted the lasting, real reward. So here's Paul. First of all, because of Christ, he regards all earthly gains as loss. But he goes another step. Verse 8.

There's a contrast. It's not picked up in our translation. Verse 8 starts with the word indeed. Well, there's like, there's actually two Greek words. One's very long. There that means rather, on the contrary, I think this.

So he's not saying to make further. Indeed has the idea of, okay, let me just say the same thing in a different way. But actually what the Greek means is, no, I want to go further than that.

God, not just that I regard all things, that I regard my gains as loss. No, I'm going to go another step.

Now, because I know Christ, what he's going to say in verse 8, because I know Christ, I forfeit.

I willingly forfeit all, not just the gains, but all to gain him. That's what I do.

[38 : 51] I take another step. So I've not just regarded that as loss. Okay, those are loss. Okay, I've let those things go. Now he's saying, no, it's bigger than that. It's not just, okay, whatever is loss, I loss.

It's like, no, now I look at everything as loss to gain him, because I know him. Watch how he says it. Verse 8, watch this. He says, indeed, I count, I regard everything as loss.

Why? Because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ, my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered.

That word suffered means I forfeit. I willingly let it go or willingly dismiss it.

I willingly dismiss the loss of all things and count them as rubbish. They're no longer just lost, but now they're rubbish. What's his purpose in doing that?

[39 : 57] End of verse 8. In order that, in order that, I may gain Christ. So it's another step. Let's kind of break it down a bit.

Because I know Christ, I willingly forfeit all to gain him. So not just my gains, but my status, my pleasures, my securities, my freedom, popularity, whatever, you know, comes next.

I've already given up past stuff, but I'm talking about present and future stuff now, too. I give that up. Whatever your dreams were, have dreams?

If you're older like me, it's like, you know, I kind of got... For me, he took those away. I'm glad, because they were idols. They were about me, not about him.

So notice, first of all, verse 8, he makes a resolution. He says, on the contrary, I suffer loss. I now regard him further, not just as loss, but as garbage.

[41 : 05] So it's not an impulsive act. He's thought this through. And the other context I want you to think about is, at this point... Now, I can understand.

We see when people get converted to Christ, there's excitement. There's like, you know, I'm going to go change the world, and everything's Jesus. And we get that, because that's all new, and it's all exciting. At this point, when Paul writes this letter, it's been 27 years.

27 years after his conversion, he still feels this way. In fact, he's just focused on it. And remember, he's sitting in a jail cell. So he's lost.

There's another loss. More freedom lost. More freedom lost. Man. But to him. Freedom's nice.

He talked about that in chapter 1. Yeah, I'm hoping. I think I'm going to get set free and be with you. But remember, for me, to live is Christ's die's game. That's the bottom line. So live wherever I live, it's Christ.

[42 : 15] If I'm in prison, I'm prison for Christ. If I'm free, I'm preaching for Christ. If I die, there's that same word again.

Gain. Big advantage. So. He still has the same resolve.

And now he takes it further from it's not just loss, but now it's garbage. All those things are garbage. Worthless. Now.

This passage makes me look at me. It makes me look at Jesus, and that's good, but it also makes me reflect on me. Do I think like that? Do I have that kind of regard?

Do I go there? I remember my early days with Jesus. Man, it was all about, I know him, I walk with him, and I'm motivated. And I've gone, since I've gone through depression, I've gone through stuff, and it's kind of like, how do you get back there?

[43 : 24] Well, do I still have the same, what I was convicted with this week is, do I still have the same regard? Do I still have the same regard? Do I still value that more than comfort and ease and being healthy, you know, trivial things like that?

These last two weeks with this stupid whatever I have, it's kind of like being in depression again. It's kind of like, all I wanted was relief. All I wanted was healing.

And that becomes my God. Right? It's just easy to go there. It's just the natural thing to do if you're not alert to the joy stealers.

So why does Paul do this? What's his reason? He says, verse 8, Now he's getting more specific. In verse 7, he just said, because of Christ. You know, I consider all things a lot. Now he's getting more specific. Now he's getting much more personal. It's not just because of Christ, but it's because of the surpassingness.

[44 : 47] There's a Greek word in there that's really hard to translate. So my translation has surpassing value. Surpassing worth.

Some have excellency. Some have surpassing value. I think numeric center has. So it's like hard, hard word to kind of grab. It's the surpassingness.

The excellency-ness. Those don't translate well. Of what? Of knowing. Knowing what? Jesus. Stop there. Pause. Say Ia. Think about it. Meditate. Knowing Jesus.

When's the last time you thought about that? Knowing. Not knowing about. We can study people in history and know all about him. I know all about George Washington.

[45 : 45] A lot of great things about George Washington. Really impressed by that guy. But I didn't know him. I never sat down with him. I didn't know how he talked. I don't know.

I mean, I get an impression from reading, but I don't know. I think the guy was a stud. Physically. To go, you know, take the... Not about George.

Or, yeah. So, I can know about him, but I can't know him. I haven't spent time with him. See, this word means knowing by spending time, experience, personal relationship with.

That's what changed everything for Paul. What made everything else meaningless and garbage is he's now spent time walking with Jesus.

Talking with Jesus. Listening to Jesus all day long. Have you ever worshipped where you've actually pictured Jesus sitting up front?

[46 : 45] It's changing, isn't it? You're actually singing to him. Now, he's not physically here, but he's spiritually here. He hears every word we say.

It's changing. Because it becomes much more personal and intimate. I mean, it's just singing thoughts to a vague person. And all of a sudden, oh, there he is.

First time I did it, I couldn't sing. It becomes personal. As you go through the day, do you think about visualizing Jesus walking with you?

You know, we go through the day, we shoot up quick prayers and we think of God way up there. What if we thought Jesus was right here by my side as I'm going to work, as I'm sitting down to study?

Because, yeah, physically he's not there, but spiritually he is there. It makes it real. It makes it personal. I'm just saying, just trying to make that feel.

[47 : 57] That's knowing Jesus. And then at the end of verse 8, he puts it another way. He says, it's because I know him.

Where's verse 8? Knowing Jesus is my life. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish. In order that I may, what? Gain him.

So it's because I know him, it's in order that I may gain him. So because I know him, I forfeit all to gain him. I may gain him. Here's the real gain.

Here's the real advantage. Here's something that's lasting and eternal. It's something I don't deserve. It's not something I achieve. It's something that's given to me. So, in other words, Paul's saying, yeah, okay, I've already got Christ, right?

I've been converted and that changed my view of everything. Now he's saying, I want to go deeper. I want to go further. I want to gain more. I've already gained a lot, but I want to appreciate and know it more.

[49 : 02] So he gives an example of what he's gained. Verse 9. What does he gain? That I may gain him and be found in him, 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.

There's a whole lot there. Again, a different kind of righteousness. He talked about righteousness before. As to righteousness under the law, right? Blameless. I've had that kind of righteousness. Now he's going to talk about a different kind of righteousness that's found in Jesus.

It's not a self-righteousness. It's not a righteousness that's based on keeping the law that's produced and merited. But it's a different kind of righteousness that he describes at the end of verse 9.

And he gives three prepositions to define it. One, it's through faith of Christ. Two, it's from God. Third, it's on the basis of faith. Faith. It's through.

Now, my translation has through faith in Christ. Actually, that's not what it says in the Greek. What it says is through faith of Christ.

[50 : 17] Which can mean it's either faith directed to Christ or it's meaning faith that came from Christ. In other words, I get this righteousness not by something I do, but by something Jesus does.

Through his faith. Through his faithfulness. It doesn't... He achieved it. Secondly, it's from God, so it's a gift.

It doesn't come from the law. It comes from God. And then third, how I receive it is on the basis of faith. And because it has the second faith element there at the end, I look at the first faith element is not my faith in Christ, but Christ's faithfulness.

Because it already has my faith, my channel. Not a big deal. What is this righteousness? 2

Corinthians 5 says, For our sake, He, God the Father, made Him, God the Son, to be sin, who knew no sin.

Why? So that in Him, we might become the righteousness of God. Gift. Gift. Gift through Jesus.

[51 : 40] Who lived the perfect life, kept the law, right? Kept the law for us. And then was hung on a cross. And then our sins are given to Him for Him to pay for. And He gives us His righteousness.

The great exchange. So how does this new righteousness come to us? That's kind of what I want to know. How does this righteousness come?

How did Paul get it? How do we come to know Christ? I know about Christ, but what if I don't really know Him? What if I don't really walk with Him? Or what if, for some of you, maybe, haven't walked with Him for a while, or haven't known Him personally for a while?

I'm still studying. I'm still walking. I'm still having faith. But I haven't really thought about spending time with Him just with Him. So how's it come?

2 Corinthians 4 describes this in one way. Paul is speaking. He says, even if our gospel is veiled. So there's an obstacle to our gospel.

[52 : 48] The gospel is veiled. It's veiled to those who are perishing. Well, they're the ones that need it, right? In their case, the God of this world. Who's the God of this world?

Satan. He's still in control here. Not ultimately in control, but he has dominion. The God of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers.

How are they going to be saved then? God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers.

To keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.

Interesting he uses that phrase, glory of Christ. Who is the image of God? So how do you preach to that?

I mean, Satan's already blinded their minds. What hope do you have? For what we proclaim, so Paul goes on to us, but we still preach. What we proclaim is not ourselves, but we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord.

[53 : 52] With ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. So it's still all about Jesus. So why do you proclaim? Why do it in that situation? He explains, for God.

Because God, who said, let light shine out of darkness. When did he do that? When did he say, let light shine out of darkness? Man, we go all the way back to the beginning, right?

That's Genesis 1. Let there be light. And there was light. No, didn't he have to do stuff? Didn't he have to, you know? No, he just said, and it was.

Right? So he's referring to that. So the power of God's word. God, who said, let light shine out of darkness, has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

What a mouthful. So God, who can bring light out of darkness by just speaking, brings light into our darkened hearts, our blind, veiled minds to give us light of, look at how he says it, of the knowledge of knowing.

[55 : 07] Not just knowledge about, but knowing, walking with, personal and spiritual knowledge of the glory of God. Not just of God, but the glory of God. In the face of Jesus Christ.

And then he calls it a treasure. This passage overlaps with ours so many ways. We have this treasure in jars of clay. Our fragile, weak selves.

To show, God does that intentionally to show that the surpassing power belongs to God, not to us. We're just the crackpots. So, can I meddle?

Well, I'm gonna. It's for me as well as you. Has God shown in your heart? Has he revealed Christ to you?

The glory of Christ. Not just Christ as a person who did things, but as your own Lord. Have you come to know glory in Christ?

[56 : 15] So, you're boasting in him. Do you get that? Do you see him as a treasure? See, every time the gospel is preached, every time the word is opened up and the gospel is preached, Christ is revealed, and yet Satan is blinding the hearts of many from seeing it.

So, it takes an act of God for the blind to see.

Just like Paul's experience on Damascus. He's blind. He thinks he sees. He thinks he understands everything. He's at the top of his Judaism class, so to speak.

And yet, God strikes him and blinds him and changes him. It took an act of God. It takes an act of God for us.

For that veil of Satan to be lifted. For us to strike in our hearts, not just our heads, but in our hearts. To see who Christ really is and then to know him.

[57 : 25] To be brought into relationship with him. Another question. Has knowing Christ brought a radical change in your life?

Has it brought you to change your values? What you see as what really matters? What defines you? Somebody asks who you are.

How would you define yourself? Would you define yourself by your family heritage? By your job that you do? That's what we typically do. Well, this is what I do. Yeah, but who are you? How do you define yourself?

How do you see yourself? Do you still see yourself as, this is what I do? This is where I came from. Well, Paul said, yeah, that's right. I came from a certain thing. I did a certain thing.

But now I see it all different. That's meaningless stuff now. Has it changed you to regard all earthly gains as loss? Has it brought you to a resolution to forfeit all?

[58 : 26] Because you know him, to forfeit all in order to gain him and be found in him? Or have you lost a sense of knowing him? Maybe you had that before, right?

And maybe through life and through circumstances, through hardship to trial, maybe it's, you know, it's, you haven't had that time alone with him. Or when you have time alone, it's kind of, this is my problem, go through that list.

You know, you're a good prayer warrior. I don't think of it that, in a prideful sense, but I got all these things I need to pray for. Get through that list. And I forget to spend time, just me and him.

Lose touch. And maybe you've lost sense of knowing him because you've not forfeited this world. Maybe in some sense you still value the earthly. Maybe you've been tempted kind of back to find security in these things. Joy stealer.

[59 : 37] Beware the joy stealers. This is joy. This is what real joy is. To boast in the Lord because all my confidence is in him and because I've come to know him.

In order to gain a greater joy. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for Paul's kind of opening up, his unveiling of himself.

Thank you, Lord, that we get to see kind of how he thinks, how he personally thinks, how he's dealt with his own view of himself and how he sees you.

These words are so powerful. I remember reading these words so long ago and they struck me. And they strike me again.

And so, Father, we pray that you would just take these words and do by your spirit work in our own hearts and minds and souls. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Thank you.