

## The True Christian

### *Philippians 3:1-11*

#### Outline

- I. A portfolio
  - A. “A basket containing a collection of your assets which you are holding hopefully to get a return.”
  - B. The apostle Paul opens his “portfolio” (chapter 3).
    - 1. Everyone has a concept and belief of salvation.
      - a. *“Man’s preservation from destruction or failure, what gives life its ultimate meaning.”*
    - 2. His “P&L” statement.
      - a. Verse 7 divides Paul’s profit against his losses.
    - 3. Paul’s view of salvation shifts (everything he has placed his life on).
      - a. “My righteousness”
      - b. Christ’s righteousness.
  - C. Anchor verse: Matthew 16:24-25

**"For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it, for what will a man be profited if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

- D. True salvation.
    - 1. Concerns an eternal, spiritual deliverance.
    - 2. Entering the kingdom of God (Matthew 19:24-25)
    - 3. Saved from “wrath,” that is, from God’s judgment of sin (Romans 5:9).
    - 4. We are saved by the blood shed from Jesus Christ on the cross.
    - 5. One’s salvation must be assessed as to its reality.
    - 6. **"Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith..."** 2 Corinthians 13:15
- II. Paul’s command (Philippians 3:1).
    - A. We are to “rejoice in the Lord”.

- B. This joy is the result of two things:
  1. A greater need for Jesus.
  2. A bigger understanding of grace.
- C. The gospel is our “safeguard” (verse 1).

IV. Marks of a true believer (Verse 3).

- A. A true believer worships in the Spirit of God.
- B. A true Christian glories in Christ Jesus.
- C. Puts confidence in Christ.

V. Paul’s “profit” column: (Note 7 = perfection!)

- A. Ritual (circumcision).
- B. Race (*A Hebrew of Hebrews...*)
- C. Rank (*The tribe of Benjamin...*)
- D. Tradition (*A Hebrew of Hebrews...*)
- E. Morality (*as to the law I was a Pharisee*)
- F. Sincerity (*As to zeal, a persecutor of the church*)
- G. Rule Keeping (*As to the righteousness unto the law I was blameless...*)

VI. Paul reconfigures his P&L statement resulting in a new portfolio.

***But whatever these things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.***

- A. *“I have suffered the loss of all things AND COUNT THEM AS RUBBISH so that I may gain Christ...*
  1. Rubbish = excrement.
- B. Paul exchanged his righteousness for the righteousness of Jesus Christ!

## The True Christian

*Philippians 3:1-11*

### Sermon Notes

This is what we call Palm Sunday... the first day of Passion Week... Jesus's final week on earth...culminating in His death and resurrection the final day of this week... I find it a bit strange that Christians only give a nod to what we call Easter but pull out all the stops on Christmas!

Christmas is wonderful... the birth of our Savior is surely worthy of a month or two of celebration... but if all we had was the birth of Jesus... we wouldn't be celebrating. There would be no reason for celebration...

Easter... or preferred... *Resurrection Sunday* is the most special of days of remembrance...Jesus's birth without His death and resurrection would just be another birthday...He was born so that He would die on a cross on our behalf... and three days later... be bodily resurrected!...The apostle Paul vividly argues the supremacy of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 15

**14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith also is in vain. 15 Moreover, we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified [a]against God that He raised [b]Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised; 17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.**

All that to say that the most important days of Jesus life... the most important event of Jesus's life is what we call Easter

So... this week I challenge you to change it up a little... attached to your outline is a simple chronology of the final events of Jesus's life during this Passion Week... I challenge you to every day this week sit down with your Bibles and follow along... look up the passages.... Meditate on God's word.... How this gospel... the good news is such good news!

And when we get to Thursday... come to church and as a body of Christian believers... fellowship and worship together remembering that first Communion... the Last Supper...the last Passover meal of Jesus Christ.... And the many events that circulated in, around and through it the night before Jesus was nailed to that cross....

The passage this morning is not a Palm Sunday narrative... it is not about the triumphal entry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.... On that day... Jesus entered through the gates of Jerusalem as king... the most humble of all kings... but does that not fit so well in this letter of the apostle Paul to the Philippians?

The chapter we just finished...Chapter 2 of Philippians goes so well with the humble earthly coronation of our king...(2:8)... Jesus humbles Himself by leaving His heavenly abode and **Being found in the appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross...**

As Jesus entered the gates of Jerusalem on Sunday... in just five days He would be nailed to that cross... Jesus presents Himself as THE KING... and He stares man in the face... you ... me... and says... “Well? What about it?”.... “What are you going to do with Me?”.... Are you going to make Me your king?.... or will you be pounding nails into My wrists and ankles?...My hands and My feet?

These first eleven verses of chapter three illustrate for us the message of the gospel.... The reason for the death and resurrection of Jesus.... And what it all means for us...

Let me get us into it this way:

Many of you are concerned over your investment portfolios...some of you are concerned because you haven't started one yet... but for those of you who have... you've probably been thinking about it some these days...An investment portfolio is basically a basket containing a collection of your assets which you are holding hopefully to get a return on those investments that are in the basket...

Today with inflation, political and social confusion...with food, energy and gas prices flying high... you are watching your basket.... You might even be re-evaluating and reprioritizing what's in your basket....

What we have in Philippians 3 is a picture of a portfolio... specifically the apostle Paul's portfolio... and as we look at his portfolio... it begs each one of us to evaluate our own portfolio...evaluate and possibly re-prioritize our “assets”.

I'm not pushing an analogy here... the apostle writes these first eleven verses actually using accounting terms... actually putting in front of us...intentionally a “Profit and Loss” statement...tracking his assets in his portfolio....

If you've ever been in business you know how important a P&L statement is... it shows you the reality of how your business is doing.... you evaluate how you will operate in the future...where you will put your effort... your business decisions are based largely on your “Profit and Loss” statement....

All year long you want your profits to outweigh the losses... until April 15 when you try everything legal to prove your losses are greater than your profits...For only one day!... That's next week if you forgot!

Paul's portfolio is not his *financial* investment portfolio...it's much greater than that...it is a portfolio on everything he has placed his life on...we could say it is a basket containing everything Paul has placed his heart on for his ultimate *salvation*.

Everyone has a concept and belief about salvation...it's not only a religious term... setting aside the Christian definition of salvation... salvation by broad definition is *man's preservation from destruction or failure*...it could be defined as *what gives life its ultimate meaning*...

Salvation for the non-Christian could be *success*... avoidance of pain and suffering...exchanged for pleasure and happiness...elevation in social status...an increasing financial portfolio... being able to go through and finish life feeling *good* about one's self...you get to the end and say "*That was great!*"

That salvation P&L statement would be full of assets on the "profit" side that insured such outcomes... it would include such assets.

One would strive to minimize the loss side... bad business decisions... bad spouse decisions... bad time management...wasted time on non-profitable endeavors... all to maximize his final outcome in life... and minimize anything that could get in the way.

The apostle Paul lays out his portfolio...Containing all that he thought would be his salvation...he opens his portfolio, pulls out his P&L statement in front of us and concludes in verse 7:

**But whatever things were gain (*Profit*) to me those things I have counted as *loss* for the sake of Christ.**

*Everything in my basket that I've been basing my life on... everything that I thought was my salvation... I'm moving them over from the profit column over to the loss column,*... this is what we're going to look at this morning... and as we do... have your portfolio opened in front of you!

You might re-evaluate and consider some reprioritizing what's in your basket...Paul begins chapter three... the first three verses with a command and a statement of faith... this is where Paul ended up in his final portfolio...these first three verses are the new profit side of his P&L statement...

It all starts with one's TRUE salvation...

Then the following three verses... Verses 4 through 6 looks back at his prior P&L statement... to his re-prioritizing his assets creating a new portfolio in verse 7...that's probably as far as we will get this morning...but then the final four verses... verses 8-11... shows Paul's life completely re-prioritized and centered upon Jesus Christ...

### **Read Philippians 3:1-11**

Matthew gives us a couple verses to anchor all this on:

Matthew 16 verses 25 and 26. Here is a familiar saying of Jesus, listen to it, "**For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it, for what will a man be profited if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

This is talking about true salvation...Christian salvation is not success here on earth....  
 “salvation” concerns an eternal, spiritual deliverance...Jesus equated being saved with entering  
 the kingdom of God (Matthew 19:24-25).... A far cry from getting to your death bed saying  
 “well.... That was great....”

What are we saved from?...we are saved from “wrath,” that is, from God’s judgment of sin  
 Romans 5:9

**9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the  
 wrath of God through Him....**Our sin has separated us from God, and the consequence of sin is  
 death (Romans 6:23)...eternal death...salvation refers to our deliverance from the consequence of  
 sin and therefore involves the removal of sin.

We are saved by the blood shed from Jesus Christ on the cross.... The gospel... the good news  
 of Jesus Christ.

The gospel... Jesus and the cross, His resurrection is the central theme throughout the New  
 Testament.... The entire testament is centered on the gospel.

But chasing right behind the gospel theme... is another theme... it is a concern that the writers of  
 the New Testament not only stress upon but are prolific in writing about it because it is so very,  
 very important.... And that is... that **one’s salvation must be assessed as to its reality**... is one’s  
*claim* of being saved... a true statement.... Does it match reality?

Someone asked me a couple of years ago... *why do you always say “true Christian”*.... In many  
 of my sermons I won’t usually say something like *If you are a Christian*.... I usually say  
 something like *If you are a true Christian*.... Or.... *If you are a real Christian*...

There is a reason for that... we call just about everybody born in America a Christian...*they  
 sprinkled me as a baby... I’m a Christian!... I’m a good person, my parents went to church... I’m  
 a Christian...I had an experience at a camp or crusade...Are you a Christian?...”Yeah, pretty  
 much!”* ...Pretty much???... so the term “Christian” isn’t enough... well...

**ARE YOU A TRUE CHRISTIAN?**

Who is a true believer?... who has been deceived?... there is a haunting verse that I repeat often  
 from up here... it is a verse that has stuck in my mind to the point of thinking about it  
 constantly... it is tragic.... But it is unfortunately a necessary statement from the lips of Jesus  
 Christ Himself in Matthew 7:

**"There will come a day when many people will say, Lord, Lord, we have prophesied in  
 Your name (this includes many pastors!) and we've done many wonderful works in Your  
 name and we've cast out demons in Your name. And He will say, Depart from Me, you  
 workers of iniquity, I never knew you."**

Jesus Himself pointing to the fact that there are people who *think* they know Him, *think* they  
 serve Him, do many good things in His name... *think* they represent Him but are deceived.

I said last week that I've been reading some of the Puritans writings... I came across a short book by a puritan back in 1661 named Matthew Mead... The title of it is, *The Almost Christian Discovered*, isn't that a great title?... typical archaic Puritan language... *The Almost Christian Discovered*.

Matthew Mead wanted to address a very significant problem. The problem he wanted to address was the fact that there were many people who thought they were saved and weren't...I think he must have wondered "how close can you get to being a Christian and yet not be one".....So he was addressing the problem 300 years ago that Paul was addressing nearly 2,000 years ago that we are now addressing today.

This is what he writes... I know it is a bit lengthy.... But I think important:

*"A man may have much knowledge about Christ and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may have a great and eminent gift, yet be but almost a Christian."*

He means by that a speaking gift, a leadership gift.

*"A man may have a high profession of religion. He may be much in external duties of goodness and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may go far in opposing his own sin and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may hate sin and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may make great vows and promises, strong purposes and resolutions against his sin and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may maintain a strife and a combat against sin and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may be a member of the church and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may have great hopes of heaven and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may under visible changes, altered life and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may be very zealous in matters of religion and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may be much in prayers and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may even suffer for Christ's sake and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may outwardly obey the commandments and yet be but almost a Christian.*

*A man may perform external worship yet be but almost a Christian.*

*And a man may have faith and yet be but almost a Christian."*

Being but almost a Christian doesn't save you from anything!

God is eminently concerned that the lost become saved and He is equally concerned that no one be deceived about the reality of their spiritual condition. Because there are many who believe that they're in a right relationship with God when in fact they're not...

2 Corinthians 13:5 you have sort of a summation of all of this. Paul writes, "**Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith...examine yourselves or do you not recognize this about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you... unless indeed you fail the test.**"...he is saying...*can you really recognize that Jesus Christ is in you? Can you put yourself to the test and come to that*

*assurance? You must...you must test yourself, you must examine yourself....* must check out the evidence.

And so, you see then these two themes in the Scripture...the gospel and the reality of salvation running right along behind it.... what does it take to be saved?

Do you know if you are truly saved?... really.... Do you?... how do you know?...is there any proof in your life that confirms you are saved other than just your profession of faith??. well... if you answered to yourself *wow, now that you mention it, I'm not sure...* or.... If I just made you doubt yourself a little.... This will be a good Sunday for you.... In fact... this should be a good Sunday for everyone... including you who KNOW you are saved....

Paul begins chapter three in verse 1 with **Finally...** Paul doesn't really understand "finally" much like I don't understand "finally"... I could be in the middle of a sermon and say "*finally*" and most of you don't buy it because I go on for another thirty minutes!...nothing really final about it!

Paul is just about in the middle of his letter and he says "finally"... and he is nowhere close to being "final"!... so many rich things ahead!... but his *finally* is putting a cap on what *he's been talking about...*

**Sanctification**.... The process of us becoming more and more like Christ.... In your attitudes.... In your efforts... in humility... in your relationships... how you talk... how you don't complain...grumble?

Chapter two was about us becoming more and more like Christ.... So that we may become "blameless" in Him.... And so now Paul says to cap off that thought.... **Finally my brethren, rejoice in the Lord... rejoice in the Lord...**

Paul isn't suggesting that we be joyful... **he is commanding us to be joyful!**... that tells me that our being full of joy isn't based on circumstances... mood... or external stimuli... it is based on a decision....our decision.

But we can't decide that just anything is going to make us joy-full...all things won't make us full of joy...they do not have the ability to deliver... only one thing can fill you truly with joy... and that is Jesus Christ....(3:1) **Rejoice in the LORD...**

as we've seen earlier this isn't the kind of joy that is like happiness... happiness stems from having good circumstances...we talked about this in depth in chapter one a couple months ago... this is a joy that exists regardless of circumstances...it is what is produced within us when we have a deep, deep **confidence in our future** based on trust in God's purpose and power...

Joy can be defined as **a supernatural delight in God and God's goodness**... *joy is an inner quality of delight in God*... so it is not affected by whatever happens to us on the outside...

Joy is a state of existence without any ultimate fear in your life because you've embraced the security and love of the Father.... Joy is the result of our will in choosing to obey God.... This joy is the culmination of embracing the gospel in our lives and being proclaimed as righteous by God Himself through the blood of Jesus Christ..... so.... **Rejoice in the Lord!**

This kind of joy is a result of two things.... **A greater need for Jesus** rather than a greater need for more stuff...so many look to getting more things as a way to have more joy...what you need is a greater need for Jesus..... **And a bigger understanding of grace**.... And how the two are vital parts of your life.... Because you don't get more joy from the stuff you desire.... You get more joy when you realize what you deserve but won't get....

And then he writes: **to write the same things to you again is no trouble to me... AND IS A SAFEGUARD FOR YOU.**

Paul is saying... *I'm teaching you the same things that I was teaching you when I was with you in Philippi ten years ago...that same thing was the gospel!... and I'm going to tell you the same thing again..... and to do it again and again... it is no trouble to me!*

We should be preaching the same thing over and over again...THE ANSWER TO EVERY PROBLEM IN THE WORLD TODAY IS THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST...WE DON'T NEED TO BE SITING AROUND MOANING ABOUT HOW BAD THE WORLD IS WE NEED TO BE PROCLAIMING TO A LOST WORLD WHO JESUS IS!

I love what Tony Mirada said **We should all be same thing churches...** teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ over and over again to the world until Jesus comes.

Why does Paul want to say the same thing over again?... he says **it is a safeguard for you...** the gospel is safe... it is safe when false teachings attempt to creep into the church.... The gospel... to hear the gospel over and over again... to understand the gospel... prevents heresies from creeping into the Christian message...the more people can recognize the true gospel can they detect false gospels..... and there are plenty of those creeping I today!

Now Paul begins his teaching on **what are the marks of true believers**... what are the signs of a person that reveal they are truly saved" He begins in verse 2... **beware of the dogs**.... Now he's not referring to cute little schnauzers or wiener dogs...no

All over the ancient cities.... Wild dogs would roam the streets scavenging anything they could get their paws on... they roamed in packs... they fed on garbage... they were despised animals.... And dogs became a derogatory term...

In Jesus day.... Gentiles... the non-Jew was called a "dog".... Now Paul turns that around and is now calling *some* Jews dogs... the Jewish false teachers that had embraced a FORM of Christianity... known as the **Judaisers**

Who said that you needed Jesus Christ PLUS something else..... Paul says... no, they're dogs... they are false teachers that live on garbage...they go out and get into things they shouldn't be getting into and destroys them.....

He tells us how you can detect the dogs.... "WHO LET THE DOGS OUT?"... the evil one let the dogs out!... **beware of the evil workers...** they've been sent out by the evil one to destroy and corrupt... that's what repetitious hearing of the gospel *safeguards* against!

He calls them the **false circumcision**... circumcision was a very important symbol in Jewish religion... I won't get into the details on how it is done... but it was a very important surgical act that men were required to undergo that was a picture of man's need to be cleansed from sin.

The bloodshed from the physical act of circumcision symbolized the need for sacrifice to accomplish that cleansing... it was a part of the Jewish law... **circumcision was to reflect an inward reality**... the carrying out of God's commandment to Israel "**Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskins of your heart** (Jeremiah, Leviticus, Deuteronomy...)

All circumcision really was...though it was a command....*it was a ritual representing the spiritual condition of the heart.*

These Judaizers had crept into the church teaching a "false circumcision"... basically... what they were teaching was that you may need Jesus... but you *also* need to go through this religious act of getting circumcised if you want to be found "righteous" before God...if you want to be saved... have your foreskin removed... YOU HAD TO DO THIS THING.

Salvation to these dogs was **Jesus PLUS doing something**.... That's not the gospel!... those who embrace the true gospel of Jesus Christ he calls the "*true circumcision*"... verse 3.... And then he lists what makes up true believers of Jesus Christ.... Evidences of true believers of Christ who are saved....he lists three things....

These three things should be growing more and more evident in a believer's life as they progress in their sanctification...these four things will not be dominant in a *new* believers life...but as one becomes more and more like Christ... a new Christian is going to have these three things become more and more prevalent in their lives as they move through life...

Important to note... this is all done through the power of the Holy Spirit!

**1. A true believer worships in the Spirit of God (3a)**... now he is not referring to good music... or some cutting edge church service... he is talking about a *life* of worship... true worship that goes beyond praising God to actually serving Him...a life set apart for Him...being obedient to Him...*from the heart*.. this worship is every aspect of life...

You get out of bed... you go to work... you talk to people... you take you kids to soccer... you make dinner at night... and you do it all while being in a state of continual worship... **true worship is doing all of life for the glory of God and reveling in it**.... *True worship is a constant awareness of your love for God... your dependence upon Him...your awe of Him and your purpose found in Him*...

Worship does not begin at 10:30 and is over at noon.....so Paul here is saying... *true people of God... true Christians... have... live... through the Holy Spirit a life of worship*.... They are the true circumcision.

Is your life worship?... or is that just an activity that has a beginning and an ending then you do everything else on your list?... a life of worship is a mark of a true Christian!... we live by the Spirit... we parent by the Spirit... we work by the Spirit...we eat by the Spirit..... WE DON'T DO IT PERFECTLY... WE SLIP... BUT WE ARE GETTING MORE AND MORE WORSHIPFUL IN OUR LIVES.... We desire it...

The second mark.. the second proof of salvation... is that a Christian 1. Lives a life of worship... and #2...still in verse 3...

**2. A Christian.... A true Christian... glories in Christ Jesus**... that simply means... you are a person *who makes much of Christ!*... the word glory here is the idea of *one boasting with exultant joy about what you are most proud of*.....**may I never boast of anything but of our Lord Jesus Christ**.... (Galatians 6:14...).

TO contrast that... a false believer puts confidence in the flesh..... boy do we see that today... it is being pushed down our throats... *if you think you can you can... if you think you can't you can't... whatever*.

**3. Read verse 3.... We put confidence in Christ**.... Paul then unpacks a truckload of wrong confidence in the flesh...Here Paul begins his P&L statement...Remember the context... there are Judaizers who have come into the church and basically in their arrogance were telling everyone that they had to be good Jews plus believe in Christ...

It's like Paul looking them in the eyes and says to them... *You think you have anything on me regarding Jewishness?... sit back and let me tell you about my portfolio!*

Paul opens up his portfolio and reveals his previous view of salvation... What he thought he should do to please God.... **What was his salvation?**...having confidence in his flesh!... His abilities...experiences... efforts... works... on and on and on.... *If you think you are good... just wait until you hear what I'VE done for God!*... that's what he is saying here.

He lists seven major points on his "profit column"...by the way... naming seven of these may not be insignificant... The Jew knows that seven represents perfection... [expound].

**1. Ritual—Read Verse 5a**.... an eighth day circumcised man would be a *true Jew* from birth... not a gentile who converted to Judaism... He's as born Jew as you could get!.... now that's an asset!....

Now... this is good for all of us to consider... that was Paul's list of where he USED to place his confidence in... HIMSELF.... What do we place our confidence in?...is it in some ritual?... today... some people put their confidence in baptism... or confirmation when they were a young person... or some religious ritual or ceremony they did sometime in their life... *hey I'm a Christian... look at what I've done... my assets... I was baptized December 25 1968.... Not just baptized but on Jesus' birthday!*...now that really looks great in a portfolio!!

**2. Race**—(5) **A Hebrew of Hebrews...** the race of Israel... the book of Hebrews tells us that God works without partiality... we are not to put our faith in our race... American does NOT make you a Christian!

**3. Rank**—(5) I was of **the tribe of Benjamin...** that was a very respected tribe... many greats in the Bible were of the tribe of Benjamin... Israel's first king, Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin... As was Mordecai who along with Esther saved the Jews from genocide...

*I was not from some tribe on the other side of the tracks!... God does not play favorites... He doesn't care what your name is... what your earthly status is... what country club has let you in... what position you have in a church....*

**4. Tradition**—again... **a Hebrew of Hebrews....** *None of the new stuff in the church today... I am from the old Hebrew tradition....*

**5. Morality**—or maybe we could call it “RELIGION”... (5) **as to the law I was a Pharisee....** *I was so good I was the one making the laws... in fact I made so many laws that we couldn't keep track of them!... I was a good person!... So many people put their confidence in their morality... the problem is... as one said... *Morality can keep you out of jail but not out of hell....**

We are all for morality!... the Bible is clear on that... it's just that morality... being a good moral person is insufficient... most people today think they are somewhere between Adolf Hitler and Mother Theresa.... Hitler is terrible... Theresa a little too good.... *I'm in the middle.... Balanced.*

**6. Sincerity**—(6) **As to zeal, a persecutor of the church...** today that would look like... *it doesn't matter what you believe... just be sincere!... and... you can be sincerely wrong!... I remember all three of my daughters played a little basketball in High School... If I remember right...*

All three of them.... At one point in the game... grabbed a rebound... got disoriented. And ran to the wrong basket and made the basket giving the other team two points.... All three were very sincere in their effort!... all three desperately wrong!

Today we hear... *it doesn't matter what you believe just follow your heart...* it was Bill Murray who said *I followed my heart and it led me to the refrigerator.*

**7. Rule Keeping**—(6) **As to the righteousness unto the law... I was blameless...** **THOSE ARE THE THINGS PAUL USED TO PLACE HIS CONFIDENCE IN.... THOSE ARE HIS ASSETS....**

They are all good things... notice that Paul was a “good person!” some of them incredibly wonderful and important... BUT...

But then... Paul gives us a BUT in verse 7.... **But whatever these things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ....** *Those were the things I cherished... those are the things that got me in!... they made me “righteous”... the only problem was.... it was MY righteousness....*

**Read verse 8**

*These things that used to be so very important to me... the SURPASSING greatness has outshone all of them! That word "SURPASSING" is a great Greek word... hyperecho... it literally means the "super-thing"... I have found the super-thing...something so super that the things that used to control me no longer have any power over me... I don't even care about them anymore!*

**Very few things get better over time... but Jesus does!**...He is a surpassing thing... the super thing... Jesus is the one we place our confidence with... (remember that's our 3<sup>rd</sup> point)...**(8) I have suffered the loss of all things... AND COUNT THEM AS RUBBISH... so that I may gain Christ...**

I was taught years ago when I was taking an accounting class to write everything in pencil...never use ink... if you make a mistake you can erase it easily.... The apostle Paul takes out his big eraser and erases everything in the profit column and moves all of them over to the loss column....

A complete re-allocation of assets...

Jesus Christ is everything to Paul... Jesus is where He places ALL of his confidence in.... by the way... the translators are being polite... that word translated as "**rubbish**"... is kind... the old King James is much closer... **Dung**... *all those great things I've done?... the moral lifestyle I lived... the status... the rank... my ancestry... my tradition that I valued so much... put it all next to Jesus Christ and I see it all as EXCREMENT!*

**"For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it, for what will a man be profited if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

Paul lost all that made up his portfolio... it really was a loss... he felt it... he had status... he lost that.... He had position and rank... lost all that... there was a price... but all of it was dung... compared to what **He gained in Jesus.... How does a person "gain Christ"?**...

That will be on Easter!

Are you a TRUE Christian?.....

Are you trying to save yourself?..... by your efforts... your work... your energy...

**Read verses 9&10**