

What Really Matters

Discussion Questions

Paul describes his impressive resume of accomplishments and status before counting them all as loss for Christ -- what accomplishments, titles, or identities do you most strongly build your sense of self around, and how would it feel to release those as your primary source of worth?

The sermon draws a distinction between a 'do religion' and a 'done religion' -- in your own daily life, do you find yourself trying to earn God's favor through effort and performance, or genuinely resting in what Christ has already accomplished on your behalf?

Paul says in Philippians 3 that he considers his past achievements as garbage compared to knowing Christ -- what would it practically look like in your week-to-week life to treat knowing Jesus as your highest priority above all other pursuits?

Jeremiah 9:23-24 warns against boasting in wisdom, strength, or riches and instead calls us to boast in knowing the Lord -- when you introduce yourself or describe yourself to others, what does that reveal about what you truly value most?

The parable in Matthew 13 describes a man who sold everything he had in joy to purchase a field containing a treasure -- is your pursuit of Christ marked more by joyful sacrifice or by reluctant obligation, and what might that reveal about how you truly see Him?

The sermon suggests that if you are following Jesus genuinely, suffering will be part of the journey - how has suffering in your own life either deepened or challenged your relationship with Christ, and what did you learn through that experience?

Paul's transformation required him to completely reframe his identity from one built on religious and cultural achievement to one rooted in Christ alone -- what false identities or counterfeit sources of meaning do you find hardest to let go of, and why?

The sermon points out that the church sometimes emphasizes what believers must give up without equally emphasizing what they gain in Christ -- how has your understanding of what it costs to follow Jesus compared to what it gives shaped your willingness to commit fully?

Paul writes that he wants to know Christ, experience the power of His resurrection, and share in His sufferings -- which of these three aspects of knowing Christ feels most foreign or underdeveloped in your own faith journey, and what might God be inviting you into?

The sermon closes with repeated calls to 'sell what you have and buy the field' in various areas of life such as skepticism, discomfort, fear, and routine -- which specific area feels most like a field God is asking you to invest in right now, and what is holding you back?

Based on Philippians 3 and the Theme: What Truly Matters

Day 1: The Resume We Build

Reading: Philippians 3:1-7

Devotional: We spend enormous energy crafting how others perceive us. Our accomplishments, titles, and affiliations become the shorthand for who we are. Paul had every reason to boast by the world's standards -- heritage, education, religious standing, and political influence. Yet he called it all loss. Before we can embrace what truly matters, we must honestly examine what we have been building our identity around. Is it reputation, rank, achievement, or approval? God is not impressed by our resume. He is moved by our faith. The first step toward lasting joy is recognizing that our identity must be rooted in Christ alone.

Reflection: What accomplishment or status do you most often lead with when meeting others? What does that reveal about where your identity is anchored?

Practical Application: Write down three things you frequently use to define yourself. Pray over each one and ask God to reveal whether it competes with Christ as your primary source of identity.

Day 2: The Treasure Hidden in the Field

Reading: Matthew 13:44-46

Devotional: Jesus described the kingdom of heaven as a treasure so valuable that a man joyfully sold everything he owned just to purchase the field containing it. The key word is joyfully. He was not grieving what he gave up. He was overwhelmed by what he was gaining. This is the heart of genuine discipleship. When we truly understand the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ, surrender stops feeling like loss and begins feeling like the greatest exchange imaginable. Paul echoed this exact joy in Philippians 3. Selling what we have is not the point -- finding the treasure is.

Reflection: Does following Jesus feel more like sacrifice or joy to you right now? What might that reveal about how clearly you see the treasure?

Practical Application: Identify one area of your life where following Christ has felt like giving something up. Spend time in prayer asking God to help you see what you are gaining in that same area.

Day 3: Righteousness That Cannot Be Earned

Reading: Philippians 3:8-9; Romans 3:21-24

Devotional: Paul was as law-observant as any person could be. He kept every requirement, fulfilled every obligation, and outperformed his peers in religious devotion. And yet none of it could make him right before God. Romans 3 confirms that all have fallen short of God's glory, and that righteousness comes only through faith in Jesus Christ. The do religion -- the belief that our effort earns God's favor -- is a trap that leads to pride, exhaustion, and ultimately despair. The done religion rests on what Christ accomplished at the cross. Our job is not to earn salvation but to receive it with open hands and a surrendered heart.

Reflection: In what areas of your spiritual life do you still operate as though you are earning God's approval rather than resting in what Christ has already done?

Practical Application: Memorize or meditate on the truth that righteousness before God comes through faith, not performance. When you catch yourself striving for God's approval today, pause and remind yourself that in Christ, you are already fully accepted.

Day 4: Knowing Christ Through Suffering

Reading: Philippians 3:10-11; Romans 8:16-18

Devotional: Paul expressed a desire that sounds strange to modern ears -- he wanted to share in Christ's suffering. Not because suffering is desirable in itself, but because he understood that the path Jesus walked runs directly through difficulty. Romans 8 reminds us that if we share in Christ's suffering, we also share in his glory. Suffering is not a sign that God has abandoned you. It is often the very road on which you encounter him most deeply. The resurrection is not only a future event -- it is a present reality experienced by those who walk faithfully with Jesus through the hard places of life.

Reflection: How have you experienced God's presence most powerfully during a season of difficulty? What did that season teach you about who Christ is?

Practical Application: Reach out today to someone you know who is currently suffering. Offer your presence, your prayer, and the reminder that God has not abandoned them.

Day 5: What Matters Now

Reading: Philippians 3:12-14; Jeremiah 9:23-24

Devotional: Jeremiah recorded God's declaration that wisdom, strength, and riches are not the things worth boasting about. What matters is knowing God -- the one who exercises kindness, justice, and righteousness. Paul pressed forward with that same conviction, straining toward what lay ahead rather than clinging to what was behind. The Christian life is not a moment of decision followed by spiritual coasting. It is a daily pursuit of knowing Christ more deeply, loving people more genuinely, and pressing toward the life God has called us to live. Joy is not found in what we have accumulated. It is found in how fully we know and follow Jesus.

Reflection: What does pressing forward look like in your life right now? What might you need to leave behind in order to move toward what God has ahead for you?

Practical Application: Set aside fifteen minutes this week to sit quietly before God and ask him one question: "What do you want me to let go of so I can know you more fully?" Write down what comes to mind and take one concrete step in that direction.