

Philippians 3:1-11

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Preacher: Seth Powers

[0 : 00] We're going to continue on in Philippians today.! I'm going to read and unpack Philippians 3 verses 1 through 11.!

There's probably other ways of praising that. Exchanging religion for knowing Christ. The sufficiency of God's righteousness as a full and total replacement for man's righteousness. And Paul gives some of his testimony here. It's just really precious. So, I'm going to read it. Philippians chapter 3 verses 1. Starting in verse 1.

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and it is safe for you. Look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers.

Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. Who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision. Who worship by the Spirit of God. And glory in Christ Jesus.

[1 : 23] And put no confidence in the flesh. 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. But, whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

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.

[2 : 24] 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.

Amen. Okay. I'm going to start in verse 1. I'm going to take a few pauses as I work through this. And share some thoughts.

Verse 1. Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me. And it is safe for you. I just love that.

Paul's fine with repeating himself on very important things. The gospel bears repeating. And Paul's like, it's fine. It's no trouble to me to say the same thing over and over to you.

[3 : 25] And it's safe. It's a safeguard. This helps me a lot. I think a lot of times of I need to have a new thing to say. I need to have a new way of saying it.

I need to have a clever end to, you know, make the truth just really, you know, zing and hit gooder than it did last time. And in order to do that, I need to have a special way of saying it.

And this helps with that. It's just like, no. I'm fine saying the same thing as many times as necessary. And you're not bothering me because it's safe for you.

It's good for you. And I'm going to tell you again, a thing that you've heard me say a lot of times, but it's essential that you hear it and you be reminded of it. It just blesses me.

And he says, rejoice in the Lord. The gospel produces the fruit of rejoicing. And I've just been thinking about that more and more lately. Just joy in the Lord, rejoicing in the Lord.

[4 : 28] It just goes with heart belief in the good news of Jesus. It produces joy. And we need to have our eye out for that.

Like, if I'm losing my daily rejoicing as a Christian, I need to come to the Lord and I say, Lord, will you please renew that in my heart?

Help me to believe this good news afresh. Help me not get tired of it. It's safe for me. It's safe for me to hear this. Rejoicing in the gospel, they go together. And then he has a warning in verse 2.

Look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers. Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. I think the NASB puts it the false circumcision.

Look out for these guys. For we are the circumcision. The NASB puts it the true circumcision. It kind of contrasts these against each other.

[5 : 24] False circumcision, true circumcision. We are the true circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God. And glory in Christ Jesus. And put no confidence in the flesh.

So, Paul warns. He warns of dogs. And what he means by dogs is evil workers, mutilators of the flesh, false circumcision. In other words, false teachers.

These aren't those who are going around promoting unrighteousness. They're promoting righteousness. They're preachers of righteousness, but by a different means.

They're preachers of righteousness, but they're not preachers of God's righteousness. They're preachers of self-righteousness. They hold a very high standard. They exhort you to say, hey, God's holy.

We need to be like God. We need to act like God. We need to be real Christians. But the means, the gospel that they offer is not a true gospel. It's a gospel of self-improvement.

[6 : 22] It's a self-effort. I'm going to talk a lot about this. But one attribute of false teachers that occurred to me is they're oftentimes very good at diagnosing problems. And that's the hook.

That's the sales pitch. They've accurately diagnosed the problem. And you're like, oh, wow. They really diagnosed that problem very well. They diagnosed that about me. They diagnosed that problem accurately about society.

But their solution is not in accordance with the gospel of Jesus Christ. It might include it, but it's got a whole bunch of other stuff packed in there. And that's where we need to keep our eyes out for this.

We've been going through Galatians as our emcee. And this is essentially the Judaizers, the Galatian heretics. They were professing Christians. They didn't in any way deny the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

They didn't deny he was the son of God. They didn't deny he died for sins. All right. Well, they really got a lot of alignment with these false teachers. Yes. We have a lot of alignment with false teachers.

[7 : 24] That's why Paul uses such strong language, dogs. Dogs. Evil doers. Mutilators of the flesh. Just very polarizing, drastic, condemning language for speaking of these people.

And it's because the gospel, quote unquote, that they uphold has to do with righteousness. They're promoters of righteousness. They're not coming in and telling people, hey, live in sin.

They're saying live in righteousness, but do it with our method that we're offering them. And it doesn't have to do with the person, work of Jesus Christ in totality.

It's that plus some other stuff. Anyway. So I think that story, that kid's story was so good.

I was just so dialed in. I think the Lord just served that one up. An example of this, an excellent example of this is Abraham and his two wives.

[8 : 31] Okay? So Abraham is promised that he's going to have a son. God tells him that. Abraham believes that promise on the basis of God having told it to him.

And God credits that as righteousness. Hasn't happened yet. But God says, you're righteous for believing what I told you. And then a long time passes.

No son. And so Abraham and Sarah have an idea for how to help God along bring this promise to pass.

And it's to have sex with Hagar, the slave one. So Sarah has this idea. Abraham has sex with Hagar, produces Ishmael.

Okay? And this is a picture of man's attempt to bring about God's promise. God promised me this. I'm trying to make it work out.

[9 : 30] I can't figure out how this is going to work. Oh! I guess I'll just do, this makes sense. This plan makes sense. Okay, my wife's too old. So God must have meant have sex with this younger woman.

Okay, I'll be here to say. No. That wasn't the child of promise. Years later, God fulfills his own promise through his way through Sarah.

And it's a miracle. Who gets the credit? God gets the credit. And that's the whole point of God's fulfilling of his own righteousness. Even the gospel, God fulfilling our righteousness through his son, sending him to pay for our sins on the cross, raising him to life for our righteousness, sending the Holy Spirit so that Christ would dwell in our life, in our hearts through faith, and that all of the Christian life is really just Christ living in us through the Spirit for the glory of God.

God gets all the credit. And it should have a miraculous element to it in our life. It's just God is just taking this total sinner and just doing a miracle. You know, this is God's way.

This is God's way. Getting off on a tangent, though, but I think it's a wonderful story. That's a great illustration of the truth that Paul's trying to talk about here. There's two ways of trying to pursue righteousness. One is me trying to fulfill what God has promised, and the other is God fulfilling what he has promised, and they're miles apart.

[10:51] They're hugely different, and you can't do one while you're trying to do the other. You've got to pick. That's what Paul talks about later on. Paul talks about this true circumcision.

He says in Romans 2, 28 through 29, Circumcision speaks of cutting off of the flesh.

This is the distinctive in the Old Testament for Jews. It said that they were set apart for God. Well, in the New Testament, a Christian circumcision is different. So there's common teaching out there in some Reformed circles.

Presbyterians believe this, is that essentially baptism is the new covenant circumcision. That's actually not true. New covenant circumcision is a circumcision of the heart.

It's regeneration. It's being born again. Okay? God said in, he promised in the Old Testament in Jeremiah, he's going to take out your heart of stone, and he's going to give you a heart of flesh. He's going to circumcise your heart.

[12:04] He's going to make it soft. Okay? And we're going to be able to serve God from the heart, by the power of the Holy Spirit. And we're going to be able to serve for an audience of one. Okay?

We have our eyes out for what everyone else thinks about us. This is just human nature. It's easy to live in front of the opinions of other people. The Holy Spirit frees us to live for an audience of one. And that's what true righteousness does. It puts us before the throne of Jesus and say, oh, wait, yours is the only opinion that matters. It's for you. From you and through you and to you as all things.

That's true circumcision. It was an outward sign in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, it's in the heart, and God does it. That's the true circumcision, though.

Okay? And that's what Paul's trying to say. We are the true circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God. And you glory in Christ Jesus. You don't glory in your own works anymore.

[13:01] You're kind of disgusted by them. They frustrate you, how insufficient they are. They always fall short, no matter how hard you try. But when you look to Jesus, it's perfect, and he's mine. And I rejoice in Christ Jesus, and I'm continually so thankful that he stands in the gap for me, and he lives his life through me.

And my orientation is towards glorying in Christ Jesus, and I know that I can't do it except by the Holy Spirit. And I'm just a realist now about how much of a failure I am in my flesh.

I don't put any confidence in him. I've been robbed of my confidence in thinking that I can do something that makes God happy. I know I can't. And praise God, he's provided another who he's very happy with to stand in my gap, you know.

That's why glory in Christ Jesus. This is a fruit of having a truly circumcised heart. It's not about outward appearances anymore. It's about the heart. Let's move on.

I love this. Paul just basically, he gives his confidence of the flesh pedigree.

[14:39] He says, if anyone else wants to get uppity about this stuff, listen, you got nothing on me. I'm better than you, okay? I'm just better than you.

I tried harder, and honestly, I did a lot better job. I got a lot further in my flesh than you are, okay? And he does this so he can put it down later on, but he talks himself up.

He says, I was 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.

All right. Paul did a pretty good job. Okay. In Galatians, like I said, we've been going through Galatians, so it's a little fresh in my mind. He says in there that he was excelling above his peers.

He was more zealous for the traditions of his fathers. He was more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of his fathers. And he was excelling. He was outrunning his peers and his zeal for God. [15 : 44] And so this is pre-conversion. We're going to talk a little bit about what happened when Paul got converted.

But the point being, Paul was not converted out of being, you know, a frat boy. Okay. He wasn't clubbing.

Paul was churching. And he was churching real hard. He was churching so hard, he was out-churching everybody. Okay. He was doing all the ministry stuff. He was doing all the street preaching.

You know, I'm just putting this in modern terms here. This was the guy who I think if we're judging according to the flesh, we would look at and say, wow, man, I feel kind of insecure compared to the level of ministerial output that they manage.

I don't pray nearly as hard as they do. I don't evangelize nearly as hard as this guy does. Paul's that kind of guy. Okay. He's not the kind of person who we would look at and say, they don't really care about the kingdom of God.

[16 : 48] People would point to this guy and say, you need to care about the kingdom of God like that guy does. It's the gold standard. Okay. Okay. So, but Paul's saying this is meaningless.

It has nothing to do with real righteousness. What God sees, man looks on the outward appearance. God looks at the heart. And this is falling short of the true circumcision that God is looking for.

And he paints this awesome picture of how awesome he was in order to tear it down, in order to show us that this is not what true righteousness is. Okay. It's not performance. So, he's a Hebrew of Hebrews.

He's got more zeal for combating false teaching. Strong apologetics ministry. So strong that he's hauling off people he'd use as heretics off to prison, which was the church, by the way. He was a Pharisee.

So, the Pharisees, I think the Pharisees can get a pretty bad rap. Yeah, there's some false teaching and stuff. There's some traditions of men. And I believe if we went and were able to look and survey the theological landscape of, you know, first century Judaism, the Pharisees were the closest to the truth.

[18 : 00] They were conservative. They were zealous for God's law. And they were upholding what the Bible says strongly against deception, against humanism, against, you know, attempts to pull the Jews away from the Orthodox teaching of the Torah into other things, you know.

Yeah, they elevated their human traditions about a lot of stuff. But, you know, Jesus was able to say about the Pharisees in Matthew 23, do everything they say.

Wow. That's very high commendation. Think about a teacher where you can say, their teaching is so accurate, just do everything they say and you will, like, that's good.

But, he said, not as they do. Not as they do. Perfectly orthodox doctrine.

Correct. Okay? No error. That's what Paul was. Correct. He was a very correct man. He had blameless obedience to God's law, you know.

[19 : 14] So, at least from an external standpoint, he was blameless. Now, no man, there's no one that's good, not even one. Paul's not saying he's seamlessly perfect.

But I think he's basically making the point that, in human terms, he's blameless. In his own conscience, he was blameless until the Lord awoken him to see the true intent of the law there. Anyway, I think Matthew 23, Matthew 23 is a great synopsis of what this looks like in practice. So, I'm not going to read that right now, but Matthew 23 is Jesus' woes, his list of woes against the Pharisees.

I think it's a really good exercise to read that and say, Lord, am I in here? You know? Is my name in this list here? Do I act like this?

Do I operate like this? Do I do all my works to be seen by other people? Do I act like this? You know? Like, this is just so close. You know? And Jesus sees this stuff.

[20 : 19] And thankfully, we have the spirit. We don't have to be condemned about this stuff. But we also have a flesh that has patterns of operating that we're just not even aware of. Until he shines a light and says, hey, guess what?

I have a great living example of your problem. Guess what? It's Pharisee. All right? And it's really healthy. It's just healthy to do that. It's healthy to have the humility to realize that if I'm not in the ditch of worldliness anymore, I'm probably more tending towards the ditch of what these guys are, as being Pharisee.

We're not above that. Anyway, what's confidence in the flesh look like? I think a way of succinctly capturing it is it's a focus on what I've done for God, what I'm doing for God, rather than what God's done for me.

It's me trying to please God rather than, you know, like Peter. Jesus tries to wash his feet. He's like, far be it from you, Lord. You can't wash my feet. He's like, if I don't wash your feet, you have no part of me.

That's just the truth. We have not, we didn't seek after God. God sought us. He has complete work, finished work through his son, Jesus. Trying to please God by my own efforts.

[21 : 39] That's what confidence in the flesh looks like. Feel bad. Vicked about sin. I'll start running through my replay list of all the wins I've had this week.

Try to make myself feel a little bit better. Well, at least I didn't, you know. I had some really good Bible times. I was preaching. I preached gospel to my coworker. That makes me feel good. Makes me a little bit better, you know.

No. Like, that's not what makes us right with God. Christ had to die to make me right with God.

That's the basis of my confidence before God. Yeah. So, anyway.

Verse 8. No, no, no. Verse 7. Verse 7. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. So, what's the gain Paul's talking about here?

He's not talking about worldly gains. He's not talking about, like, crypto gains. Okay? I used to think like that. I just, I would read this whole passage up to verse 7. It was just like, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

[22 : 36] But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. And just reframe this in terms of worldly gain. Like, fun stuff. And money. And, you know, movies.

And all this worldly stuff. Yeah, you got to get rid of all that worldly stuff. And Jesus is everything, you know. If you really knew Jesus, you wouldn't even want any of that stuff. That's not what Paul's talking about. He says, whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

What gain is he talking about? His gains in pursuing righteousness. He had made a lot of progress. He had made so much progress.

He was outstripping all the hoo-hahs around him who were also trying to make progress. He had more. Paul had more to lose in coming to Jesus because he gained so much.

He had a lot of thoughts about what the Bible meant. There was a lot of theology packed up in that head. He studied under Gamaliel. He was, he's a Pharisee. Okay? He knew so much.

[23 : 38] Wow. Gained so much. And then he comes to Jesus and is just like, wait a minute. This is a, I have to reset everything. So what kind of gains is he talking about?

His religious gains. His righteousness that he'd earned under the law. His ministerial track record. You know? So important to him.

And you can hear this come out in our testimony sometimes. We're giving our testimony. We're kind of like him. Our track record. Our history. Our church experiences.

How God's moved in our life. Yeah. Like a lot of this is just plain honest. Like God, man, he did such a work. But you know, there's a lot of me in there too. I put a lot of identity in how I've progressed.

Whatever that gain is, he counts loss for the sake of Christ. Verse 8. Indeed, I count everything as a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord.

[24 : 39] For his sake, I've suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I might gain Christ. So he broadens the scope. Beyond his achievements for God, which that's core.

Okay? Like we want to get free from living for the world. It starts for how free are we from our own righteousness. You know, this is foundational.

This is the most important part of us. How we're right with God. It's precious. Paul let that go. And then there's a whole lot of stuff that goes with it.

His money, his comfort, his health, his whole life was poured out. I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake, I've suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I might gain Christ.

And Paul sure did. No. His whole life was a life of suffering and overflowing joy because Jesus was with him wherever he went. See, I learned the secret.

[25 : 42] Later on in Philippians, he talks about learning the secret of content. It's just this wonderful secret. Jesus followed him wherever he was. He stayed in his heart and he filled him with joy unspeakable and full glory.

And nothing can get you out on the outside. So he discovered that secret. Verse 9, And be found in him, in Christ, not having 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.

The law cannot make anyone perfect. Perfect. The law is good. It's holy. It's perfect. It's just. The law is God's commandments. Okay. But it can't make you right.

Can't change you. Just like a mirror. You shine a mirror on you. A mirror shows you you're dirty. You're trying to like take a bath with a mirror. You know, just wipes the mud around more. You know, it just doesn't. It can't clean you.

And that's the purpose of God's commandments. His law is to shine on us and show us that we're sinners. Romans 3.20 says, For by the works of the law, no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

[26 : 58] So, pursuing righteousness by obedience to the law, it's a fruitless endeavor. Does that mean we should disobey God? No.

It's just you can't incrementally level up righteousness by obeying commandments that you weren't formally obeyed. You know, say that you were living in adultery and then you learn about the commandment, thou shalt not commit adultery and you stop living in adultery.

You didn't level up. Okay. That wasn't an incremental step towards righteousness. It looks like that. But it's not. Okay. You, by the works of the law, no flesh will be justified.

Because you still got the, you still got the sin inside you. Still, you changed the outward behavior, but you still got the adultery factory going on inside your heart.

It's just with your eyes now, you know. And God sees that. And your nature is still there. It's still the same. So, the law can control our behavior. It can show us that we're sinners, but it can't change our nature.

[28 : 07] So, we need something more. We need a better hope. So, the Bible says in Hebrews, the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did. By which we draw an eye to God. That's what he's talking about here.

To be found in Jesus, not having a righteousness of my own. It's not mine. I don't identify. It didn't come out of me.

It came from God. Through faith in Christ. The righteousness that's from God that depends on faith. I have to just believe what God has said and receive it as true.

And then it's mine. And it's God's righteousness. He gets the glory for it. I don't get the glory for it. And to receive that gift, I got to let go of the other one I've been holding on to, which is me.

It's my righteousness. And that's what confidence in the flesh is. It's just me. I think we have a lot of other words for it. I think we can, this confidence in the flesh, this dead religion, this self-righteousness.

[29 : 11] I think it's good to do an exercise. What do you call it when you have the same word means synonyms? A synonym exercise with this. And sometimes, like, the Lord can give us a different definition for something that just kind of, like, makes it pop.

And just like, oh, oh yeah, I totally know what that is. It's my spiritual journey. You know, like, you can have an obsession with your own sanctification, your own spiritual journey.

It's like a novel. You're just reading it. Everyone finds out what happens next, you know. Some of this is like, why? It's because we love ourselves so much.

We love our own righteousness. We're working so hard at it. I want to see how it turns out, you know. And the free gift of righteousness, the hallmark is we glory in Christ Jesus.

We rejoice in him. We're so thankful for Jesus. And it's Jesus started. He's completing it. He's finishing it. And it frees us. It gets our eyes off ourselves.

[30 : 13] We're just not navel-gazing so much anymore. Yeah, we get conviction of sin. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin. But he turns us to Jesus. And I really think some of this preoccupation with our own sanctification isn't actually God's mind towards it.

It's an evidence of living like Paul pre-conversion in our experience. Because Paul's orientation is towards a person now.

He's just thinking about Jesus now. That's the orientation of a Christian. Verse 10, continuing on, emphasizes this point more. That I may know him.

He traded his own righteousness for the righteousness that comes from God as a free gift of faith. For what purpose? Why? Why does God make us right with him?

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

[31 : 22] Wow. It's just talking about another person in the law. It's not talking about me. That I may know myself. And the power of my new resurrection I got going on.

And like my sufferings. You know? Like my sanctification sufferings. And like my crucifixion. I see him. You know, like, I don't know. I've thought like that.

And just, I've thought like that a lot even after being a Christian. It's just not Christian. This isn't, this is Judaism. Repackaged with Christian terms. Okay? Paul has a mind that is set on the spirit that rejoices in Christ Jesus.

And it's just thinking about Jesus. Christ, our life. I have weakness. I have failure. Christ has strength. He has success.

He's my solution. I'm terrible being a parent. Okay. Christ isn't. Free gift. Free gift. Fill in the blank.

[32 : 26] Whatever sin the Holy Spirit convicts us of. The answer is him. Christ himself. I've exchanged a life of trying to work myself out of a sanctification debt.

Into Jesus. Is my sanctification. And I'm freed now to have my mind set on him. And to believe and receive him for my need.

So this is God's way of doing sanctification. It's through Christ. It's through a person. Very Christ-centric. You know the fruit of the Holy Spirit living in your heart? He glorifies Jesus.

Now Jesus said that about the Holy Spirit. When he comes, he will glorify me. In fact, he says he will not speak of himself. But he will take what's from me and he will make it known to you.

This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to reveal this mystery of the person and work of Jesus Christ. So one of the key evidences of the circumcision of the heart is that all of a sudden, Jesus is precious to us.

[33 : 31] Does it eliminate our attachment to ourselves and our own preciousness? No. But it's a victorious affection. He must increase.

I must decrease. And the Holy Spirit helps us to increasingly just put to death the deeds of the flesh. And one of the deeds, actually, Dad said this to me before. We have to say no to our flesh even when it wants to be holy.

I think it's such a good, it helps me realize whole categories of walking by the flesh that I just never even considered. Like that was holy stuff.

How could that possibly be walking by the flesh? Because it's all about me. You know? Doesn't have to do with Jesus. Anyway.

So a couple points here. One is there's a lot more to this gospel than he just articulated than just payment for sins. It is payment for sins. But there was a lot more that happened on the cross than the payment for our past sins.

[34 : 34] It covers every aspect of righteousness. And it has to do with Jesus Christ and him crucified. You have sins that were cleansed by the blood of Jesus. Jesus shed his blood to cleanse us from our sins.

You have righteousness. He imputes Christ's life to us through the person of Jesus. When Jesus died, we died. So he says there. They may share his sufferings becoming like him in his death.

So not only were our sins paid for, the sinner was crucified. The one who is doomed to live in slavery to sin, that guy was nailed to the cross and he was removed of the power and agency to rule our life.

I mean, Romans 6 says this, don't you know that your old man of sin was crucified with him? So this is the basis of our victory as a Christian.

When we get convicted by something new, the Lord reveals an area of our sin in our life. The reason we can walk immediately into an experience of victory is because the power of that old man to dictate that I must walk in that sin was crucified with Jesus 2,000 years ago.

[35 : 41] So I was forgiven for my sin by the blood of Jesus. But I was also set free from that guy who's doomed to just repeat the same pattern over and over again. He was nailed to the cross.

And I can just believe that and receive it and say, oh, wow. I've never had an experience ever in my entire life of ever walking in freedom from this. Never.

But I believe what you said. Don't you know that your old man was crucified with him that you would no longer be slaves of sin? That's the basis of our victory.

So anyway, and then living power by the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus not only died, he was raised to life. And because he lives, we live also.

The gospel is Christ's righteousness imputed and imparted by the spirit. He stands in our place before God. And he's who God looks at.

[36 : 40] When I come before God in Jesus' name, I'm coming in the name of Jesus. God looks at me and he sees Jesus. Therefore, I can boldly become for him. And on earth, when I see this need for righteousness in my life, I'm like, Lord, how is that even possible?

You called me to live like this. The Bible says, if any man says he's in Christ, then walk as he walked. It's through Jesus. So it's God working in us that which is pleasing to him.

And in verse 11, he wraps it up and says, that by any means possible, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Any means possible. Paul has this view that God works everything in his life together for good.

For the ultimate goal of the resurrected Jesus. The Bible says, when we see Jesus, when he returns, we'll be like him. And that's our hope.

That's future glorification. We will be saved fully, complete elimination of the presence of sin. And Paul sees all the different stuff going on in his life, the sufferings, everything, as working together towards that goal.

[37 : 44] That ultimately, by any means possible, I will attain to that resurrection. Okay. A few exhortations for us. I was just praying through our church and just praying the Lord would apply some of these.

So these are the things that stood out to me. One is that we would worship by the Spirit of God, specifically in the following areas. Prayer, Bible reading, and evangelism.

Like he said, that's the attribute of someone who's of the true circumcision is that we worship by the Spirit of God. We need the Holy Spirit to pray. We need the Holy Spirit to read our Bible.

And we need the Holy Spirit to be able to share the gospel with people. Like we just can't do it. There's not a natural predisposition to do those things. So I don't know if you guys have felt like blocking in these things.

Well, it's there for a reason. Like we need the Spirit. Even to do something as simple as pray. So just remember that. We don't worship according to the flesh. We worship by the Spirit of God.

[38 : 45] Watch out for false teachers. I think this might go without saying, but I've just been increasingly aware of how persuasive there's some men are on the Internet because of their ability to diagnose problems.

If you have a strong problem diagnosis that other people aren't able to articulate quite as clearly, you have purchased yourself a following. That's not enough, though.

We have to have a solution, too. Jordan Peterson has awesome problem diagnoses. He has worthless solutions. Absolutely worthless.

Has nothing to do with Jesus Christ and him crucified. And there's a lot more people like him.

Okay? So just because someone can diagnose a problem, we need to hold them at arm's length and we need to judge them according to the Word of God and say, Are they offering me the same solution that Paul is?

We need to examine ourselves for areas where we put confidence in the flesh instead of Christ. Romans 10, verses 2 through 4 says, I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

[39 : 56] For being ignorant of the righteousness of God and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

So our zeal for God can just be zeal for ourselves. It can just be zeal for our own sanctification. We love our story. We love our spiritual journey.

We love the spiritual journey we're on. We're super into it. And we're zealous for it. That's the kind of zeal for God that Paul had. Okay? And it matched the phrase as true zeal for God. It has nothing to do with the finished work of Jesus. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for all who believe. You don't know if someone is actually excited for God? They're excited to get to know Jesus better.

Well, it's down to that. They share the same passion Paul had. They counted everything as loss for this one thing, that I may know him. So, and that's a good question to ask ourselves.

[40 : 57] Like, am I as excited about knowing Jesus as I am about church? Am I as excited about knowing Jesus as I am about theology? Well, the same thing.

Okay? Maybe. Is it to you? This is why it's so much easier to read books about the Bible than the Bible itself. The Bible is the only book that there's a blanket over.

2 Corinthians 3 says there's a veil. Over the scriptures. And only in Christ is the veil done away. You struggle with having a life-filled experience of devotion in God's word?

Well, it's because it's the only book that has a spiritual blanket over it that's only done away in Jesus. But it says, when you turn to the Lord, the veil's done away.

Okay? That's a promise for us. But we can kind of, like, that's a block that God put there for a reason. He commands us to desire God's word, and he puts a block on it.

[42 : 04] Why? Through the Spirit of God. So they would need him. Say, Lord, honestly, you're commanding me to desire the Bible.

Not just read it. But like a newborn baby, desire the sincere milk of the word. 2 Peter 3. 1 Peter 2. That you might grow.

That's an impossible standard. You're requiring me to love something that I can barely even have the motivation to get up in the morning and do. You know? Like, it's everything I can do to just get through my Bible reading plan, much less desire it.

It's more like a nagging guilt, right? Why would God make it like that? Only in Christ is the veil done away. I love that story about the disciples on the road of May.

It's the end of Luke. The end of Luke? Yeah. He secretly walks with them and unpacks the scriptures to them. And then he vanishes and they're like, we're not our hearts burning within us?

[43 : 12] That's what it's like to have Jesus do your Bible study with you. Total game changer. But we got to believe that that is what he wants. Righteousness that's of the flesh is content with just cranking away and racking up a brownie points.

And you know what your real passion is? The book's about the Bible. At least you can get into those. A lot of good things. Wonderful things. But sometimes I wonder if we're avoiding the stumbling block that the Lord has put in front of us called Jesus.

And we're not coming to him. And acknowledging our need. Be like, honestly, Lord, I don't even want to read the Bible. I don't even care. I don't even want to pray. And the last thing I want to do is tell someone about Jesus.

And I know I'm supposed to do all those things. So I'll half-heartedly plink away at it. That's righteousness that's according to the flesh.

That's me bypassing God's plan, which is through his son. He makes us excited about this stuff, but it's only through the Holy Spirit.

[44 : 28] Anyway, getting a little bit sidetracked on that one. We need to examine our life for this stuff, though. You just get in a pattern of this, and it's just like, that's Christian.

It's not. It's really not. I encourage, again, blocking off time, reading Matthew 23, reading what Jesus had to say to the Pharisees, and asking God the question, Lord, does any of this mean? Because if it is, we need to know. We need to repent. I feel like I read that, and I just find myself in there so much. It's so effective in snapping me out of it.

I just love living in front of people, and I thought that I've repented of this thoroughly enough. I'll just never struggle with it again. Whatever. No. No. And it's just a wonderful reset button.

All their works they do to be seen of men. Wow. Now, come to think of it, for the last couple months, the ones I get excited about doing are the ones in front of all you guys.

[45 : 33] And the ones I'm not so excited about doing are the ones only the Lord can see. Guess what? It's not for him. So, number four, trade your confidence in the flesh for confidence in Christ.

All this man religion, the best we have to offer, it's just garbage compared to what he has to offer. And we can just repent. We can exchange it today.

The other one is to live by faith instead of feelings. This is just another way of putting confidence in the flesh. It's like money. It's a wonderful servant, but it's a terrible master. Joy in the Lord.

It's a fruit of the Spirit. It's awesome. It's wonderful. But we need to orient to what the Bible has said and say, like faith comes by hearing by the word of Christ.

If God said it, I believe it. I'm going to step out in faith and obey. I love that story you shared, Carrie, the other day about the Lord just telling you, you can do it. It's not like getting up to do something with the kids.

[46 : 36] You're like, I can't do that. And you just feel like God said, no, you can't. Because I say you can't. That's what the word of God does for us. We read what God's word has said and we're like, oh, okay.

Well, that's not my experience. I don't feel like that. But to believe it is to receive it. You know, faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of Christ.

So we need to orient around what has God said? What's his word say? If he said it, there's grace for it. I can believe it and receive it. Just like Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.

That's the same thing. The feelings will follow, but we shouldn't be led by our feelings. Otherwise, we're getting wrapped up in this, like just in a kind of tricky way, confidence in the flesh.

We're looking into ourselves for our sufficiency, not what is his word said. The other one is, last one, number six.

[47 : 37] I think it's important to be willing to start over. Paul has this idea of gain and leveling up and then counting it all as garbage for the sake of Jesus.

The Lord knows what's going on in our hearts. And sometimes the biggest obstacle to just receiving Jesus and his way for things is that we're trying to add him on to our spiritual pedigree.

Rather than being willing to let him come in there and clean house and just be like, no, you need to start over in some areas, bro. In fact, you've never really built on Christ in this area. You built on yourself the whole time.

And I'm not interested in coming in and doing a self-improvement renovation on your home construction project, spiritually speaking. I had to die to put that to death.

You need to count it as loss for the sake of me. And just have some humility and let me come in there and do some work in your life, you know. I know this is an obstacle for me. This verse is really precious to me.

[48 : 38] Some of you have heard our testimony, but we were in a home church for years. I had some really strong thoughts on righteousness and how righteousness has worked out in a Christian's life. Lots of self-effort.

And the Lord just showed me I was completely wrong. And I remember being in a bathroom. This is one of those times where, you know, a bathroom revelation.

You know, sitting on a toilet just had this powerful revelation of the gospel. And my biggest hang-up, honestly, to receiving it was, what do I do with everything that we've been doing? I had so much pride in all that stuff.

It's just embarrassing to admit that I've been so fundamentally wrong in a certain area of my life for so long. And the Lord brought this passage to mind. Everything that was gained to me I count as loss for the sake of Christ.

And I got to understand what he really meant for the first time. Then when I opened Philippians, I realized he was talking about everything he had gained in pursuing God. That was what was hard to let go of.

[49 : 44] Well, that's the stuff that can hold us up. And we need to be willing for the Lord to come into our life and reform it. Which means showing us areas where, yeah, we might have been trusting the Lord with, you know, in this area.

But in this area over here, we've never actually really trusted the Lord for. And that's why we've consistently hit a dead end our entire life. We need to ask the question, Lord, do I just need to have a fat reset button?

Have my attempts to pull off what you're calling me to do actually been the hindrance the whole time? And I need to trust you instead. So, anyway, I'm going to pray.