

NETCAST SERMON NOTES

Series: This Isn't Normal

Date: July 5th, 2026

Title: The God Who Found Me

Speaker: Henry Lonstein

Key Scripture: Philippians 3:12–4:1 (with Acts 9:4, 15–16)

The Big Idea: Christ's radical pursuit of us is what frees us to leave our past behind and pursue Him back. The Christian life is not an initiation on our part, but a grateful response to the One who found us.

1. You Didn't Find God, God Found You

Even a legend of the faith like Paul displays immense humility, stating, "not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect." He completely refuses to lean on his religious résumé and openly admits he hasn't arrived yet.

- **The Reality of Testimonies:** A testimony is simply an account of how you know God and why you still know Him. Whether your story is a dramatic rescue or a "boring" testament to faithful, consistent parenting, we often try to take the credit for the moment.
- **The True Initiator:** We love to say things like "I met Jesus on the bathroom floor" or "I made a deal with God." But Paul writes that he presses on "because Christ Jesus has made me his own" (Phil 3:12). Your testimony is not a story of how you found God; it is a story of how God found you.

2. God Freed You to Pursue Him Back

Because Christ first pursued you, you are given the absolute freedom to drop your heavy baggage, leave your past behind, and strain toward what lies ahead.

- **A Response-Driven Life:** We often treat our faith like a business transaction where we took the first step, expecting that if we follow God, He is obligated to move on our terms and bless us. But the Christian life is entirely response-driven. God moved first.
- **The True Prize:** Paul presses on toward "the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." When you chase Christ, all you get is Christ—and He is more than enough.
- **It's About Aim, Not Effort:** In Acts 9, Paul intensely persecuted (dioko) the church. In Philippians 3, he uses that exact same Greek root word to describe how he presses on (dioko) after Christ. The grace of God doesn't change your hardwired capacity for intense devotion; it changes your aim.

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3. Your Identity Is in Heaven

Paul warns against living as enemies of the cross—those whose minds are completely set on earthly things, whose god is their appetite, and who find glory in their shame.

- The Devotion Shift: Even if your past looks like an enemy of the cross, that intense lifestyle is just evidence that you are capable of radical devotion—you were just serving a false god.
- Citizens of Heaven: Our true citizenship is in heaven. We stand firm because the same God who relentlessly knocked Paul off his horse in Acts 9 is the God who broke through our broken past to secure our eternity.

Call to Action / Reflection Question: Are you treating your walk with God like a transaction where you initiated the terms, or are you living every single day as a grateful response to the God who already found you?