



Sermon Text: Philippians 3:1-11

Sermon Date: April 2, 2017

Sprinkled throughout the New Testament, we find the cost of following Jesus. We are called to follow in in Cross-carrying obedience. It is a scary thought, to risk all the world offers to gain Christ. Yet, we cannot see the call to sacrifice as a call to ultimate sacrifice. Paul shows us in our passage that the call to lose everything for Jesus is in the realest, deepest, most satisfying sense a call to everlasting joy and measureless gain.

On Sunday, Pastor Justin pointed out four aspects of gospel-shaped sacrifice that enable us to experience true gospel-shaped satisfaction.

DELETE YOUR RELIGIOUS CREDENTIALS

Paul begins by warning the church about a group of false teachers who claimed that true salvation in Christ was possible only if Gentiles submitted to circumcision and obedience to the Law of Moses. Yet Paul destroys their argument by pointing to his own experience. He had every reason to put confidence in his religious credentials but none of his works mattered. True righteousness in Christ far outweighs the fake, flimsy “righteousness” that depends on our impeccable behavior. To find true satisfaction, we must also delete our religious credentials and keep them deleted.

SEE THAT LOSING IS NOT LOSING

Although Paul had lost all things for Christ, he is not a sad, sorrowful, broken man who trusted God and regretted the decision. No, Paul says that he considers everything he lost to be rubbish in comparison to the greatness of Christ. We must grasp that losing it all to gain Christ is not losing at all! He is better and more satisfying than every other thing in all the Universe. The wonder of gospel-shaped sacrifice is the discovery that it is no sacrifice.

STRIVE TO KNOW CHRIST

As the passage continues, we see Paul striving to know and enjoy more of Christ. True satisfaction brings a satisfying sense of dissatisfaction. When something is really good, we want more and more and more of it. We see Paul hungering to know more of Christ. Yet, the way that he comes to know more of Christ is by sharing in His sufferings, “becoming like him in his death.” When we suffer in obedience to Christ we come to know and enjoy him more.

FOCUS YOUR EYES ON ETERNITY

Gospel-shaped sacrifice only makes sense from an eternal perspective—when what we gain comes into view instead of only seeing what we lose. Like Paul, we must yearn—by any means possible—to attain the resurrection of the dead. Eternity must be in our eyes! As Jim Elliot, a young missionary martyr, once said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?
2. What keeps you from going “all in” in following Christ? How does Paul’s testimony in our passage encourage you to give up everything for the satisfaction of knowing Christ?
3. Gospel-shaped sacrifice only makes sense from an eternal perspective. How can you cultivate an eternal perspective in your daily life?