

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
KNOWING AND EXPERIENCING CHRIST
AS REVEALED IN PHILIPPIANS**

Message One

Gaining Christ—the Goal of the Believers' Pursuit of Christ

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:4-14

I. In Philippians 3:3-16 Christ is presented as the goal of the believers' pursuit:

- A. For Christ to be our goal means that He is the highest enjoyment.
- B. Our goal is the all-inclusive Christ as the prize to be awarded to us; when we reach the goal, the goal will immediately become the prize—v. 14.
- C. Paul's pursuit was toward one goal, one aim—Christ; he took Christ as his goal, pursuing to obtain the prize to which God in Christ Jesus had called him upward—vv. 12-14
- D. Since our goal is to gain Christ, we should forsake all other things and pursue nothing but Christ—vv. 7-8.

II. On account of (or because of) the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Paul counted all things to be loss—v. 8a:

- A. Paul placed great value on the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; this is indicated by the words *my Lord*, which convey his intimate, tender feelings concerning Christ.
- B. Paul's eyes were opened to see the excellency of the wonderful, all-inclusive Christ; on account of this excellency, he counted as loss all things, whether they related to religious gain or natural gain.
- C. In verse 8 *all things* indicates that Paul dropped not only religious things but all things on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; thus, to Paul, the loss of all things was the loss of everything.
- D. The more we have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, the more we will count as loss everything religious and natural—vv. 4-8a.

III. On account of Christ, Paul suffered the loss of all things and counted them as refuse in order to gain Christ—vv. 7, 8b:

- A. *All things* in verse 8 includes the things of religion, philosophy, and culture; Paul suffered the loss of all these things because they were substitutes for Christ, hooks used by Satan to keep people from Christ and the experience of Christ.
- B. We gain Christ by suffering the loss of all things that were once a gain for us and by counting them as refuse—vv. 4, 8:
 - 1. The Greek word for *gain* in verse 8 means "to secure, to obtain, to lay hold of."
 - 2. Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead (Col. 2:9) and the reality of the shadows of all positive things (vv. 16-17).
 - 3. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches—Eph. 3:8.

4. Like Paul, we should not only count all things as loss on account of Christ (Phil. 3:7) but also suffer the loss of all things and count all things as refuse (v. 8).
5. The more we suffer the loss of all things and count them as refuse on account of Christ, the more we will gain Christ for our experience and enjoyment—vv. 7-8.