

The Book of Philippians

“All for Christ”

Text: Philippians 3:1-11

When Christ becomes our greatest gain, everything else takes its proper place.

Warning:

In Philippians 3:2, Paul issued a strong warning against legalism.

- When you read this verse, the natural tendency is to think that Paul is addressing three distinct groups; however, the truth is that He is speaking of only one group: *the Judaizers*.
- Their teaching was a perversion of the grace of God (Eph. 2:8-9).
 - Salvation has nothing to do with our self-efforts; it is a gift from God through His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - We must beware of any teaching that says we must be right with God by *faith in Christ plus something else*. Those who teach such things are preaching a false gospel.

Spiritual circumcision (Phil. 3:3).

- Here, Paul refers to the circumcision of the heart, which is the new birth (Ezekiel 36:26-27).
- Paul says that outward circumcision guarantees nothing; only circumcision of the heart brings about spiritual transformation (Rom. 2:25-29 NLT).
 - Paul told the Philippians that because their hearts were circumcised, they were able to worship God in the Spirit (John 4:24), rejoice in Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh.
 - The term “confidence in the flesh” does not refer to sinful actions but to one’s *own efforts and achievements in attaining right standing with God*.
 - As believers, the only thing we can boast about is what Christ has done for us (Gal. 6:14).

Paul’s Autobiography:

- Paul recounts his past achievements, which he considered gains before coming to Christ (Phil. 3:4-6).

- His credentials and achievements far exceeded those of the Judaizers.
 - Paul was a well-educated man who trained under Gamaliel, a leading Jewish teacher of his time (Acts 22:3).
 - Eight days after his birth, he was circumcised, as required by law (Lev. 12:3).
 - He was of the stock of Israel, meaning he was an ethnic member of Israel (Acts 22:3).
 - He was of the tribe of Benjamin, one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Saul, Israel's first king, was from this tribe (1 Sam. 9:21).
 - Paul was a Hebrew of Hebrews, meaning he was a pure-blooded Jew rather than of mixed race.
 - Paul was a former Pharisee, as was his father (Acts 23:6).
 - Paul was zealous in persecuting the church (Acts 8:1).
 - Paul obeyed the law without fault.
- Paul taught that **true circumcision** involves **faith in Jesus** and in His finished work (Rom. 3:24-28).
 - This is why he didn't boast about his accomplishments and did not want the Philippians to be impressed by or misled by the Judaizers' religious accomplishments.

To Know Christ:

Here are a few keys to assist you on your journey to know Christ.

1. View your past life as rubbish (Phil. 3:7-8).
 - The word "rubbish" is "dung" in the KJV translation, and in Greek it refers to *any refuse, such as the excrement of animals, offscourings, rubbish, and dregs*. It denotes things that are worthless and detestable.
 - Whatever God has brought you out of, consider it rubbish. It's not worth holding on to (Heb. 12:1).
 - Paul's former way of life was rubbish, scraps fit only to be thrown to the dogs.
2. Let go of your self-efforts and embrace the righteousness that comes from Jesus (Phil. 3:9).
 - You are righteous because of what Jesus has done for you through His finished work, not because of your good works.
 - Stop trying to become righteous through your good works. Put faith in what Jesus has done for us (Rom. 5:1).

- Place no confidence in your achievements; instead, rely entirely on Christ.
3. Seek to know Christ (Phil. 3:10-11).
- Paul's ultimate aim in life was to be intimately acquainted with Christ and to experience the power that raised Him from the dead.
 - Knowing God is a theme woven throughout the Bible, and Paul links knowing Christ to sharing in his sufferings and glory (1 Cor. 1:18).
 - Paul saw suffering (persecution) for Christ not as a negative but as an opportunity to deepen his fellowship with Christ.
 - As believers, we are not immune to suffering today; we, too, will face persecution (Matt. 5:10-12; 2 Tim. 2:3, 12).
 - When Paul speaks of being conformed to His death, he doesn't mean being crucified as Jesus was. He means living a crucified life, dead to this world's system and its values (Gal. 6:14).

Call to Action:

1. Let nothing hinder your growth in Christ.
2. Trust Christ's work, not your own efforts, to be right with God.
3. Make knowing Christ your highest priority.