

I. Intro

A. Text: **Phil. 3:1-16**

B. Commendation (**Phil. 2:19-30**)

1. Timothy (**Phil. 2:19-24**)
  - a. No one like-minded
  - b. Sincerely care for your state.
  - c. Proven character, served
2. Epaphroditus – Lovely (**Phil. 2:25-30**)
  - a. Sent by Philippians to minister to Paul during Roman imprisonment.
  - b. Brother, fellow-laborer, fellow-soldier
  - c. Served others for the gospel with such tenacity and recklessness that he lost ...
    - i. His health and almost lost his life.
    - ii. Did not regard his life.
    - iii. Risked it all for the sake of others.

C. Closing #1 (Finally)

1. Rejoice

***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

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

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

1. Specifically referring to Judaizers

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- a. Judaizers were Christians who demanded a list of requirements (in addition to faith in Christ) to please God.
    - i. Faith + Circumcision
    - ii. Outward good acts/ 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, but the cutting of outward things from their hearts. **(Phil. 3:3)**
    - a. Seat of their affects have been narrowed to follow hard after knowing Christ.
    - 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)**

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

- a. Family Background **(v. 5a)**
  - i. Circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day
  - ii. Tribe of Benjamin
  - iii. Hebrew of Hebrews
- b. Personal Accomplishments **(v. 5b-6)**
  - i. Law → Pharisee
  - ii. Zeal → Persecutor of the Church
  - iii. Righteous from the Law → Blameless

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

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2. Your List: According to your culture/ life, what would your list of good things look like?
    - a. Family Background:
      - i. Race/ History
      - ii. State and migration
    - b. Personal Accomplishments (Obituary Material)
      - i. Family
      - ii. Job
      - iii. House
      - iv. Community Service Org.

C. All Things (Good Things) Are Less Than Nothing When Compared with Christ

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

1. 2 Lists
  - a. Lifetime accomplishments, obvious blessings, etc
  - b. Christ
2. The things that you thought would matter... are nothing in comparison to Christ.
  - a. Less than nothing.
    - i. In comparison to Christ, loss (less than nothing).

III. **Passionately Pursue (One Thing)**

*<sup>13</sup>Brethren, 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.
    - i. Not a new nation to conquer.
    - ii. Not a new car.
    - iii. Not a raise on the job.

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- iv. Not that the kids would behave.
    - b. That I may dwell in the house.
      - i. That I may enjoy His Presence
    - 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.
      - i. To enjoy intimacy in His Presence.

B. Everything Else = Loss

*<sup>8</sup>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).*

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

*<sup>8</sup>More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the **surpassing value of knowing Christ** Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, (Phil. 3:8-NASB)*

- i. Losing things (family, health, positions) don’t matter when your gain is Christ.
- ii. **Luke 9:23-25:** <sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?

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b. The infinite value of knowing Christ (NLT)

<sup>8</sup> *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 (Phil. 3:8-NLT)*

- i. When asked by the Father “*What’s so special about you that you that you should spend eternity in His presence, you’d better have something to brag about.*”
- ii. **Jer. 9:23:**<sup>23</sup> *Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; <sup>24</sup> But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me.*

*“...and count them as rubbish....” (Phil. 3:18)*

- 3. Everything else is rubbish, animal excrement, that which is fit only for the trash dump, and in comparison to knowing Christ.
  - a. Whether Paul physically lost everything or not, the best of his circumstances became nothing to him (in his sight).
    - i. The best of circumstances were nothing more than poop in comparison to the surpassing excellence of knowing Christ
- 4. Many people will recite a list, when they stand before the Lord. (**Matt. 7:22-23**)
  - a. Did we not prophesy, cast out demons, do many wonders...?
    - i. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity... I never \_\_\_\_.
  - b. Nothing else matters, but knowing Jesus.

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<sup>10</sup> 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)

### C. Knowing Takes Experience

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...
    - i. Raise me up out of my habits
    - ii. Raise me up out of my feelings (depression, loneliness).
    - iii. Raise me up out of my stagnation
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.
    - i. There's a closeness that is developed with those who stick with you in adversity.
    - ii. There's something about eating beans and rice together, that prepares you for filet mignon.
    - iii. If I ever get rich I know I can trust Sequela with whatever, because she stuck with me when the gas wasn't on. The only meal was Hamburger Helper off hotplates.
  - 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.

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4. Heart's desire was to be raised up at the resurrection... Christ's return. (**Phil. 3:11**)
    - a. The first resurrection.
    - b. The resurrection of all who sleep in Christ.

D. I've Got Treasure, But it Ain't Over

<sup>12</sup> *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. Haven't yet received the prize

Attained (lambano #2983): to obtain, receive, sometimes from a **self-prompted action**.

2. We appreciate what He's done, but... We ate until full, but will you increase my appetite for God.
  - a. The night I surrendered.
    - i. Cool but there's gotta be more.
  - b. Laughing at my insistence on worship.
    - i. The day I recorded my first album.
  - c. The day I received a life sentence.
    - i. The day my sentence was overturned.
  - d. The day I was called to the preaching ministry.
    - i. First sermon.
3. Completely satisfied in Christ, but simultaneously dissatisfied unless God shows up again for an encore.
  - a. Made it this far by faith, but I'm desperate for more by faith.

<sup>12</sup> *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**).*

4. Full Court Pressure.

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

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- a. Diligent to enter into that rest.
  - b. So I press, violently running after
    - i. **Ps. 42:1:** *"As the deer panteth after the water..."*
5. I press...That I may apprehend that which has apprehended me.

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 yours.*

- a. One day (almost 20 years ago) Jesus got ahold of me.
  - i. Stopped me on my Damascus Road; knocked me off my horse.
- b. Today my desire is to lay ahold of Jesus.
  - i. To know him more intimately than I did yesterday.
  - ii. To lose myself in all of him.
  - iii. Nothing else matters
- c. In the middle of a world characterized by many things, they are all rubbish to me
  - i. All I desire is this One thing: Knowing Jesus.

#### IV. Conclusion: Keep Pressing On

<sup>13</sup> 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, <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (**Phil. 3:13-14**)

- A. The Goal: Knowing Christ
- B. Knowing about Christ won't do. Quoting all the right scriptures won't do.
  - 1. **John 5:39:** *"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."*
- C. My Prayer: That you may reach the goal (knowing Jesus)
  - 1. Experiencing Him (resurrection power)
    - a. Share/Commune with Him (suffering)



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b. Made conformable to Him at His death.

2. We have a lot of good activities that we pray for. A lot of good circumstances.

a. Married (Happily)

b. Part of a great fellowship of believers.

c. Great job.

d. Pay taxes

D. But when I pray for you, it's the same as Jesus' before His arrest and betrayal.

1. *"That they would enjoy eternal life."*

a. **John 17:3:** *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent".*

2. Knowing, experiencing Jesus is the one thing that matters in this very temporary life.

3. In this, despite circumstances (even good ones), I rejoice!