

# All Loss but Christ

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Date: 13 August 2023

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Let us resume our public worship of God by singing to his praise from Psalm 40. Psalm 40, and we're going to sing from verse 5 down to verse 9.
- Psalm 40 from verse 5. O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done, thy gracious thoughts to us ward far, above all thoughts are gone.
- In order none can reckon them to thee, if them declare and speak of them I would, the more than can be numbered are. No sacrifice nor offering didst thou at all desire, mine ears thou bored, sin offering thou, and bound didst not require.
- Then to the Lord these were my words, I come, behold and see, within the volume of the book it written is of me. To do thy will I take delight.
- O thou my God that art, yea, that most holy law of thine, I have within my heart. Within the congregation great I righteousness did preach.
- [ 1 : 2 2 ] Lo thou dost know, O Lord, that I refrain not my speech. And so on. You can sing these verses, Psalm 40, from verse 5.
- O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done.
- O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done.
- O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done.
- O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord my God, for my God, for many of the Messiah that ye hast done. O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord my God, for innerhalb of machenarasht-E■■■ tal.
- [ 3 : 1 1 ] O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord your God, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord my Lord has done.
- O Lord my God, for many of the wonders thou hast done. O Lord my God, for many of the wonders hath done. With my words I come behold yon sea.
- Within the volume all I will never get greater than it's on me.
- To do thy will I take ye light. O thou my God the dark.
- Till that most holy long I die. Within my heart.
- [ 4 : 2 8 ] Within the congregation great. By righteousness it takes.
- Lord I ask you. O Lord the day. Let us join together in prayer.
- O Lord God in heaven we give thanks that we can approach a throne of grace.
- Knowing that we have that invitation extended to us. To come into your presence. By virtue of the finished work of Jesus Christ.
- For it is in his name that we are able to come. Our right by nature was forfeited in the fall.
- [ 5 : 4 4 ] We fell from that estate wherein we were created by sinning against God. And that sin has followed us all our days.

Not just our own passion of sin. Which we are naturally inclined to. But our first parents being in a relationship that was covenantal with God.

Their sin meant our condemnation. And the sin that brought judgment to bear upon them. Brought it to bear upon us. And that follows us all our days. There is no escape for any one of us. Even when we are inclined to do so.

To live righteous life. Lives in the sight of God. We are incapable of fulfilling that end.

[ 6 : 56 ] Because we sin against you in thought, in word and in deed. And we confess that. Even in our most holy activities.

We find our actions and our thoughts. Even our intents. Being insufficient. To accomplish that which ought to be true of us.

So we confess that. At the outset of our service. That each one of us would look heavenwards. And seek mercy.

And grace to help. In this time of need. So that in our worship. We would know that we have you help. You help to enable us to come as.

Penitent sinners. Confessing such sin. And seeking forgiveness at your hand. Through Christ Jesus the Lord. That you would help us to appreciate what sin is.

[ 8 : 02 ] That we would not just have an intellectual appreciation of it. But a comprehensive understanding. That has affected not only our thoughts.

But our emotions. And our activities. And our activities. Even in the sight of God. We pray that you would encourage us this evening.

To come. Come thirsty. And to come hungry. Seeking that you would. Provide for us. A drink from the wells of salvation.

And that you would set upon the table of the gospel. That which would satisfy your soul. We pray for all present. That you would unite us as one.

So that there would not be one. Amongst us who would not have that same design. That we would not be content. Simply with being present.

[ 9 : 03 ] As some indeed are. So often our attendance upon God's house. Is all that matters. And however important that is.

And it is important for us. To be obedient to this calling that you have set before us. To gather together in God's house on the Lord's day.

And to fulfil our obligations in worship. Nevertheless it is more than we do often.

Just doing so superficially. And externally. Without engaging our minds and our hearts. In the things of God. Without affection for God's word.

Without the desire that that word would work in us. And for us. To the edifying of our never dying soul. So draw us to Christ we pray.

[ 10 : 09 ] And may the Christ of God. Be central to our worship. We pray for those whose desire it is. To be amongst your people. But by reason of infirmity.

Or it being involved in the path of duty. They are not able to be here in this place. A place that you have frequented. Frequented in times past.

And blessed. In the passing. Those who were in it. Just as Christ the Lord. Walked the streets of Galilee. And there were those who sought him.

And who desired. Just a touch of his garment. In the passing. And the efficacy. Of that faith necessary.

To reach out. Was sufficient. To bring goodness into their lives. And the way. But more than that. We believe that. There were those who met with him in the way.

- [ 11 : 13 ] And even. As they met with him. Their life was transformed. And they were translated. From the kingdom of darkness. Into the kingdom of your marvelous light.
- May that happen this evening. Here in this place. And may those unable to be present. Hear of it. And we know that their heart will be gladdened.
- To hear of the sound of rejoicing. That goes on. Even in the courts of heaven. Over one sinner.
- That repenteth. We pray that you would encourage your people. By seeing. Men and women of all ages.
- Desiring the things of God. More than the things of this world. For we know that. Whatever we gain from. From you our God. We will never be deprived of it.
- [ 12 : 12 ] You have promised it. And you have promised to. Leave it with us. Whereas the things that are of this world. Belong to the world.
- And. These things will be left in the world. After we take our leave of the world. So we pray for the appreciation. Of the things that matter.
- And that we would seek earnestly. The kingdom of God. And his righteousness. We pray for your blessing. Upon those who are. Confined to their homes.
- Because of illness. Some who are hospitalized. Even those of our own number. We commit to your care. Remember those who are grieving. And sorrowful.
- As the voice of death. Is seldom silent. And you speak to us. Concerning their own end. We pray. That you would elect us.
- [ 13 : 08 ] To the. To the urgent necessities. That is ours. To be. Ready. For that hour. Whenever it may come.
- Pour out your spirit upon us. As a nation. That we may return to you. Remembering those who govern us. And though. The royal household. The king.
- And the queen. And their families. We pray for the extended family. We pray for. The various parliaments. We pray for the nations of the earth.
- And those who govern them. In whatever capacity. Remember the war torn. Nations of the earth. Those afflicted by disasters. We think again.
- Of the places. That have constantly. Encountered. The grief. And the bitterness. That war brings. Think of the Yemen. We think of Ukraine.
- [ 14 : 06 ] And many other. States. That have been. At war. For so many. Decades. We remember those affected. By natural disasters.
- And we remember. And we remember. These places. Where flames. Have decimated. The landscape. And destroyed lives.
- And livelihoods. And we remember. The grieving amongst them. Thankful that we have. So. Many good things. Amongst our own lives.
- In our own lives. For which we are to. Express gratitude. Before God. Enable us so to do. So bless us together. At this evening hour.
- Bless our worship. And all who. Unite with us. Even as one. At the throne. Of grace. Throughout the world. The people. Who bear your name.
- [ 15 : 00 ] Are as one. Calling upon the heavens. To be rent asunder. That you. The God of. All grace. May come down. Leave blessing in your way.
- Forgive every sin. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen. I'm going to sing now. To God's place.
- Psalms 50. Psalm 50. The first. Version of the psalm. The mighty God. The Lord. Hath spoken. And did fall.

The earth. From rising of the sun. To where. He hath his fall. From out of Zion hill. Which of excellency. And beauty.

The perfection is. God shined. Gloriously. Now God shall surely come. Keep silence. Shall not he. Before him.

[ 15 : 55 ] Fire shall waste. Great storms. Shall round about him be. And to the heavens. Clear. He from above. Shall call. And to the earth.

Likewise. That he may judge. His people. The Lord. Together. Let my saints. And to me. Gathered be. Those that by sacrifice.

Have made. A covenant. With me. And then. The heavens. Shall. His righteousness. Declare. Because. The Lord. Himself.

Who is he. By whom. Men. Judged are. And so on. We'll sing. These verses. The mighty God. The Lord. Hath spoken.

And did call. The mighty God. The Lord.

[ 16 : 48 ] The mighty God.

from rising of the sun to where he must be fallen.

From the just side yon hill which of excellence deem and beauty the perfection is.

God shined gloriously of God shall surely come if silence shall not deem if for him fire shall with great storms shall all doubt will be.

Unto the heaven is cleared if from the full shall fall and to the earth like wise the deep which of his people all.

[ 18 : 52 ] Together let my sins unto me gather me those that by sacrifice are made are covenant with me.

And then the heaven shall his righteousness declare because the Lord is healthy I whom the manager is he I whom the manager Let us hear God's word as we find it in the New Testament scriptures on Paul's epistle to the Philippians.

And we're going to read chapter 3. Paul's epistle to the Philippians chapter 3.

Reading from the beginning. Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord to write the same things to you to me indeed is not grievous but for you it is safe.

Beware of dogs Beware of evil workers Beware of the concession For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

[ 21 : 05 ] Though I might also have confidence in the flesh if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh I am o'er circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin and Hebrew of the Hebrews as touching the law of Pharisee concerning sin persecuting the church touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless But what things were gained to me those I counted loss but Christ Be it helpless And I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord For whom I have suffered the loss of all things And do count them but done that I may win Christ

And be found in him not having mine own righteousness which is of the law but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being made conformable unto his death If by any means I must attain him to the resurrection of the dead Not as though I had already attained either were already perfect but I follow after If that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus Brethren I count not myself to apprehend it But this one thing I do Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded And if in anything ye be otherwise minded God shall reveal even this unto you Nevertheless whereto we have already attained Let us walk by the same rule Let us mind the same thing Brethren be followers together of me and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example For many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ whose end is destruction whose God is their belly and whose glory is in their shame who mind earthly things for our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself

Amen and may the Lord that his blessing to a reading of his word and to his name be the praise We'll sing unto God's praise this time from Psalm 31 Psalm 31 and from the beginning singing down to verse 6 In thee O Lord I put my trust of shame let me never be according to thy righteousness to thou deliver me bow down thine ear to me with speed send me deliverance to save me my strong rock be thou and my house of defence because thou art my rock and thee I for my fortress take therefore do thou me lead and guide even for thine own name's sake and since thou art my strength therefore pull me out of the net which they in subtlety for me so privily have set into thy hands

I do commit my spirit for thou art he O thou Jehovah God of truth that hast redeemed me those that do lying vanities regard I have applaud but as for me my confidence is fixed on the Lord let us sing these verses from the beginning of Psalm 51 in thee O Lord I put my trust shame let me never be in thee O Lord I put my trust shame let me never be afford to thy righteousness without deliver me bow down thy ear to me with seed send me deliver to save me my strong rock below and my house of defense because thou art my rock and thee leap

[ 27 : 46 ] I come first Piece I more days may please DJ in everythinguar this day line I word And said thou art my strength therefore, hold me out of the night, which then is subtly for me so crippling I have said.

And to thine hands I do commit my steadfast love, watch me.

O thou Jehovah God of truth, thou hast redeemed me.

Those that do lie in your amenities, regard thy love of heart.

But as for me my continence is fixed on the Lord.

[ 29 : 48 ] Can we turn to Paul's epistle to the Philippians? And chapter 3, and we can read at verse 7.

Philippians 3 at verse 7. But what things were gained to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

For whom I have suffered the loss of all things. And do count them but done, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that I may have suffered the power of the power of the resurrection.

And the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

And so on. As you can see, in reading these words there, there is much to be gleaned from what the Apostle Paul has to say.

[ 31 : 24 ] But these words are his words to the church in Philippi. A church that we know was a church that Paul himself had much to do with.

If you want its history, you'll find it in the book of Acts, and Acts chapter 16, I think it is.

It is a Roman colony. And that, I suppose, has a bearing on some of the things that the Apostle has to say. Many of the rules and laws and the political and social structures that exist within Philippi are greatly influenced by the Roman authorities.

If not totally so. Because when the Romans come in, they quickly establish a rule of law that is very much grounded in their own way of doing things.

And that was the way it was wherever their influence was exerted. The church itself was a Christian church that Paul, Timothy, and Silas, and Luke were involved in at some point.

[ 33 : 13 ] Their names are mentioned. And the effect of their preaching and their ministry was felt throughout the land. The thinking is that Paul, at the time that the letter was written, was in prison.

And that this comes through in what he has to say. In some ways, but not in others.

Many of the commentators believe this to be the most joyous of Paul's writings. It's as if it's saturated in joy.

Which, given the circumstances of the author, seems very difficult for us to understand. How a person who could have lost his liberty be able to write to a congregation of believers and his heart rejoicing as he did so.

But that seems to be the case. In chapter 4, he encourages them to rejoice in the Lord.

[ 34 : 30 ] Always, he says, and again, I say, rejoice. But the words that we're looking at this evening, it reminds us of Paul's own past history.

it reminds us of what he was before he came to be a child of God, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it not only reminds us of what he was, but the great transformation that came into his life that gave him a new desire, a new perspective on life.

a new understanding of what lay beyond life in this world. And Paul is clearly somebody who has experienced, I'm sure you understand, a complete transformation.

His understanding, his experience of life and living has been turned upside down. But his expressed desire is not so much in the sense of personal interest, but the Christ that changed his life, he wishes to be glorified even more.

[ 36 : 08 ] That's what has changed him completely. Christ has changed him from being Saul to Paul. He has taken him from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his marvelous life.

He has converted him. He has made him a living soul, able to glorify God, something that was not true often before, even though that was not what he believed.

but Paul now, his greatest desire is that Christ is magnified not just by him, but in him.

And Paul knows that there is a difference. It's not going to be a ministry of words alone, but when people see Paul, they see somebody, that grace has changed.

they see somebody in whom Christ is at work. They see somebody that is a stranger in the world and whose face is set on something better than he has in this world.

[ 37 : 31 ] He states clearly that his desire is that Christ be glorified in him, whether by life or by death. It matters little to Paul.

If he glorifies Christ by living, so be it. If he glorifies Christ by dying, so be it. Christ is glorified.

And that is what he wants more than anything. God is the world.

It changes his view on the world. I think we have to remind ourselves of that, that we see things differently when Christ comes into our life.

We see the world in a way that we did not see it before. what? I think a lot of Christians, when they tell their story of Christ coming into their heart, that one of the greatest changes they see is even in the world around them.

[ 38 : 40 ] They see the world differently, physically. The sun, the moon, the stars, the grass beneath their feet, all of these things are seen by them in a different way.

But not only is it true of them that they see the world in a different way, they see the world and those who belong to it in a different way.

And Paul is here seeing those who are not Christian, those who are not believers, in a way that he hadn't seen them or understood them to be before.

In chapter three it says, beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. And Paul uses extreme language there.

He speaks of those who are in the world and who are strangers to Christ and the language that he uses is extreme.

[ 39 : 51 ] But it is no more extreme than the language that he was used to using, but directed against the very people that he is now numbered amongst.

The dogs were once thought by Paul to be the Gentile believers. Those who were not Jews were dogs. they were uncircumcised.

They were people that were despised by him and all who espoused the same beliefs. But now that has changed.

And he sees those who are of a different mindset to himself by reason of his faith. He sees them like that. We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit he sees and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh and so on.

The end of the chapter he says, many walk of whom I have taught you often and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

[ 41 : 11 ] grace. It's a different understanding that now has gripped his mind of what it means to be out of Christ, what it means to be a stranger to grace and to God.

Well I want us to look at these words of the apostles and identify three things that the apostle could say that are true of himself by reason of the change that was wrought in his life.

And he elaborates upon them in a measure. First of all he has a changed perspective on what life means, what life is all about.

he sees things differently now to what he saw beforehand. The second thing is that he has weighed up things differently to the way that he weighed them up before.

There is a different value system in place to the one that dominated his thinking before. the things that mattered before do not matter now.

[ 42 : 37 ] The things that did not matter before are the things that are important to him. And the third thing not only is that three of him but he has an agenda.

He has something that he looks toward. There is a changed goal. before Paul had everything in this world but now he understands that this world is but a stepping stone to greater glory.

And he explains what is meant by that. The words of our text are preceded by Paul's description of the things that matter to himself.

And I'm sure you will know this anyway. Things that Paul considered important. Things that were top of his list.

The things that he wanted to boast in and very probably did. he was somebody who enjoyed great privileges of birth.

[ 44 : 03 ] He was a benjamin. He was circumcised. His upbringing within the Jewish faith was of the top echelons of instruction.

He was taught at the feet of Gamaliel. He knew the law inside out. Everything that would mark him out as an A grade student marked Paul out as all that.

He also speaks of the supposedly elite personal righteousness that marked him out in the eyes of others.

Not just other eyes, but his own in particular. all these things mattered to him. All of these things were important to him.

But once the change was wrought in his life, by an encounter with Christ Jesus, the things that mattered did not matter anymore.

[ 45 : 10 ] Now I think we have to stop there, because while not one of us may be in the same category as Paul, as far as privileges are concerned, we certainly did not have the same kind of upbringing as Paul had within Judaism.

We certainly did not have the same spiritual input into our life that made us think that we were cut above the rest. But it's quite something else for us to say that such thoughts did not intrude into our thinking.

That we were quite ready at times to think that there was an elitism that marked us out because of the place that we occupied, even within these villages that we belong to, as far as Christianity was concerned.

But what Paul discovered and what those who have come to Christ discovered as a truth that cannot be denied and should be emphatically kept before our mind's eye at all times, that whatever we have by way of spiritual privileges, and there are some that we should consider to be privileges, and that they are spiritual privileges, if they stop short of having brought us into a living, loving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, they are ineffectual and they will add to our condemnation ultimately if they remain as they are.

if we are content in our own Phariseism to think that we have something that marks us out as someone or something, when we are not in a relationship of faith with Jesus Christ, it is an existence that is jeopardizing our very soul.

[ 47 : 42 ] Now, look at the way Paul sees it. Remember, he is not dismissing the things that were in his life as if they were not there. What he is doing is he is describing what they were like as far as productivity, as far as spiritual worth is concerned.

I think it's Dr. St. Clair Ferguson who uses this analogy and he likens the Apostle Paul to somebody who faithfully took his wage packet to the bank every week where he was paid and deposited the entirety of his wage over the counter of the bank.

And yet when it came to reckoning how much was being saved as a result of banking the wage instead of it being in the black it was always in the red.

Instead of it being accruing interest and increasing it was it was indirect.

The deposits were rather than becoming deposits they were withdrawals. And that is the way Paul sees it as far as his spiritual life was concerned.

[ 49 : 22 ] Everything he says was counted as a loss. And he's looking at his life and he said yea doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but done that I may win Christ.

The emphasis threefold emphasis on what it meant to him to be losing as a result of what his life was made up of.



What he thought was of spiritual significance was not. And this discovery was a discovery that Paul could not make by himself.

This was something that he had to be instructed in. This was something that had to be revealed to him as a result of his eyes being opened.

What was really of worth was considered by him previously as meaningless. this. And again Paul you have to understand while it may not be as straightforward in our translation but the language that he uses is very very extreme.

[ 51 : 02 ] He says I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but done that I may win Christ.

The language that he uses is powerful. I count them but excrement. These things that were once so important to me they mean nothing.

Modern translators want to use the language where the words are tamed down. So what they're saying is well if you think of a party and that the party at its end all you have left over is what Paul is talking about.

The leftovers of the party. But no Paul is saying something much more dramatic than that. And these things Paul has discovered that he puts so much stock in are no longer what are important.

now if you're a Christian you can you can analyze what you are putting your trust in.

[ 52 : 23 ] How much of your past activity upon which you put so much weight are you taking into your Christian life today?

how much of it is affecting the way that you think and saying well I've got this code book and all of these things God will look at and God will treat me with greater respect because they're in my life.

But if they are not of faith, if they are not something that is done by reason of what Christ has done in your life, if they are not the result of the spiritual activity of God's Holy Spirit in your heart, then you should question them because they are just like what you depended upon before and which Paul says is rubbish of no merit.

What made the difference to Paul? Well, the answer is that he saw something that he appreciated more than any of these things.

He had a change of mind but more than a change of mind, a change of heart. He had a change of his whole being the result of an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 54 : 04 ] Changed values as you could see. He saw the wonder of Christ and the Christ that Paul encountered surpassed any other passion that he had ever met before.

we often hear the quoted the tragic circumstances of the missionary Jimeli of two along with four companions lost their life as a result of their endeavours to proclaim the gospel to Indian natives.

for a time there was success in proclaiming the gospel to them but at some point they lost their lives.

The very people that they were trying to bring salvation to took their lives. But before that happened it said that Jim Elliot wrote these words.

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. What he meant and what Paul means is this, that the way the child of God, the way the sons of God see things, the value system, the things that are worthy, the things that are valuable, the things that are of import, are things that previously they never thought as much.

[ 55 : 59 ] I've often said that when you talk about a Christian's enjoyment of Christian fellowship, fellowship, and many Christians enjoy fellowship with other Christians.

Time spent together with like-minded men and women, speaking about the things of God, sharing the things of God, what God has done in their lives.

It's a great pleasure in that. God, but try and tell that to somebody who's never experienced it. Try and explain it to somebody who's not able to speak of the things that God has done in their life that are so precious.

Try and tell somebody who's never seen Christ with the eyes of a believer, who's never seen the death of Christ as something that is not a tragedy, but something that is gloriously salvific and that God intends for the good of the sinner.

And it's as if you've come up against a blank, an impossible, it's as if you can't fully comprehend what you have to say.

[ 57 : 28 ] But the Christ that Paul gained could not be compared to anything that Paul knew. He found somebody who he was willing to call Lord and somebody he was willing to call Master and somebody he joyfully served regardless of in which way.

Paul delighted even in his time in prison because the understanding was his that he was serving Christ in the prison.

Now if a person like Paul whose life has been driven by the desire to live a righteous life and to live a just life and to live a God pleasing life and to do that with their own endeavours when a person discovers the difference between that kind of life and the life where it's just something you cannot wish to do anything other but that.

change, the difference is immense and Paul knew exactly what it was about.

Remember when he writes to the Corinthian church, the second epistle Paul couldn't speak these words before.

[ 59 : 26 ] His righteousness was a work righteousness. His work righteousness was the means by which salvation was possible. But now he looked elsewhere and he looked to Christ and he saw Christ fulfilling righteousness for himself.

He saw his own endeavours as being pathetic and decrepit and worthless. But in Christ he saw all that he couldn't do, done for him.

The prophet Isaiah, we find these words, no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.

This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. That's a prospective sight of what God was going to do in Christ Jesus.

Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. This is what the Lord will do for his servants. I will vindicate them. And you know the biggest difference is found there.

[ 60 : 48 ] And the difference is manifested, manifestly seen in the approach that Paul adopts. He became someone who was indebted to God instead of God indebted to him.

Now that's a thing because we can't get away from the thought that by doing what we should, doing what we were created to do, fulfilling the perfect obedience that we were created to fulfil, all we are doing is what is expected of us.

We're not doing something that will make God outdebted and that's the problem for many. They can't get away from the mindset that they are in some way going to do something where God will say well done, you deserve this.

What Paul discovered was that God had made a provision for him and all he had to do was avail himself of that provision.

But God had provided a gift and all that he could do was receive the gift. The gift of God by Christ Jesus.

[ 62 : 21 ] And that's the third thing we have here. Because of his changed perspective, because of how he saw things anew, he had a different agenda, he had a different goal.

Having established an appreciation of the worth of God's way in Christ Jesus, he knows that nothing less than that will satisfy.

It won't satisfy him, that's the thing. He wants to be found in Christ. He wants to know Christ.

But he knows Christ. He knows Christ. he believes in Christ. And yet he is here saying he wants to know Christ better. There is an increased interest that his limited resources cannot satisfy.

And he wants you know it's very difficult for a person who's a Christian to admit that they are perfectly satisfied with what they are in Christ at the present.

[ 63 : 51 ] Even though intellectually they know that everything they are in Christ is complete, it's entire, it lacks nothing. And yet they're not satisfied with that perfection.

they want to think it needs to be more than that. You know, read verse 10. He says that I may know him.

Paul, you know him already. what do you mean? That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being made conformable into his death.

What do you think Paul wants? What do you think he's deciding? Well, he desires, you know, the order of the words seems wrong.

Resurrection followed by death. You know, that's not the way it is. Death is followed by resurrection. But what he wants and what Paul desires is the power of the resurrection now.

[ 64 : 56 ] He wants the dunamis of the resurrection of Christ. The power of Christ liberating him so that he can live more and more into righteousness and die into sin.

That's what he wants. The apostle Paul is not happy being an apostle. He's not happy being destined to everlasting life. He's not happy as he is.

He knows there is death that are awaiting him and he wants that now. You know, when he writes the epistle to the Galatians, he says, For I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

That's the way he is. But it doesn't mean that he's happy being Paul. He believes that he can be a better Paul.

[ 66 : 07 ] He believes that his obedience can be markedly improved upon. And I think that's a Christian trait that Paul is demonstrating there.

A Christian trait that follows every Christian, not just Paul. Even though intellectually you have every right to believe that what you have become by reason of your faith in Christ means that you lack nothing as far as your salvation is concerned.

But there are still areas of your life where the sanctification of your body and your mind must be ongoing. There is the mortification of the flesh which has to do with the sin that is plaguing your life.

Dr. MacDonald Ferdinand Tosh wrote in a poem which is translated into English. And one part of it has to do with the Christian on the banks of the Jordan.

And this is what he said. Through the remnant of corruption that still cleaveth fast to me, often times it is my grief how slow my progress seems to be.

[ 67 : 43 ] What today my fear is chiefly and what tempts me to despond is what's on this side of the river more than anything beyond.

Now I was thinking of these words and I think they correspond to what Paul is saying here. Naturally, those of you who are not Christians, you fear death, you fear what is in death for you, you fear what is beyond and here after, because your death will introduce you to the encounter with Christ where you will be condemned for all eternity.

You're afraid of that. Paul has no fear about what lies beyond death, but he is afraid of what lies between the now of his experience and the death that he will go into because Paul knows something about the wickedness that is in the heart of man.

Paul knows the shortcomings that leave men and women tired of themselves. it's a confusion to those who aren't Christians when they see Christians on their deathbed if they're not triumphant in their death.

Surely, surely they're ready to go to heaven, surely they're ready to go to glory, they say, and sometimes they're not. They're afraid and they're concerned not with Christ, or anything that Christ has done, but what they see in themselves.

[ 69 : 37 ] And very often the Christian is someone who has to deal with the devil coming with all kinds of thoughts and making them disturbed.

The deathbed struggles of some Christians may be something that confuses us. God's will because the enemy of our soul never rests and if he sees a Christian in weakness, he will do all in his power to do what he can to expose that weakness.

things. But that's Paul, you see, when he speaks about these things. He wants to be found in Christ with the righteousness that Christ has for him.

And that righteousness he knows to be without question, without stain, and nobody can condemn him for it.

And that is what he desires. I bought a book a long while ago and I probably mentioned it before.

[ 70 : 59 ] I often go to Bethesda and buy books there. I take back books and I end up bringing books back with me. And this book is a book about the life of a free Presbyterian minister who spent his ministry in Holkirk and Helmsteen.

And part of the account of the ministry of this person tells us about his last days in the world.

And he was at this point in his life, he was on his death pet. And he had clearly evidenced in his life, through what he had to say, a desire to be with God, which was far better.

And his wife who was caring for him one day came to the bedroom door and she heard him talk. She heard him talk and she wasn't sure who he was talking to or if he was praying or if he was wanting help of some description.

But when she went in to see him, this was what he said. He said, I have a wonderful saviour and he has given me a wonderful salvation.

[ 72 : 27 ] Do you know, he said, do you know, he said to me, your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more forever.

Christ told him something. As if in a conversation the words that he probably had written upon his heart that he had preached on, that he had told others about.

heard. But at this moment in his experience, as he was just on the brink of eternity himself, it was as if it was news to him. It was as if it was as fresh as the first time he heard it.

Your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more forever. now Paul knew that to be the case.

Paul the preacher, Paul the pastor, Paul the apostle knew all that. But he was also somebody for as long as he was in the world, he knew that the world was his enemy.

[ 73 : 47 ] He knew that the prince of this world was his enemy. he knew that the weakness of the flesh was his enemy. And that caused him concern.

But he also knew that beyond this world that there were treasures and pleasures without equal. And these things he delighted in thinking about.

There is a difference between a Christian and a person who's not a Christian. Big difference. Difference between things that you think about, the things that you take pleasure in in this world, the things that you take pleasure in thinking about in the world to come.

These things make a difference. And it's important for you to know that you have to think about that.

Are these things things that make me different? Because if they have made you different, then you can afford to think, well, maybe I have a relationship with this Christ that I haven't realized before.

[ 75 : 10 ] Maybe I have this knowledge of Christ that means he means more to me than I realize. Or maybe what you will say is, oh well, if that's what a Christian is, maybe I haven't quite got there yet.

Maybe I haven't understood that yet. Maybe I haven't experienced yet what needs to be experienced. Well, you need to think of these things and think them through for yourself, the way the apostle did.

Let us join together in prayer. Oh Lord, oh God, we give thanks for all that you are to your people, how they can think about the life that they once lived and the things that they put such stock in that now are seen for what they are.

The things that are precious and the things that are lasting, the things that are God honouring and God glorifying, these are the things that your people crave and we would ask that we would see ourselves more and more drawn to these things and desiring these things.

Cleanse us from the many shortcomings that our life consists of. We seek that forgiveness in Christ. Amen. We're closing Psalm 85 and we'll sing from verse 6 through to the end.

[ 76 : 56 ] That in thee may thy people joy, although thou not us revive, show us thy mercy, Lord. To us do thy salvation go.

I'll hear what God the Lord will speak. To his folk he'll speak peace, and to his saints, but let them not return to foolish. Them will sing to the end of the psalm from verse 6 Psalm 85.

That in thee may thy people joy, will thou not us revive. That in thee may thy people joy, will thou not just revive, show us thy mercy, Lord, to us, to thy salvation live.

I'll hear what the Lord will speak, to this who he'll speak peace, unto his sins, but let them not return to foolishness.

To them the field in his glory in earth is his salvation, that glory in the land may have our habitation.

[ 79 : 05 ] his son. Truth met with mercy, righteousness, and peace is mutual in Christ's grace from earth on righteousness, and righteousness looks down from heaven high.

Ye, what is good the Lord shall give, our land shall yield in trees, just this to see, just in this step, shall go be for this day.

May grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you, all now and always. Amen.