

## Ln 10 Making the Most of Your Life

*Philippians 3:7-14*

One thing that causes a tremendous amount of stress is not knowing how to make the most of our lives. Jesus didn't come just so we could have all our sins forgiven and a home in heaven. He also came so we could make the most of our lives here and now—to have life *more abundantly* ([Jn 10:10b](#)).

In this passage Paul tells us **three** things required for making the most of our lives.

### **Make an exchange** [3:7-9](#)

Paul writes: *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ* ([3:7](#)). Paul once highly valued his religious pedigree but now considers it *loss*. Paul considered everything that kept him from trusting in Christ as Savior and finding real joy in his life as *loss*. Before he received Christ, what Paul thought were assets were really liabilities as far as his salvation and joy were concerned.

When Paul came to understand *the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus*, all his accomplishments became nothing more than *dung* by comparison ([3:8](#)).

The word translated ***dung*** (*skubalon, skoo'-bal-on*) can also be translated "manure." Paul used the strongest possible word to describe his disdain for all the religious elements that had kept him from knowing Christ.

Apart from Christ, how does Paul describe all humanity in [Romans 3:10](#)?

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When you become a Christian, you exchange your sin for Christ's righteousness. You exchange your guilt for a clear conscience, and a meaningless life for a life with purpose and significance. Last, but not least, you exchange an eternity in hell for eternity in heaven.

Paul was overjoyed to exchange the tremendous burden of futile, self-righteous efforts for *that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith* ([Philip. 3:9b](#)).

How does Paul describe this *righteousness* in [2 Corinthians 5:21](#)?

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This *righteousness* is unattainable by obedience to the Law or by any human efforts. When we place our faith in Christ, we exchange our sins for the *righteousness of God in Him*. This means in Christ we are all God requires us to be and all we could never be in ourselves. Because of Christ's death on the cross, we can exchange our sins for *the righteousness which is of God by faith*.

How does [Galatians 2:16a](#) express this truth?

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To make the most of our lives, we must **make an exchange** and...

**Develop a growing relationship with Christ [3:10-13a](#)**

**Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship.** Therefore, Paul writes: *That I may know him* ([3:10a](#)).

The word translated **know** (*ginōskō, ghin-oh'-skoh*) refers to knowing someone and establishing a relationship. Paul did not just want to *know* the facts about Christ; he wanted to *know* Him personally. Do you *know* who the president of the United States is? Do you *know* where he lives? Do you *know* his wife's name? Do you *know* him personally? There is a big difference in knowing about someone and knowing him or her personally. Being a Christian is much more than knowing the facts of Jesus' life; it is knowing Him personally. You may say, "How do I *know* if I *know* Him personally? I go to church; I read my Bible and pray." However, you can do all these things and still not *know* Jesus.

How does [1 John 2:3](#) tell us we can *know* if we *know* Jesus personally?

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This doesn't mean we must follow a list of rules without messing up before we can really *know* the Lord. It means obedience is the natural result of getting to *know* Jesus personally. Jesus came to earth and died on the cross so we could have eternal life.

In His prayer the night before His crucifixion, how does Jesus explain *life eternal* in [John 17:3](#)?

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Paul knew getting to *know* Jesus personally meant he would experience ***the power of his resurrection*** ([Philip. 3:10a](#)). The same *power* that raised Jesus from the dead and gives us new life in Christ enables us to *know* Jesus and become more and more like Him.

Paul tells us getting to *know* Christ includes *the fellowship of his sufferings* ([3:10b](#)).

As we get to *know* Jesus personally our lives are transformed, and then we sometimes must deal with rejection and ridicule by those who don't *know* Christ. Thus, we are sharing in *his sufferings*.

The same *power* that raised Jesus from the dead gives us the *power* to live for Him, which means we are *being made conformable unto his death* ([3:10c](#)). In other words, we die to our old natures and desires.

Paul wants to *know* Christ even more personally so *by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead* ([3:11](#)). Paul is confident of his salvation and resurrection ([Rom. 8:38-39](#); [Philip. 1:6](#)). I think Paul is referring to something he wants to *attain* that is more than just *the resurrection*. It is something Paul wants to *attain* at *the resurrection* and is the same thing we should want to *attain*.

It is found in [1 John 2:28b](#). What is it?

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Paul knows the Christian life is a process, a lifetime of learning and growing. Therefore, he writes: *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect* ([Philip. 3:12a](#)). Paul doesn't want to be misunderstood—he is not claiming his conversion made him *perfect*.

This would lead to haughtiness and pride, which are very dangerous because of what truth found in [Proverbs 16:18](#)?

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To become better Christians, we must, like Paul, be dissatisfied with our present spiritual condition. Paul continues: *but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended* ([Philip. 3:12-13a](#)). We will never grow in our relationship with Christ until we realize growth is necessary.

To make the most of our lives, we must **make an exchange, develop a growing relationship with Christ**, and...

#### Let go of the past [3:13b-14](#)

Paul writes: *but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind* ([3:13b](#)). To make the most of your life, stop wasting time regretting the past. It's passed, it's gone. Let go of your guilt, grief, and grudges. You can't change the past, but with God's help you can change the future. Holding on to the past can prevent us from being what God wants us to be in the present.

How does Jesus express this truth in [Luke 9:62](#)?

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We can't drive our cars looking in the rearview mirror. We can't run a race looking behind us. Similarly, we can't run the race the Lord has for us without *forgetting those things which are behind* ([3:13b](#)) and letting go of our guilt, grief, and grudges.

You can only forget what is in the past if you are *reaching forth unto those things which are before* ([3:13c](#)). To make the most of your life, stop concentrating on what you have been and start concentrating on what you can be in Christ.

Paul continues: *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus* ([3:14](#)). The *mark* and the *prize* are the same. At the Greek games the winner of a race was taken to the seat of the judge and a wreath was placed upon his head. This is the *prize* Paul is *reaching* and pressing toward. Paul describes his goal in his last letter, *2 Timothy*, written just before he was executed. He writes in chapter two: *I have fought a good fight... finished my course... and... kept the faith* ([2 Tim. 4:7](#)).

Therefore, what does he write in [2 Timothy 4:8a](#)?

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I hope I can say when it comes time for me to die that I have *fought a good fight... finished my course... and... kept the faith.*

Then, as a result, in heaven the Lord will put a *crown* on my head and say to me what words we all should want to hear (see [Matthew 25:23a](#))?

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To make the most of your life, you must do three things:

**MAKE AN EXCHANGE,**

**DEVELOP A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST,**

**LET GO OF THE PAST.**

Which of these need the most attention in your life, and what will you do about it?

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