



The Pursuit
Phil. 3:1-14
August 10, 2025
Bushawn Carpenter

I. Intro

A. Text: **Phil. 3:1-14**

B. Closing #1 (Finally)

1. Rejoice

¹ ***Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. (Phil. 3:1)***

II. Beware... of Many things

² ***Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! (Phil. 3:2)***

A. Beware of dogs, evil workers, and the mutilation (**Phil. 3:2**)

1. Specifically referring to Judaizers

a. Judaizers were Christians who demanded a list of requirements (in addition to faith in Christ) to please God.

i. Faith + Circumcision

ii. Faith + Outward good acts

iii. Faith + accomplishments that focus on personal works to please God.

2. Paul's Plea: The Circumcision that pleases God is not the cutting of outward flesh from the foreskins of genitalia.

a. But the cutting of unnecessary thing that latch on to your heart. (**Phil. 3:3**)

b. All other pursuits/ passions have been cut off.

c. All confidence in the flesh (personal abilities, achievements, and do-goodness) has been rendered dead and useless.

B. Beware of the list.

1. If anyone had a list of good things to hang his hat on, Paul had THE list. (**Phil. 3:4-6**)

⁴...If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. (**Phil. 3:4b-6**)

- a. Family Background (**v. 5a**)
- b. Personal Accomplishments (**v. 5b-6**)

*List was a list of good things (according to that culture).

- 2. Your List: According to your culture/ life, what would your list of good things look like?
 - a. Family Background:
 - b. Personal Accomplishments (Obituary Material)

C. Beware of Good things (if they distract from Christ)

⁷But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. (**Phil. 3:7**)

- 1. All Things (Good Things)... Nothing When Compared with Christ
- 2. Lifetime accomplishments, obvious blessings, etc.
 - vs.
 - a. Christ
- 3. Christ over everything!
 - a. In comparison to Christ, everything else is nothing.

III. Passionately Pursue... (One Thing)

¹³Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do (**Phil. 3:13**)

- A. Paul's One Thing: Knowing Christ
 - 1. Just To Know Him
 - 2. David's One Thing: "One thing have I desired of the Lord and that will I seek." (**Ps. 27:4**)
 - a. Wasn't things.
 - b. That I may dwell in the house.

-
- c. That I may know Him.
 3. Martha was worried about many things, but Martha chose that one thing
 - a. To sit at the feet of Jesus.
 4. Everything Else = Loss

⁸ Yet indeed I also **count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ (Phil. 3:8).**

- a. Paul could care less about “many things” in the face of the one thing.
- b. Give up anything/everything to gain Christ.
- c. In comparison to Christ, nothing else is of any value.
5. The excellence of knowing Christ, far outweighs all worldly treasures.
 - a. The “surpassing value of knowing Him” (NASB)
 - b. The infinite value of knowing Christ (NLT)

“...and count them as rubbish....” (Phil. 3:8)

6. Everything else (in comparison to knowing Christ) is rubbish, animal excrement.
 - a. That which is fit only for the trash dump.
 - b. The best of his circumstances became nothing more than poop in comparison to the surpassing excellence of knowing Christ
7. In the day that Great Day, many will count on a list (Matt. 7:22-23)

B. Knowing Involves Experiencing Him

¹⁰ that I may **know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, (Phil. 3:10)**

Know (ginosko #1097): to understand, to be intimate, to know by perceiving + experiencing.

1. Desire was to **experience His resurrection power**

-
- a. Everybody wants resurrection power, but don't nobody want to die.
 - b. Same power that raised Jesus from the dead...
 2. Desire was to **share in the sufferings of Christ**.
 - a. As Jesus bore our suffering in exchange for our good, are we willing to suffer affliction that He may be glorified.
 - b. Communion (and koinonia) through good and bad circumstances, high and lows.
 - c. *"If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him"* (2 Tim. 2:12)
 3. Desire was to be **conformed to the death** of Christ.
 - a. My flesh would be mortified.
 - b. Obedient to the point of death.
 - c. Sacrificially Selfless in the face of death.
 - d. Not my will, but your's be done.
 4. Focus was on the fact that he'd be **raised up at the resurrection...** Christ's return. (Phil. 3:11)
 - a. The resurrection of all who sleep in Christ.

IV. Conclusion:

A. The Apprehended \Rightarrow Apprehenders

¹² *Not that I have already **attained**, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which **Christ Jesus has also laid hold** of me (Phil. 3:12).*

1. You didn't choose Christ, He chose you.
 - a. You didn't win Him over, He won your heart.

Apprehend (katalambano #2638): to obtain and make something your own by joining with another, to take hold of what's been freely given and make it fully yours.

- b. Because I've been apprehended, my desire is to apprehend all that I've been apprehended for.
2. Apprehended \Rightarrow Apprehenders

¹³ *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; **but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,** (Phil. 3:13)*

- a. It's my one, singular focus.
 - i. To know Him (experience Him).
 - ii. Haven't fully experienced all that the prize affords in my now.
- b. The prize: God Himself
- 3. Single-minded focus on the prize (future)
 - a. Forgetting the past.
 - b. Refusing to settle for my present.
 - c. Reaching forward to that which shall be.

B. Pursue/Press

¹⁴ ***I press toward the goal** for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:14)*

- 1. The prize for the upward call: God Himself
 - a. Pursue what shall be in our now.

Press (dioko #1377): *to pursue with tenacity, to follow hard after (repeatedly) until it captures the one being pursued.*

- b. Diligent to enter into that rest.
- 2. I press (pursue with tenacity)... That I may apprehend that which has apprehended me.
 - a. Jesus has laid hold of me.
 - b. Today, my desire is to lay hold of He who has laid hold of me.
- 3. In the middle of a world characterized by many things, they are all rubbish to me
 - a. All I desire is this One thing: Knowing Jesus.
