

Genesis 42:1-38

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[0 : 00] All right, am I turned up all the way?

Two of y'all got that, but it's okay. Let me go ahead and pray for us, and we'll jump in and get started. Father, we, yeah, that is our declaration, God, that we are our worshippers.

Those of us who profess you as the one true and living God, who acknowledge your son, Jesus Christ, that you sent, the power of the Holy Spirit that has regenerated and redeemed us. Yeah, God, we want to worship you.

And so, Father, we have done so in song tonight, Lord, and now we have the privilege of looking at your word. Father, we confess that without the aiding presence and power of your spirit, Father, we are unable to apprehend the truths that are there.

And so, Father, we pray that you would help us as we turn to your word tonight, that we would humbly submit ourselves to it, for you are speaking to us. And, Father, I pray that we would not take that for granted.

[1 : 26] So, God, be with us now as we seek to look at your word, particularly Philippians 3, that you would apply this word to our hearts, that we might not sin against you. We ask all these things in Christ's name, by the power of the Spirit, to the glory of you, the Father.

Amen. Amen. You all doing all right? All right. I mean, you're quiet. Yeah, so we're going to be in Philippians chapter 3 tonight.

If you've been tracking with us for the past few weeks, we've been going through the book of Philippians. Tonight, we're going to be in chapter 3. I'm grateful to stand again and to share with you, as Matt did share.

My bride and I are celebrating the birth of our son, Jude, and sleep deprivation is real. It's a real thing. And so we're blessed, of course, but, yeah, still in that phase where the nights and the days are kind of mixed up.

So he turns up at about 12 a.m. That's when he wakes up and expects everybody else to be up. But we're grateful to be here, and I'm excited to look at this particular passage, Philippians 3.

[2 : 39] And we're going to be looking at the first 11 verses of Philippians chapter 3. When you have it, say amen. If you need a moment, say wait a minute. That's cool.

Or you can just keep turning, and we'll recognize that you need a moment. Philippians chapter 3, verses 1 through 11, I'll read it for our hearing. And the word of God says this.

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

Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision who worship by the spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh. Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh 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.

[3 : 38] A Hebrew of Hebrews. As to the law of Pharisee. As to zeal, a persecutor of the church. As to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as lost for the sake of Christ.

Indeed, I count everything as lost 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.

Such is the reading of the word of God. There is a, yeah, there is an interesting worldview that's prevalent today.

[4 : 42] If you have your eye towards the culture and will consider yourself a cultural critic to any degree, you recognize, particularly as a Christian, that there are several versions of Christianity going on.

One in particular that I find interesting just because of how, in my opinion, how contrary I think it is to the gospel that we see in the scriptures. Is this notion that the deepest, most central problem of humanity is a self-confidence issue.

In other words, that the world is done or is doing something to us as individuals. And that the world, the external world is our problem. And the answer to that problem is going to be found somewhere on the inside.

In other words, if you were to go to a counselor of this worldview, this quote-unquote Christian worldview, you might get some advice that says, you know, your problem is you've got low self-confidence.

And what you need is you need to recognize that you're more amazing than you realize. You need to recognize that there is a king or a queen in you and that you have all this power inside. And God wants you to attain the potential, the desires and aspirations that you have for yourself.

[5 : 51] God wants to partner with you and help you reach those goals. He wants you to soar like the eagles. He wants you to fly high. But you've got to realize that there's a potential that's on the inside.

You have to boast up in this self-confidence. You need more self-esteem. This particular passage, that worldview would look at what Paul says in this passage and they would look at Paul and say he has self-confidence issues.

And interestingly enough, this Paul who has self-confidence issues in this passage is calling us likewise to have self-confidence issues.

I guess misery loves company. Now, Paul is calling us to see the worldview that he's presenting, the worldview that by God's grace he's come to adapt. And he's issuing this call, this charge to us to adapt that same mindset.

To have self-confidence issues. To have a lowness of the confidence that you put in yourself. A lowness of the trust that you ascribe to yourself.

[6 : 57] Paul calls you and I to consider that, to reckon with that. And to see that that's what the gospel demands as those who would subscribe to its precepts.

This particular passage begins with two imperatives. If you have your text there, again, we're in Philippians chapter 3. And the first imperative is just as interesting as the second.

Paul says, finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. That's a command. Paul issues an imperative, perhaps this transition.

He's going into his last thoughts with this letter. And he says, rejoice in the Lord. If you've read through the book of Philippians, you understand that this is a phrase, a word, particularly that Paul uses over and over and over again.

It'll come up again in chapter 4. But he issues this imperative, this command, and he tells the church at Philippi, and by extension, he tells you and I to rejoice in the Lord. Why is that interesting?

[7 : 59] For two reasons. One, Paul's in prison. Paul's on lockdown. Four, doing the very things that he's always been doing ever since his conversion in Acts chapter 9.

Paul is spreading the gospel. Paul is sharing truths. Paul is showing no respect to persons. He's sharing it to the Jews. He's now sharing it to the Gentiles. Gentiles. Paul is spreading this gospel message that that Jesus Christ that was put on that tree, that was actually the Messiah.

And Paul's under Roman imprisonment, perhaps. Perhaps it's this first Roman imprisonment. He's under Roman imprisonment, awaiting, as it were, a decision for what's going to happen to him.

And Paul, in prison, writing this prison epistle, gives the imperative to rejoice. That'd be like you going to visit somebody in prison and then encouraging you.

Like, you know, I know you got all that freedom out there, and I know how hard it can be. But, you know, don't let that get you down. Paul's in prison, and he's encouraging, he's demanding that this small group of individuals, this church that he's founded, he's demanding that they rejoice in the Lord.

[9 : 14] Many people describe this letter in its entirety as Paul's joy letter, that this Paul has joy. Joy, not only, of course, being in prison as one who's been persecuted for the faith, but joy in suffering in chapter one.

Joy in humility, like Christ in chapter two. Joy as he's commending other individuals, namely Timothy and Epaphroditus, as those who are worthy of followership.

Matt shared on that last week. But as one who is bound, Paul has the liberty to command that we rejoice in the Lord.

It's interesting for this reason as well. Not only is it interesting because Paul's in prison, but it is interesting because it is a command. That Paul sees joy, not as perhaps the contemporary culture might see joy as something that's merely to be equated with happiness.

And happiness is often predicated on happenings. And when your happenings aren't happening, you're not happy. But Paul sees joy as something that can come about, something that can manifest via a decision of the will.

[10 : 27] In other words, Paul says, I'm commanding you to be joyful. I'm commanding you to rejoice. And he's given this command as one that can actually be followed.

Of course, this decision of the will, as Christians, we know that this isn't something that we come up with in our own strength, but the power of the Holy Spirit working in us. This rejoicing, this joy that we have, that despite perhaps unfavorable circumstances, that we will be glad in the Lord, that's spirit motivated.

That doesn't come from you. It doesn't come from me. As a matter of fact, it's not just spirit motivated. It's a part of the fruit of the spirit. Galatians 5.

That Paul gives this imperative because this joy is a decision of the will and he wants the people at Philippi, he wants you and I to consistently rejoice in the Lord.

And he's going to give this apologetic now about why he's about to go into what he's about to go into. Namely, he's going to talk about something that he's talked about before. He's kind of referenced a little bit in chapter one, talking about the enemies that perhaps this church was facing in these individuals who are teaching a false gospel.

[11 : 44] But he's saying, I'm going to bring it back up again and it's no problem for me and it's for your benefit. He's going to go into the second imperative that I think is connected to the first. He wants them to rejoice in the Lord.

That the object of that joy, saints, the object of our disposition of contentment, of gladness, of joy is rooted in Christ.

It's rooted in the person and work of Christ. It's not rooted in circumstances. It's not rooted in, you know, my day didn't go the way I thought it was going to go today. So I'm just not going to be joyful today. It's rooted in, you know, Christ, my redeemer for me, that despite whatever I see horizontally, I know that vertically things have been made right between me and God because of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

So he gives this second imperative. First, he tells them to rejoice in the Lord. And because I'm telling you to rejoice in the Lord, I need you to watch out for something. He says, I need you to take care, to be diligent, to be discerning about something.

It's right there in verse 2. He says, look out for, you got to give these three traits of this one type of individual that he's describing.

[12 : 59] Look out for, look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers. Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. So Paul's introducing this topic that he goes on at length about in other books, namely Galatians, about the role that the works of the law have in one who would call him or herself a Christian in their justification, in their salvation experience.

What role do the works of the law play? Namely a particular work, namely circumcision. And Paul's going to contend against these individuals because of the great danger and threat that they pose to the church at Philippi and to the same danger and threat that is posed to us today.

Perhaps not circumcision, but perhaps some, any other work that you might tie to saving faith as being a requisite for salvation. Paul says, look out, watch out for the dogs.

This is perhaps derogatory term that Jews use to normally refer to Gentiles. Here, Paul, Jew, Hebrew is using it to refer to a particular group of Jews.

That's interesting because if it is this derogatory term that Jews would use to refer to Gentiles, we know that they look down on the Gentiles, namely the people who were not the people of God, because they didn't have the law of God.

[14 : 31] They didn't have this history and heritage with Yahweh that the Jews have. They didn't have this Abraham, Isaac, and such and such to point back to. So because the Gentiles didn't have the law of God, they didn't have Torah, that they themselves, they were looked down upon by the Jews.

And Paul kind of flips this around and says, okay, the Jews use this term to talk about individuals who don't have the law of God. And now he flips around and uses this term to talk about individuals who don't understand the gospel of God.

He says, look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers. These individuals who would teach that circumcision, a work of the law, is a requisite for saving faith, is a requirement to be saved.

He would say, these individuals are evildoers. That's not that shocking because, one, the first evil that they're doing is that they're corrupting the gospel.

They're adding a work to what is a justification by faith alone. They're adding a human agency to what is a divine accomplishment.

[15 : 40] That in itself is an evil that's being done. But then, too, we remember that Jesus has particular words for, namely, the scribes and the Pharisees that he's contending against in the gospel accounts.

And in Matthew 23, he tells them that they're like whitewashed tombs. Remember that? He says, you look nice and purdy on the outside. He doesn't say purdy. He says, you look beautiful on the outside.

But on the inside, it says dead bones, right? That they are hypocritical. And right here, Paul says that there's a group of individuals that are teaching this false gospel.

And he refers to them as dogs, as evildoers. And he refers to them as this word. Literally, it's the concision. It's just literally those who mutilate the flesh.

So, Paul is now making a play, as it were, on this notion that there's a group of individuals who, because of their heritage with the law of God and because of their submission to that law of God in this one respect, namely circumcision, they have sought to wield that over and against Gentile Christians or Gentiles who would be Christians and say, no.

[16 : 48] In order to be a Christian, you need to come by way of Jewish custom. In order to be a Christian, you need to come by way of the law, like us. And Paul says, these individuals, these dogs, these evildoers, these individuals who cut up the flesh.

He says, I want you to look out for them. I want you to look out for them. And here's why. He says, because we are the circumcision.

And that we, of course, he's including himself in that, but he's referring to the faithful community there at Philippi. This is Paul's proposition for this section. This is Paul's main point.

We are the circumcision. We are the ones. Just call the individuals who thought that they themselves were the circumcision, call them mutilators of the flesh.

He says, we are the actual circumcision of God. We are those who have been circumcised by God. How does Paul get that? Where does he get that notion from? Well, he's conjuring this notion that was present in the Old Testament, that via the right of circumcision, physical circumcision, God was always after a circumcision of the heart.

[18 : 06] Was he not? Let's see. I want to read this passage, Jeremiah 4.4. There are many other places where in the Old Testament you can see that this notion of circumcision of the heart existed.

Deuteronomy 30 is another place where Moses is giving them the rundown of the law again. But here in Jeremiah 4, I'm going to read verses 3 and 4. For thus says the Lord to the man of Judah and Jerusalem, break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns.

Verse 4, circumcise yourselves to the Lord. Remove the foreskin of your hearts, O man of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Lest my wrath go forth like fire.

So in the Old Testament, there was already this notion that circumcision as a mere physical right, as a mere physical accomplishment was not all that God was after.

And Paul now, telling to the church at Philippi, that he says that those of us who have placed our faith in Christ, who have looked upon Christ as Christ's person and work, have seen his substitutionary atonement on the cross, have accepted that as their own, those individuals, you and I, we are the true circumcision.

[19 : 17] He says, we are the circumcision. We worship, continuing in verse 3, by the Spirit of God.

Many individuals would say that Paul, that there is a lack in Pauline literature of references to Jesus Christ and the gospel accounts. And several weeks ago, here at Trinity, we went through a Sunday school class on the Pauline epistles.

And one of the things I said then is that there are echoes in Pauline literature that he, no, he does not necessarily explicitly quote from a gospel account, but he's echoing these truths that were perhaps oral traditions already.

So he's not contradicting the Jesus of the gospels. I think this is a place here where we see an echo. Paul says, we are the circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God.

There's a conversation in John 4 that Jesus is having with the Samaritan woman. Remember that? And she's concerned about the address of worship. Jews say you worship in Jerusalem.

[20 : 29] We say we worship here. Which one is it? Jesus says it's not in Samaria. It's not in Jerusalem, right? It's not there, but it's in spirit and in truth. Paul reflects that truth here where he says we are the circumcision because we worship by the Spirit of God.

And glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh. In other words, that word for glory there, that conjures up this notion of boasting.

Our only boast, our only brag and rights is in Christ Jesus. We don't put any confidence in the flesh. We have self-confidence issues.

Our bragging and our boasting, the only grounds of us being certain and assure of ourselves is ourselves in Christ.

On that basis, we are the true circumcision. Then Paul does several things. And I want to walk through these briefly before ending our time here.

[21 : 40] The first thing that Paul does, or rather demonstrates that he has done and encourages us and invites us to do as well, is he reassigns his valuation.

He reassigns his valuation. I'm looking at verses 4 through 8. Look back at the text. Look at verse 4. Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also.

In other words, he's just said we're the circumcision because we worship by the Spirit of God. We boast only in Christ alone. We put no confidence in the flesh. But he says I have reason to put confidence in the flesh.

He says I do. I have a list of things to put forward if we were going to play the list game. What Paul does here is, it's interesting.

He condescends and he plays their game for a second. He submits to the rules of their game. He plays their game. Only at the end make a point, right?

[22 : 49] So if you think about it in terms of a job and a resume, right? Paul submits his resume. If having the most to boast about and brag about in oneself was a job, Paul submits his resume.

He says, okay, this is a job everybody's going for. Let me submit my resume. Let me just see what happens. Paul submits his resume. He outshines every other applicant.

He gets the job. He negotiates a compensation package. He shakes hands, kisses babies, pops champagne, and then he resigns.

This is the game that Paul plays. He gets the job, and then he says, I don't want the job. Or to think of it in terms of a basketball game, he goes on their court, plays their game, beats them at their game, and then throws the trophy in the garbage on his way out.

This is what he's doing in this section. Look, he says, if we want to play the confidence in the flesh game, I have some things to be confident about. Look at what he says. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more.

[24 : 05] Verse 5, circumcised on the eighth day. Like a good Jew. Right? That's Genesis 17. God has given this promise, covenantal promise to Abraham. He's ratified that covenant.

And then in 17, he gives this sign of the covenant, namely circumcision. Circumcised all Jewish males on the eighth day. Paul says, I got that. Check. Check. Of the people of Israel.

Of the tribe of Benjamin. Paul says, I can trace my lineage back to the tribe of Benjamin. Which, as you know, that's the tribe where Israel's first king came out of.

That's where tall, dark, and handsome King Saul came out of. Paul says, I'm with those people. And if you remember as well, Judah and Benjamin were the only two of the southern kingdom after Solomon's children split the kingdom.

Right? After Solomon's child split the kingdom, Judah and Benjamin were the only two left in the southern kingdom. Paul says, I'm of that lineage. I can trace my family all the way back to that tribe.

[25 : 10] Paul says, I'm a Hebrew of Hebrews. I'm not a proselyte. My parents are Hebrews. I'm a child of Hebrew parents.

As to the law, Paul says, I was a Pharisee. You can see him state that plainly in Acts 22 and 26, where he's repeating, as it were, his conversion experience.

Right? He's in trial after trial. He repeats his conversion experience in Acts 22 and 26. He just plainly states, yeah, I was a Pharisee. As to zeal, verse 6, the persecutor of the church.

You see that in Acts 8, beginning of Acts 9. As to righteousness under the law, blameless. Paul says to those who are under this system, this, as it were, external observance of ritualistic laws.

To those who were under that kind of system, you were to observe my life, you would say that I was blameless. Of course, here Paul is not saying that he was sinless.

[26 : 16] We know in other places, Paul calls himself the chief among sinners. But Paul is saying under that system, the game that we were all playing as Pharisees, as to the law, I was probably considered blameless.

They could look at my life and say, yeah, I was diligent for the law. But remember that passage I quoted there in Matthew, right? That external beauty, but that internal rot. I think Paul would say that he himself was a prime example of that.

So Paul gives this resume, as it were, I have all of these things to boast in. But then he says this. In other words, everything that this list would, I would have imagined would have afforded me.

Every advantage that I would have considered these things to have afforded me, my valuation has changed. In other words, those things that I placed value in, I don't place value in anymore.

Those things that I would have looked at and said, this is why I'm one of God's favorites, my resume. Because those things I would have listed and named and called off, they don't have any value anymore.

[27 : 40] He says, I counted them as lost. And then look at what he says, he goes on in verse 8. Indeed, I count everything as lost.

Because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. Those things that were formerly considered advantages, they have lost their value.

So in one sense, Paul has updated his resume. If you think of a resume as those things that you can come before God and on the basis of those things, seek to merit his favor.

And that's since Paul has updated his resume and he's taken everything off. Because that's the truth, isn't it, friends? There is nothing that we can come before God and say, okay, on the basis of these eight things, here is why I think you want me on your team, God.

But Paul has recognized that all those things that he would have been boasting about, bragging about. Of course, we see perhaps the Pharisees and the scribes doing the same thing in the gospel accounts.

[28 : 44] Paul says, none of that matters. And why does none of that matter? Because none of that can merit, none of that can merit salvation before a holy and righteous God.

I can't use any of that stuff. Everything that I would have used to put forward and say, okay, here is why I'm better than everybody else.

Here is why I'm a prime candidate for eternal salvation. Paul says it doesn't work that way. He says, I counted these things as loss. My values have changed.

I've taken value. I've divested, as it were, this list of things, and I've put that value into something else. And I've seen that I can't use the former to merit the latter. Where does he see value?

Verse 8. The knowledge of Christ. Nothing else mattered. In a weighty and ultimate sense, nothing else mattered besides having Christ as Savior and Lord.

[29 : 51] He describes this as knowing Christ. This is kind of Johannine language in a sense. He describes having Christ as knowing Christ. This goes beyond mere intellectual knowledge, right?

This isn't, oh, yeah, I know that guy. I know about him. No, but this knowing that Paul speaks of here, it's a personal knowing, isn't it? It's a relational knowing.

It's a knowledge that ends up evidencing itself in the way you live. I know him, and you can see that by the way I live my life. I want to be counted among those who are in league with Christ, and you can see by the way I live that that's the case.

He calls it knowing Christ. Listen to how John talks about this as well. John chapter 10, and there are several others, but just listen to John 10, 14.

I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me. Just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

[31 : 00] John 17, 3. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

This is personal. This is relational. This is transformative. Back in Philippians 3, look at the last part of verse 8. For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish.

That's a serious word. You can say garbage. Or you can even say dung. Paul says, this is the way I now regard.

This is the value that I put in all of those things. Can you imagine? Can you imagine? Imagine now the community where perhaps in the community of individuals who's hearing this letter read, perhaps some of them were Judaizers, those who were telling the Gentile converts that you need to come by way of Jewish customs, hearing this language.

Hearing Paul go through this laundry list of things, advantages that he would say that he would have, right? Wins the game, gets the job, quits, throws the trophy in the garbage.

[32 : 19] Imagine what that does to the individual who's still putting confidence in those things. Right? It's like wanting to get away, right? But Paul does this to show that all of these things, all of these things that I can look to and be boastful and that I can brag about mean nothing in relation to knowing Christ.

He says, I count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ. That's interesting.

He says, I count them as rubbish in order that I might gain Christ. That's what you call a henna clause. Send that, Malcolm. That in order that.

That's a strong phrase. In other words, I've had to count all of these things as rubbish so that I might gain Christ. In other words, if you don't count them as rubbish, there is no gaining of Christ.

You see that? In other words, you can't have your laundry list of things that you want to be boastful and brag about and still have Jesus. You have to count them as nothing in order that you can gain Christ.

[33 : 34] You have to lose those so you can gain. Again, that sounds just like Jesus, doesn't it? Paul keeps echoing Jesus. What does Jesus say? Whoever will seek to save his life will lose it.

Paul says, I've counted all of these things as worthless so that I might grab hold of Christ. And saints, perhaps you and I, we still have our list of things, don't we?

Someone asks you, perhaps in an interview, you know, what's the thing that you're most proud of in your life? I mean, the knee jerk, we immediately go to things that we've accomplished.

What is the thing that you are most proud about, that you would most want, you know, after you're gone, the people to remember that you for? What is that thing? Typically, people respond with something that we've done.

Paul responds with something that has been done for him. In that question, they're asking you, give me something that you've done, something that you can brag and boast about, something that I can tell everybody and everybody be wowed about.

[34 : 47] Paul says, okay, here it is. Somebody else accomplish salvation for me. It's like, is that it, Paul? That's what you want me to write down? Okay.

Paul gives the accomplishment of someone else for him as the most important thing. The thing that's worth boasting and bragging about for Paul is, yeah, I couldn't do it.

He had to do it for me. Isn't that great? This is the worldview, right? This is what Paul invites you and I into as those who confess and those who would desire to walk worthy of the gospel.

Paul reassigns his valuation. And notice, too, before we move on, I just, I think this is interesting. The way the text reads, verse 7, he counted all of these advantages, all of these things as loss.

And then in verse 8, he goes on and loses them. You see that? In verse 7, he says, I counted all of these things as loss.

[36 : 05] And then verse 8, it says, 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 everything. See, Stephen, you're making a big deal out of semantics.

I don't think so. Paul says, I counted, I considered all of these things as valueless. I considered all of these things as worthless as it pertains to salvation in Christ.

As it pertains to salvation for a holy and righteous God, I considered all of these things as worthless. I considered all of these things as loss. And then I actually lost them.

Here's my problem. When I haven't done the work of fighting and considering all of that stuff that doesn't really matter as losses, when I actually lose them, I lose it.

Paul considered all of these things as loss. He, as it were, ripped himself from an unhealthy and idolatrous attachment to these things so that, yeah, when in his following of Jesus, he had to part ways with a lot of those things, it didn't bother him much, did it?

[37 : 16] That's why you see Paul saying crazy stuff like, you know, be content. I've learned how to be a, I've learned how to be a base and I've learned how to abound.

Like, yeah, Paul, whatever. That's because Paul has done, he's done that work. And by God's grace, he calls you and I to do that work. All the things that we would consider things to brag about, whether that be our pedigree, our jobs, what we do, et cetera, et cetera, all that secondary, tertiary, even below that.

As compared to the sake of knowing Christ, because all of those things can't get you Christ. It can get you praise from other people, but they can't get you Christ.

Not only does Paul reassign his valuation, but he reassesses his validation. He reassesses his validation. Look at verse 9. So continue in verse 8.

In order that I may gain Christ, verse 9, 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.

[38 : 26] The righteousness from God that depends on faith. Mm, that's good. He says to be found in him. Now, this is Pauline language.

Paul loves that phrase, in him. This idea of union with Christ just runs throughout Pauline literature. That Christians are those who have been united with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And our right standing before God is because of our union with the one who truly has a right standing with God, namely Jesus. Paul says, I want to be found in him.

In other words, what does it mean to gain Christ? Paul used that phrase. Here's what it means. To be found in him. This verse gets at the heart of the gospel, does it not?

The gospel is a righteousness issue. Eternity with God is a legal matter about righteousness. Right standing before the one true and living God.

[39 : 34] It's about a life that has been lived in complete conformity to the divine will. That's a righteous life. A life that has been lived in complete conformity to the divine will.

That's a righteous life. This matter of righteousness has been complicated, though. Has it not been complicated by sin? So that the righteous life that is required, we don't have.

That's the, friends, that's the heart of the gospel message. And I would say this is what distinguishes this worldview from any other worldview.

Because salvation, because eternity with the one true and living God, it's a righteousness issue. And the problem that the gospel exposes is that we just don't have it. We don't have the righteousness.

And therein is the dilemma. I don't have the righteousness that God demands as one who is holy and righteous. Then what do I do?

[40 : 39] Remember that worldview that I talked about earlier would say, it's in you. Don't worry about it. But the gospel of the New Testament says, no, no, no. Our problem is not external.

Our problem is internal. And our solution is not internal. But our solution is an alien righteousness. In other words, what distinguishes the Christian worldview from any other worldview is that the Christian worldview acknowledges that in humanity, there is no answer.

One theologian put it this way. He said, the problem of the fall with humanity is that it exposes the fact that that fall was so corrupt that humanity is in desperate need of a savior.

You see that all throughout the Bible. One thing you become convinced of throughout the read through the whole Bible is that people are jacked up. You're like, oh, man. Oh, man. Oh, gosh. That's one thing you got to be convinced of.

And the theologian says that humanity is in desperate need of a savior. But humanity can't produce that savior from its own ranks. He says that's how corrupt the fall was.

[41 : 54] And so now the savior is one that I said earlier is divine accomplishment. Here's what distinguishes the Christian worldview. God comes down. Malcolm preached beautifully on this.

Philippians 2. God comes down. And he comes in fashion as a man and he lives an obedient life even unto death on the cross. So the gospel, this righteousness that's needed.

For those of us who are trusting wholly and solely on Jesus tonight, this is what has taken place. On the cross, the father has treated the son as if he lived my life.

That's the testimony of a Christian on the cross. The father treats the son as if he lived my life. And when I place my faith in the son, get this.

This is what's beautiful about it. When I place my faith in Jesus, the father treats me as if I live Jesus's life. So in other words, the righteous life that we need but we don't have, Jesus has it.

[43 : 02] And Paul says, my desperate desire to gain Christ is to be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own through works of the law, but the righteousness that is attained from God by faith in Christ.

Christ has the righteous life that is needed. We don't. And Paul says the only way to get that righteousness applied to you, credited to your account, it comes from God and depends on faith.

So Paul has reassessed, as it were, his validation. Whereas before he probably would have put, he would have probably put all of that on his resume. The way I get in is my resume.

Now, Paul says, no, the way I get in is a righteousness that is from God by faith in Christ. A righteousness that he calls, I love the way he puts these in the righteousness, not a righteousness of my own, but that which comes through faith in Christ.

The righteousness from God. Ooh, that's grace. The righteousness from God that depends on faith. God graciously grants the righteous standing because we can't earn it.

[44 : 26] God graciously grants the righteous standing and then also grants you the faith to believe in the Christ who earned that righteous standing. Paul reassesses his validation.

He's simply echoing what he's already said in Romans 3.20, by the works of the law, no flesh will be justified. Why? Because the law reveals sin, which is his argument in Romans, right?

You try to go by way of the law, you just run even more and more into your own sin. Lastly, Paul redefines his vocation.

So not only does he reassign his valuation or reassess his validation, but in verses 10 and 11, he redefines his vocation. So Paul has now distilled the whole of the Christian life.

The whole of his pursuit is this. Look at verse 10. The Greek actually says, sharing the fellowship of his sufferings.

[45 : 33] Becoming like him in his death. Paul says, so here's what I'm doing. Here's what my whole life is about. And he's already said this in chapter one, right? For me to live is Christ, to die is gain.

This is what my whole life is about. I want to know Christ. So saints, here's the challenge for you and I. You know, I think about my plate now.

I used to be busy. Now it's into like intergalactic ridiculousness now with the birth of our son. So I got, you know, I got family going on.

I got a job going on. I got school going on. I want to invest and lean well into my church, you know, before they think I'm not a real Christian. You know, I got all this stuff that I want to do.

I got all these things going on. The challenge for me is I need to view all of that. So when you're in your cubicle or at school in the library or at your desk for work, you need to view all of that as a means.

[46 : 35] It's not an end. So Paul isn't calling you to abandon all of these things. Paul isn't even calling you to abandon good works that spring forth from a life that has been redeemed by the Spirit of God.

He's been calling you abandoning that. He's calling you to abandon salvation via those works, but he's not calling you even to abandon good works. But he says all of these things that you do, all of these perhaps accolades that you have acquired, all of the events and business that you do throughout your week, all of it is a means.

That you're knowing Christ. You're experiencing Christ. You're sharing in the fellowship with Christ. Your comprehensive Christian worldview is lived out in all of those different areas.

So Paul says don't use all of those different areas to try and earn the salvation that you couldn't earn in the first place. But all of those things that you do are just means by which you make much of him.

He says I want to know him and the power of his resurrection. In Ephesians 1, I'm not going to turn there. Paul makes this argument that says he wants the church at Ephesus and therefore by extension us to know that that same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in believers.

[47 : 54] I think this is what Paul is referring to here, the power of his resurrection. Not just resurrection ultimately for my own sake and my own body, but resurrection power even now as I live out the Christian life.

Saints, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in you. Same power.

Not a junior power. The same power is at work in you and I. Paul says I want to know him and the power of his resurrection and share in the fellowship of his sufferings.

So no, Paul does not see suffering as contradictory to the gospel. Paul would not say that following Jesus should equal no suffering and no pain and no trial and no tribulation.

Paul would say I don't know how you can get that by reading this Bible. Because in chapter one he's already said that we've not only been called for this one aspect of reigning with Christ, we think of reigning with Christ, we've been called to suffer with Christ.

[49 : 03] And Jesus, of course, in Matthew 16, 33, in this life you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I've already overcome the world.

Paul says I want to know that Jesus. I want to know that resurrection power. I want to share in that suffering. I want to become like him in his death. Paul, what does that mean? Jesus died for you.

Not so you can go and die too. He died on your behalf. In one sense, true. Paul knows that he can't re, as it were, die the substitutionary death that saved him. But as Christ died for sins, Paul knows that he has to die two sins.

And so you and I, Christ's death for sin, now release the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives to die to sin. And in that way we'll conform to even the death of Christ.

This is Romans 6 language, right? And this is how he ends it. That by any means I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

[50 : 05] All throughout Paul's writings, in very subtle ways, you can tell that one of the things that Paul is really, really looking forward to, one of the things that motivates him, one of the things that he always has his eye on, yes, of course, Christ's return and being with Christ.

We see that in chapter one here. To live is Christ, to die is gain. But Paul knows that in that is also a resurrection for his own body. Paul sees Christ and the reality of Christ's resurrection as assurance that the inheritance that awaits him is that same inheritance, a resurrected and glorified body.

Paul knows that right now in this present state that he was in here, he's been freed from the power of sin. But eventually he's going to be freed from the even presence of sin.

And Paul says, I want to attain that. I want to attain the resurrection from the dead. This is why I lean in. I press forward. This is why I want to know Christ. We did just have the birth of our son.

And it has, in my mind, just kind of in a demonstrable way, just this notion of the father sending his son. Or to use Isaiah language, it pleasing the father to crush the son, Isaiah 53, 10.

[51 : 36] Paul wants this church at Philippi. He wants us by extension. Don't corrupt that. This particular community, it was threatened because these individuals were teaching that.

Yeah, the way you get that is by works of the flesh, works of the law. Paul says, don't allow that gospel of grace through faith to be corrupted. And saints, that's his word for us today.

Don't allow that gospel of grace through faith to be corrupted with all of our accolades. I know you're all that in a bag of chips. I know. But Paul says, all of that stuff means nothing as it relates to your standing before a holy and righteous God.

On that day, if you would be allowed to say anything on that day. I don't even think you're going to be allowed to say anything. Your honor, no. You're not going to be allowed to say anything.

Well, on that day, if you were allowed to say anything, you know good and well you're not going to come with your list. Well, you know God on a high account. No.

[52 : 38] The only hope at that moment is Jesus. If you can fix your lips to say anything at that moment, it better start with G and end with the sus.

He's our only hope. Saints, he's our only hope. Friends, if you're not a Christian in here, he's your only hope. Let's pray. Father, we see these words here of Paul and we are, yeah, God, reminded of the gospel of grace.

We're reminded of a righteousness that comes from you, that is granted on the basis of faith. And even that faith is a gift, according to Ephesians 2.

So, God, we are humbled to know that of all the great things that perhaps we would regard ourselves as having accomplished in our short lives, Lord, none of them can merit salvation.

None of them can merit an eternity with you, the one true and living God. But solely because of the person and work of Christ, our faith in him has granted us a righteousness, his righteousness.

[53 : 54] You see us clothed in him. Father, we just want, our hearts just want to say thank you, Lord. We don't ever want to get to a point where that's no longer amazing to us.

That the righteousness of the son of God has been credited to our accounts and you treat it as if we earned it. And Father, understanding the other side of that coin, that our sin, our guilt, you treated it like it was Jesus's.

That sweet exchange, Lord, that, yeah. As the song said right before we looked at this text, we will never know how much it costs to see our sins on the cross.

But, Father, we know that Jesus bore them and that, Father, you accepted that sacrifice. You accepted that payment. And he now sits at your right hand making intercession for all of us who would ever believe.

God, I pray that we would never forget that. May our vocation, may our desire be to know Christ. We ask all these things in his name. Amen.

[55 : 06] Amen. Amen. Let's stand and respond. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.