

# *Philippians 3:1-11*

## *Nothing On Earth Compares to Knowing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior*

**The Summit Church – Daniel Simmons**

### Introduction

Good morning Summit Church. My name is Daniel, and I am one of the pastors here at the Summit Church.

Our passage today is in Philippians 3, and since one of the primary points of the text is telling us what we should treasure, I thought I'd start today telling you 4 things in this life that I treasure:

- I became a believer in college my sophomore year. I would have been one of the few in Charleston, SC to tell you that I didn't believe God, I was not a Christian and I thought Christianity in particular was stupid. A friend of mine shared the gospel with me over Christmas break, and he asked me a question that changed the course of my life.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> most important: My family. Wendy, 13 years strong. 3 Kids.

- Durham Bulls pic. Cotton Candy: .10 cents to make, charge \$8 and you know I'm going to pay.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>. This church. I love this church. I love this spiritual family. Most of my deepest relationships are here and those friendship are built on the foundation of the gospel. I love this church and this family so much that I would happily lay down the rest of my life for the sake of this church.
- I'm an Alabama fan.
  - Pic of Riley and Dad in Tuscaloosa
  - Bama fans aren't obnoxious, we're smug

Go a head a turn in your Bibles to Philippians 3, or open up the Bible App on your phone and go to Philippians 3. We are going to be looking at verses 1-11 today.

This passage is special to me because it contains the first two verses that I ever memorized, Philippians 3:7-8  
My girlfriend and I had just broken up and what I felt at that moment was different than any previous breakup. Before that I every breakup I went through was devastating. My senior year in a high school, my girlfriend broke up with me and I went through 6 months of deep melancholy and probably was depressed. But this time was different. I was not even close to being devastated. It is not that I wasn't disappointed that I did not have a girlfriend anymore, it is just that I knew that the relationship was not helping my walk with God, and that one was more important to me. And I got home and called a guy who was discipling me and teaching me how to walk with God and I told him about the situation, and he was like I'm sorry,

and I told I'm, "I'm not sorry, and I don't really understand why not." He said, "Well, God is doing some big things in your life. Go and read and memorize Philippians 3:7-8."

When I opened up the Bible and vs. 7 which says, **"But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ."** I thought to myself, "This is the reason. Jesus is the most important relationship in my life, not a girlfriend, and if losing my relationship with my girlfriend elevates my relationship with Christ, then losing my relationship with her is worth it."

--Guys, that was miraculous for me. It was a special moment that 18 years later I still vividly remember. Now I'd love to tell you that my whole life was like that, but it hasn't been. I found a quote from church historian Clair Davis that describes my life and is really just a good summation of the Christian life:

He says, **"the Christian life is a combination of amnesia and deja-vu in which we keep learning that which we keep forgetting."**

We consistently forget the greatest thing in the whole world and we have to be reminded of it again and again, day in and day out.

This passage in Philippians is straight forward. It is Paul reminding the Philippians that **there is nothing more valuable, no greater treasure than knowing Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior.** Let's dive in, verse 1:

**Verse 1: "Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you."**

As I was preparing to get married, my grandad, called him Pop told me, "You tell your wife EVERYDAY that you love her. It is **important** that you remind her of the most **important thing.**" Paul repeats himself over and over again so the he can remind them of the most important thing; that's the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The good news that **Jesus lived the life we were supposed to live and died the death we were supposed to die.** **At the Summit, we sum that up into 4 words: Jesus in my place.**

It is a simple message to communicate, it is for the entire world no matter your back ground, or your ethnicity, it is for the rich and the poor. Jesus's work on the cross can cover any sin, it can heal any affliction, it is the message that Satan and demons fear, it is simple enough for a 6 year old to understand and accept, but it is deeper and more profound than all the mysteries of our universe.

Paul says to the Philippians, always remember the gospel.

Verses 2-3: **2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. Verse 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh**

Paul gives a warning of false teachers that will bring in news they call good, and may sound good at first, but their message will contradict the true gospel.

There are a lot of false teachers out there, and we are easily deceived, and we quickly forget the gospel.

A commentator on this passage said this:

**“even dedicated Christians have a tendency to forget the gospel daily.”<sup>1</sup>**

That is true today, it was true 2000 years ago, and Paul is working hard to remind them over and over again the truth of the gospel, and to warn them of false teachers and who bring false messages. In this particular instance in Philippians, Paul is warning them about Jewish people who are saying, “To be a real God follower, you also have to be circumcised.” **This group actually did not argue against the gospel, they just added to it.** And on the surface, it may not seem like a big deal for a grown man to get circumcised? Well, when you put it that way... -it would be a big deal for a grown man to get circumcised-

Paul obviously makes a big deal out of this. He calls these Jewish teachers dogs. This isn't Charley the golden retriever whose sole hope in life is to make you happy. Paul is talking about feral dogs. If you have ever been to a third world country, you have seen these types of dogs. They are dirty, disease ridden, they tear up things wherever they go and will attack humans if they are hungry enough. 711's in Thailand sold mace so that people could protect themselves from these types of dogs.

Paul calls these Jewish teachers feral dogs and evil doers. Why does Paul speak so strongly about these people and their message?

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<sup>1</sup> Merida and Chan. *Christ Centered Exposition: Exalting Christ in Philippians*. 133.

Verse 3, real believers **worship by the Spirit of God** not by our own spirit or strength, but by his strength that he gives us, **and glory in Christ Jesus** we don't glory in ourselves but in Christ alone **and put no confidence in the flesh** We don't put confidence in anything we do or any of our gifts or awards we have received in this life. He says to the Philippians to get circumcised under the auspices of making yourself right with God is a lie and a corruption of the true gospel.

**If you add anything to the gospel, you lose the whole thing. You will either put your confidence in what you are able to do or what Jesus has already done, but you can't do both and cannot combine the two.**

Look at what Paul says next, verse 4:

**— though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.**

This is Paul's resume, it is his pedigree. **If a person could get back to God by obeying the laws in the Bible, Paul would be the shining example of how that is done.**

Just like Paul, we write our own resume's and then trust in them. They say things like:

- Never cheated on wife or taxes

- Walked the aisle at 12, I've been in church my whole life
- Had a radical conversion when I was in college
- My kids are obedient and respectful
- Give generously and sacrificially to the church
- Everyone who knows me says I'm nice.
- I'm a good leader and in my business, I treat my employees well and customers fairly
- I've never done anything really bad
- Hard worker and successful at all I put my mind towards
- I have a spouse that loves me
- I got the right friend group, I'm in the right clique.

These resume's draw attention to what we have accomplished and what other people say about us.

Bryan Lorrits, in his book *Saving the Saved* describes how we live our lives as a meritocracy based on success and good works. He says: **this culture of meritocracy has crept into our churches. Friends, it has crept into our very souls.**"<sup>2</sup>

You have your own resume, and when you forget the gospel, it is to your resume that you turn.

Don't to your resume, instead, remember this:

And then Paul writes verse 7: **But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.**

Paul says that everything on his resume, the things he thought would make him acceptable to God actually lead him away

<sup>2</sup> Lorrits, Bryan. *Saving the Saved*. 193.

from God. They are not a credit to his relationship with God, their a debit.

Jerry Bridge's, in his book *The Gospel for Real Life*, says it like this: **"Any confidence in one's own religious attainments in the issue of salvation is not only useless, but downright dangerous...(bc) those very things could keep him from eternal salvation."**<sup>3</sup>

Your resume, whether it's based on religion and spirituality or if it is more secular humanistic in nature, either way, your **resume is not taking you to God or leading you to an abundant life, it is leading you away from it.**

But Paul tells us that one thing, more specifically one person leads to God, that is a "credit" in our account with God, and that's Jesus Christ.

Let's keep going, because it gets better: Paul says, verse 8:

**Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus 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, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.**

Paul's whole trust and his whole treasure are found in one person: Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> Bridges, Jerry. *The Gospel for Real Life*. 117.

Paul says he wants:

- To Know Jesus
- To Gain Jesus
- To be Found in Jesus
- Clinging to no one else and claiming nothing but Jesus
- He says he wants to share the sufferings of Jesus so that he can become more like Jesus
- And in the end, go home to Jesus

Remember what I said at the beginning, this passage is straight forward. **Nothing else on earth compares to knowing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.**<sup>4</sup>

No one else can die for your sins. No one else gives you eternal life. No one else can heal the broken areas of your life. No one else can restore your relationship with God.

His greatness surpasses all other things. There is nothing you have done, or you are or that you have acquired that compares:

Not...

- Money
- Success
- Relationships
- Being married or being single
- Power
- Sex
- Comfort
- Popularity

- Being in Good Physical Shape
- Strong Bank Accounts
- Not your kids

As much as I love my wife, as great as she is, Jesus is surpassingly greater. As much as I adore my children and delight them, as much as I love hearing Grant say, “my favorite is hanging out with you.” As wonderful as that is, it is rubbish compared to knowing Christ and being found in him. As much as I love this church and enjoy my job, Jesus is surpassingly greater and if he were to call me and my family away from here it would be a joy to follow him and nothing but a benefit to my soul to lose Summit and follow Jesus.

I’ll say it again, because it is no trouble for me and it is safe for you: the true gospel of is that Jesus lived the life you should have lived, he died the death you should have died, he rose from the dead three days later, he is alive right now. He is calling out to every single one of you right now. In some way, He wants you to respond to his Word.

- Stand up and sing with all your heart and rejoice in Jesus
- Repent, you have been leaning and trusting in your resume for way too long
- Some of you need to start reading your Bible on a daily basis. If you want to know the surpassing greatness of Jesus Christ, open up the book that holds his words.

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<sup>4</sup> Merida and Chan. *Christ Centered Exposition: Exalting Christ in Philippians*.132.

- Some of you need to dive into gospel centered Jesus exalting community. One of the best ways to be reminded of the gospel is through other people who know the gospel.

So I'm going to end it here and give you about 90 seconds in prayer.

We are going to put a small part of verse 8 up on the screen to help you start your prayer time: ***I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*** Use it if you need, but however you need to respond to Jesus in prayer, you do that right now. Say whatever you need say. Maybe it's rejoicing and thanking him, maybe it's repenting of your resume that has lead you to trusting yourself instead of him. Maybe it's repenting for the first time bc/as you listened today you realized that you don't know him at all.

Our worship team will start singing in a little bit, and if you feel compelled you stand and sing or stay praying, but whichever you do, do it bc/you believe that nothing compares to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus.