
KNOWING CHRIST



The kingdom of darkness trusts human effort; the kingdom of light rests in what Christ has done.

It's possible to believe in Jesus and still quietly trust ourselves.

Where does real confidence come from?

Philippians 3:1-3 NLT

Whatever happens, my dear brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. I never get tired of telling you these things, and I do it to safeguard your faith.

Watch out for those dogs, those people who do evil, those mutilators who say you must be circumcised to be saved. For we who worship by the Spirit of God are the ones who are truly circumcised. We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort,

A _____ About the Kingdom of Darkness.

The _____: The Kingdom of Light

The kingdom of darkness trusts _____ effort; the kingdom of light rests in what _____ has done.

“To know Christ is not merely to know about Him, but to belong to Him.”

- DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

Philippians 3:4-7 NLT

though I could have confidence in my own effort if anyone could. Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more!

I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the

the law without fault.

I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done.

**When Christ becomes our _____,
everything else _____ its value.**

Philippians 3:8-11 NLT

Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

**The Christian life isn't gaining
Christ and _____ everything else—it's
_____ everything else to gain Christ.**

Where is your confidence really placed?

In your consistency?

In your morality?

In your past faithfulness?

In how you compare to others?

Paul invites us to:

Rejoice in the Lord

Release confidence in ourselves

Rest fully in Christ's finished work

1. Additional Verses for Study

A. Confidence Rooted in Effort Is Fragile

Key Idea: Self-trust always produces either pride or fear.

Supporting Scriptures:

- **Jeremiah 17:5–8**
"Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind... Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord."
→ A direct contrast between self-reliance and God-dependence.
- **Proverbs 16:18**
"Pride goes before destruction..."
→ The inevitable outcome of confidence rooted in self.
- **Romans 9:30–32**
Israel *"pursued righteousness... by works"* and missed it.
→ Performance-based confidence blinds us to grace.
- **Galatians 3:3**
"Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"
→ A warning against drifting back to effort after receiving grace.

Study Angle:

Ask: *Where do I subtly believe effort makes me safer, better, or more accepted before God?*

B. Rejoicing in the Lord Safeguards Faith

(Philippians 3:1)

Key Idea: Joy anchored in Christ protects us from spiritual drift.

Supporting Scriptures:

- **Nehemiah 8:10**
“The joy of the Lord is your strength.”
- **John 15:11**
Jesus connects joy directly to abiding in Him—not performance.
- **1 Peter 1:8–9**
“Though you have not seen him, you love him... filled with an inexpressible joy.”
- **Habakkuk 3:17–19**
Joy that survives loss because it’s rooted in God, not outcomes.

Study Angle:

Joy is not emotional optimism—it’s **theological stability**.

C. Warning Against False Confidence

(The Kingdom of Darkness – Philippians 3:2)

Key Idea: Anything that shifts confidence from Christ to performance distorts the gospel.

Supporting Scriptures:

- **Acts 15:1–11**
Circumcision controversy → Peter calls it a “yoke... *neither we nor our fathers could bear.*”
- **Matthew 23:25–28**
External righteousness masking inward death.

- **Colossians 2:20–23**

Human rules “*have an appearance of wisdom*” but no power.

- **2 Corinthians 11:3–4**

A distorted gospel slowly pulls hearts away from sincere devotion to Christ.

Study Angle:

Legalism doesn’t deny Jesus—it **adds requirements beside Him**.

D. Marks of the Kingdom of Light

(*Philippians 3:3*)

Key Idea: God’s people rest in Christ’s finished work.

Supporting Scriptures:

- **John 4:23–24**

True worship is *by the Spirit*, not external markers.

- **Galatians 6:14**

“*May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

- **Romans 3:27**

“*Where then is boasting? It is excluded.*”

- **Hebrews 10:14**

“*By one offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*”

Study Angle:

The gospel produces humility because **there is nothing left to prove**.

E. Paul’s Credentials vs. Christ

(*Philippians 3:4–7*)

Key Idea: Good things become dangerous when they become ultimate things.

Supporting Scriptures:

- **Matthew 7:22–23**

Impressive religious activity without relationship.

- **Luke 18:9–14**
Pharisee vs. tax collector → confidence vs. dependence.
- **Romans 10:3–4**
Self-made righteousness refuses to submit to God's righteousness.
- **Isaiah 64:6**
Even our *"righteous deeds"* fall short apart from grace.

Study Angle:

Religious success can be the greatest barrier to repentance.

F. Knowing Christ as Supreme Treasure

(*Philippians 3:8–11*)

Key Idea: The Christian life is not addition—it's exchange.

Supporting Scriptures:

- **Matthew 13:44–46**
The treasure worth selling everything for.
- **Colossians 2:9–10**
"In Him you have been made complete."
- **Romans 8:1–11**
Union with Christ → life, freedom, power.
- **2 Corinthians 4:16–18**
Eternal value reframes present loss.

Study Angle:

Loss isn't tragic when Christ is the gain.

Life Group Discussion

1. Get to Know You

Where do you feel the strongest pressure to **prove yourself**—work, family, church, friendships, or personal goals? How do you usually respond when you feel like you're falling behind or not measuring up?

2. Digging Deeper

Paul says he no longer seeks righteousness through the law but through **faith in Christ** (Philippians 3:9).

How does Paul's view of righteousness here compare with passages like Romans 3:21–26 or Galatians 2:15–21?

Why is it essential that righteousness is **received**, not achieved, for the gospel to truly be good news?

How does understanding justification by faith alone reshape the way we approach obedience, suffering, and spiritual growth?

3. Living It Out

Paul says that knowing Christ is worth counting everything else as loss (Philippians 3:8–11). What is one area this week where you need to **release confidence in yourself** and intentionally **rest in what Christ has already done**? What would trusting Christ instead of yourself practically look like?