

Philippians 10-07-09b

We pick up our study in Philippians chapter 3 at verse 4. Having given this wonderful exhortation to learn a lesson from, pay attention to, and you have those three K words, and they all describe the same. People say, well, who are the dogs? Didn't the Jews talk about the Gentiles and say the dogs? You know, Jesus said to the woman, you know, that you can't take the bread from the children and give it to the dogs. And this was a typical kind of derogatory term that the highfalutin righteous Jews had for the Gentiles.

And so why would Paul use it here, writing to a Gentile church and say, beware, is he saying beware of the Gentiles? No, he's not. But when you take a look at these three K words, they're all talking about the same group. These are the legalistic Judaizers who are trying to establish a righteousness of their own.

These are the people that Paul talks about in Romans 9, 10, and 11, not grasping and understanding and laying hold of righteousness of God and seeking to establish their own. They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Paul talked about them in Galatians and said, if you fall back into this, you're an enemy of the cross.

You're cut off from Christ. It's just terrible. In Hebrews, those who crucify to themselves again and again, the son of God and put him to an open shame.

So that's who he's talking about. And these are three different descriptions of the same people. Now, think about it.

If these people are taking pride in their Judaism and their adherence to the law of Moses, what's the worst thing you could say about them? All of these law-keeping, holier-than-thou, righteous-look-down-the-nose-at-you people, who do they look down their nose at? Oh, these Gentiles, these dogs, you know. Well, we'll let them into our church if they will. Remember, even the Jerusalem council said, well, we've got to have these Gentiles do some part of the law.

Let's make them abstain from things strangled and blood. We've got to put some kind of law on them to let them in. We've got to put some rules, because they're lower than us, and we've got to bring them up by some form, these dogs.

So this is the view of the Judaizers, the Jewish Christians who want to... This has ever been the problem in Israel, is we've got to mix other stuff with God's plan. We can't just have God's plan. We've got to mix it.

In the Old Testament, they wanted to mix the law with Canaanite practice. Well, in the New Testament, when they did finally recognize that Christ was their Messiah, they wanted to mix the faith of Christ and the New Testament church with Judaism. They just got to mix stuff.

And so they said, well, these dogs, you know, we can let them into the church, but we're going to have to really clean them up. We've got to circumcise them, we've got to make them start observing the feasts, and we'll basically make them proselytes to Judaism, and then they can join us. And so Paul says, look, learn a lesson from the real dogs.

The real dogs are the people trying to call you a dog. They are the real dogs. And these people who claim that they are workers of righteousness because they're doing the works of the law, they're workers of evil.

He said, let's call them what they really are. These who are actual physical descendants of Abraham are actually the dogs. These people who think that they're working righteousness are actually workers of evil.

And these who think that they are the peritome are actually the katatome. They think they are the circumcision, but they are the choppers down. They are the cutters off, the cutters down.

They just want to cut you down, cut you off at the knees, drop you with their cuts. And so this is all talking about the same group, and it is calling them what they really are as opposed to what they think they are. And there are none so blind as those who will not see, and it's easy to look at others and find fault and not turn the laser-like perceptions that we have of the flaws and the faults and what somebody else needs to do on ourselves.

And this was the problem of the Judaizers. And Paul says, look, you folks in Philippi, learn a lesson from these people. He's not saying beware of them.

He's saying learn a lesson about blindness. Learn a lesson about self-righteousness. Learn a lesson about thinking you're doing right when you're actually doing evil.

Learn a lesson about the arrogance that sharpshoots other people instead of looking into one's own heart. Learn a lesson from those who think that they are doing God's will when they are actually cutting down what God is trying to do. That's what this threefold description comprises.

That's what it really means. Now, having given that threefold description that he encourages the Philippians to learn a lesson from, to observe, to draw some conclusions and some helpful personal resolutions from, he says, look, if you want to talk about people who have a claim as these people think they have a claim, they think because they're Jewish, they think because they're observant, they think because they're circumcised that they're just automatically blessed. He says in verse 4, if you want to have a little contest in the Righteousness by Works department, take a look at me.

I've been down that road. And the summary of these next couple of verses is Paul saying, look, I've been there and done that, and I've got the T-shirt. Don't talk to me about Righteousness by Works.

I was steeped in it, he says. I might have confidence in the flesh. And all of these uses where you see confidence, this is patho.

I could be convinced, I could be persuaded that this is the way. So he says, if some thinks to be set up and squared away, this, again, is a perfect infinitive. Paul says, I have been persuaded also in the flesh, or I have an argument, I have a persuasive case, might be the best way to translate this.

And that's how he starts in verse 4. He says, and indeed, I myself, ego. When you see ego, it's not double G like the breakfast food. E-G-O means I myself.

This is where we get ego, egotistical. Freud talking about the id and the ego and all that. This is I myself.

It's very emphatic in Greek when you include it, because the verb tells you the person. And so when he says, ego, ekon, he says, indeed, I myself am having, this is a present active participle from ego, to have and to hold. He says, I myself have, but it's a participle.

He says, I am having, paipoitheson, confidence, persuasion, a case to be made, an airtight argument, also in the flesh. If you want to talk about somebody who says they've got it made in the flesh, look at me. I've got that.

If someone thinks this is from doceo, this means to conclude, to think. It means that something appears to be a certain way. And if anybody thinks this way, I more so.

Anybody that thinks they've got a case, I can beat them. You lay your cards on the table, I've got all aces when it comes to this righteousness in the flesh. Bring me your most righteous guy, and I'll trump him.

In circumcision, peritome, this is verse five. The eighth day, and this is just two words in Greek. It says circumcise the eighth day.

This is just peritome, octa, amaras. In circumcision, I'm an eighth day guy. Perfect timing, exactly according to the law.

From the stock of Israel, from the tribe of Benjamin. And by the way, how many of these qualifiers does Paul offer? Count them. Circumcise the eighth day, number one.

Stock of Israel, number two. Tribe of Benjamin, number three. Hebrew of Hebrews, number four.

Concerning the law of Pharisee, number five. Concerning zeal, persecuting the church, number six. Concerning righteousness, which is the law, blameless.

How many arguments is that? Seven. I am a perfect guy when it comes to the law. I got seven

corners of this thing nailed down tight.

The Pharisees, of course, were the strictest sect of law-abiding Jews ever. And he says, according to the law, faultless. Faultless.

Ah, memptas. But, verse seven, what things were gains to me, these I have considered, and it says counted loss for Christ. Again, the Greek word order is really superior here.

He says, but what was to me gains, and that's a plural, these seven things, what things were to me gains, these I have considered. And this is a perfect. In the past.

I've already made up my mind. Remember, he said in the past, if you've decided in the past that you're convinced that your flesh is good enough, well, in the past, I have concluded, because of Christ, loss. I have concluded, because of Christ, loss.

And it's a singular. These multiple things, these seven things, are one big loss. Not losses.

Loss. Shovel all seven into the hole, it's still a hole. But, verse eight, on the contrary, I also consider everything loss.

I consider everything to be loss, because of, this is dia, through, or on account of, the excelling of the knowledge of Christ. And this is, when it says the excelling, this is huper echo, which is a word that means to surpass. It means to put something over something else, to project it over, to have power over a thing.

Echo means to have and to hold, and huper is over. So, literally, it has power over, it has position over, it stands over something. Dominates.

Surpasses. I consider everything to be loss, because of the dominance, the overarching power, of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Through whom, which is what comes next in Greek, through whom that everything, this is ta panta in both cases, he said I count everything loss, that's panta, and he says it again, through whom that all things, I lost and consider garbage, and this again is dia, and it means through whom or because of whom.

So he says, I consider all of this to be loss, because of this dominant knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, because of whom I lost all these things, I let go of all these things, and I consider them garbages, plural. In order that, hina, in order that, I might gain Christ. It's a beautiful sort of chiastic structure here, between kerda or kerde and zemia.

Remember back in the previous verse, he says what things were gained to me, you can circle gain in verse 7, and go down to the end of verse 8, that I may gain Christ. These things that were gained, I have considered one big loss, and having lost all of this rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ. Now, it's a theological statement, it sounds great on paper, you can think about my earlier example of interlocking fields of fire, looks great on paper, but so how do you do this in real life?

We're not Hebrews of the Hebrews, we don't have all of these qualifications that we're going to cast aside, so that we may gain Christ.

So when I say, well that's great for Paul, and it's a wonderful example, and that's all fine, but I don't really see a direct impingement on myself. Well, how do we connect this dot? You know, and on Sunday we're going to be getting back into the whole realm of psychology, and analysis of human thinking, and one of the fundamental observations, and one of the fundamental buckets of grist for the mill in psychology and psychiatry, and analysis of human thinking is your self-image. All of your problems are because you've got a screwed up self-image.

You don't want to damage somebody's feeling of worth, and so on, and you've got to be careful with children that you don't crush their little psyches, and this kind of thing. You can't tell somebody they flunked a test, many, many schools don't give grades, can't post the grades on a wall anymore because somebody's feelings could get hurt. Oh dear, I can't believe everybody saw that I made a B, or a C, or whatever.

You know, all of this stepping on eggshells that, well, we don't want anybody to feel bad, because that could wound their inner self, and so this, and while I'm, you know, making light of some of that, you realize that it's all about what is it that makes me feel good about myself, right? Everybody wants to feel good about themselves. I don't want to feel bad, and nothing wrong with that. Do we want to feel bad about ourselves? If you do, my suggestion is become a Calvinist.

You've got plenty of opportunity to feel bad about yourself, you just hone in on that total depravity and just wallow in it. But most people would like to feel good about themselves. I don't want to be beating myself up about my past failures.

I don't want to be living in guilt and shame and, you know, this whole thing, and it's natural. We're kind of in a tension because we mess up all the time, and we have good reason to feel bad about ourselves, but we don't want to feel bad about ourselves, and this is where the psychologists make all of their money and gain all their traction. So what's going on here? Paul says, those things that were gains to me.

What's he really talking about? I felt good about myself. Now, let's stop and think for a moment. Can Paul take credit for being born into the tribe of Benjamin and the stock of Israel? Did he choose that? Can he say, you know, of all the peoples in the earth, I struggled, I sweated, I strained, I got myself into Israel, and not only did I get myself in Israel, but because of my superhuman Herculean efforts, I got into the tribe of Benjamin.

Hooray for me. Look at the credit that accrues to me because I got myself into Israel and into Benjamin. Benjamin being the tribe that stuck with Judah when all the ten northern tribes flaked out, became Samaritans.

Not me, Benjamin. Not in Judah, but hey, Benjamin's almost, you know, it's right up there. If

Judah's the strong right hand, Benjamin is the left.

I mean, we're down there in the good part, right? Circumcised the eighth day. You know, on the seventh day, I squeaked up to my parents and said, circumcise me. I mean, the first three things, can he take any credit for that? It's an accident of birth.

He was born into a family of observant Jews that were in the tribe of Benjamin and circumcised him on the eighth day, right? When did he start getting any credit? Hebrew of the Hebrews, well, maybe he said, you know, I bought into the whole cultural, religious, zeal thing, and he even as a lad decided, yeah, I want to go for that, and he applied to become a Pharisee and got accepted, and he got zealous and thought he was on the right track persecuting the church. Well, what did Jesus say about the Pharisees? You remember the seven woes? Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites. You do, you know, your whitewashed tombstones.

You wipe the inside of the, you wipe the outside of the cup, and inside it's, you know, corrupt. You canvass the earth and make a proselyte and make him twofold the child of hell that you are. And, you know, the seven woes for the Pharisees.

Who were the biggest opponents of the Lord Jesus? Who were instrumental in getting him crucified? The Pharisees. Is this something to be proud of? Well, it kind of depends on the kind of Pharisee you are. There were a few good Pharisees.

Nicodemus, zeal persecuting the church. Yeah, you're zealous as a Jew, but how did that turn out? Holding the coats while they stoned Stephen to death? For whom the Lord Jesus stands up at the right hand of the Father to receive him, and you're a guy helping to send him there? Concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. What did Jesus tell the rich young ruler when he said, all these things I have kept from my youth? He says, well, you just lack one thing.

Sell everything you have, give it to the poor, and come follow me. And the guy goes away crying. Because he can't do that.

So, Paul says, these things that were gains, it's one big loss. These were things that made him feel good about himself. Some of it he could take credit for, and some of it was just an accident at birth.

I like being an American. I like being a Texan. I like being a computer guy that can usually get one to work.

There's a lot of things. But I like being the husband of a wonderful wife, and a father of wonderful kids, and a son of great parents, and a brother to great brothers, and a brother to a great sister. There's lots of things I can be happy about and feel good about myself, but a lot of it I can't take any credit for.

I didn't choose my family. That was just a blessing from God. A lot of things I've just fallen into backwards by accident.

I didn't choose to be a computer guy. I was trying to do something else. Most of the good things that have happened to me have been God's overruling will instead of the great plan of Sam happening.

But I could feel good about a lot of things. You all have things about which you could feel good. And the question becomes, and I don't like to ordinarily use myself as an example, but the question becomes, what are our seven things? You know, Paul says, you know what used to make me feel good about myself? Well, here's seven of the top ten.

I really felt like I had it made. I felt like I've got it nailed, and I felt like I was kind of ahead of the hoi polloi out here. All of us.

And I don't care how humble you are. I don't care how meager you are. I don't care.

I had things that I felt good about when I was living in a trailer. I felt good when I was living in a travel trailer. I had things that I felt good about when I was living in the B.O.Q. and owned nothing.

I felt good about myself when all of my earthly goods would fit in one car, including my motorcycle. There were things about which I felt, hey, I'm a Marine. I'm a Lieutenant.

I'm a Naval Academy graduate. By the grace of God. I'm this, I'm that.

All of us. I don't care who you are. We have an innate feeling that, you know, I may not be this, I may not be that, but, hey, I can grow petunias, or I can do this.

I can draw. We all have things about which we feel good. Well, that's our list of seven things.

And Paul says, let me give you a personal example, kind of like I'm doing here. He says, you want to talk about things that make you feel good about yourself? Try to top my list. And he says, you know what? What looked like gains, I discovered it was one big loss.

And I have determined that they were a loss. I concluded that they were a loss on account of this surpassingly powerful knowledge of Christ. Huper Echo.

It has it over everything. That's what it literally means, to have it over something. The knowledge of Christ has it over anything you can name.

You want to glory in something? Remember our memory verse? Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom. Let not the mighty man glory in his might. Let not the rich man glory in his riches.

Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me. Right? That's Huper

Echo. Now, when you recognize that you know the Lord Jesus Christ, you are in the family of God, you understand who you are and why you're here, what your future is, you've got that great hope, guess what? Now you've got something to cacao-my, to celebrate, to rejoice in.

Not, hey, let me show you my car. You know, let me show you my house. Let me show you my accomplishments.

Let me show you my wall of certificates and diplomas. Let me show you my resume. Let me show you the people I hang out with.

Let me show you my megachurch and all of the ministries it's involved in. Let me show you my X, Y, or Z. Paul says, shovel it in the trash. It's trashes.

It's garbages, plural. Scoobalah. And I have, it says in your New King James, I have suffered the loss of all things.

And it doesn't really say suffer. It says I have, it says because of whom Lord Jesus Christ, because of whom the all things, I lost. It doesn't say suffer the loss.

This is the verb form of zamia. It's zamia-o. And it's just the verb form of, of loss.

The noun that he used up above. I, on account of Christ, I, it doesn't say how, it doesn't say they were taken away. It doesn't say he pushed them away.

It just says they're gone. Don't care about those things anymore. And by the way, he's not a practicing Pharisee.

He's not running around attending reunions of the tribe of Benjamin. He's not living in Israel. You know, doing a lot of these things.

He's not touting and walking around in his Pharisaical robes and praying on the street corners and dropping big money bags into the temple treasury. He says, I dropped all that stuff. And I consider it garbages in order that I may kardeso.

And this is karde. This is the game that he talked about initially. This is kardino.

And it means to gain, to win. Paul uses this over in 1 Corinthians 9, 19 and 20. He says, Though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all so that I may kardino more.

So that I can win more. So that I can gain, accumulate more. To the Jews I became as a Jew so that I might gain the Jews.

To those who are under the law as under the law, though not myself being under the law, so that I might win those who are under the law. I have become all things to all men in order that by all means I may gain some. Paul says, My goal is to lay hold of these that need laying hold of.

He says in another place, I laid hold of that for which I was laid hold of myself. God laid hold of me so that I could lay hold of inheritance. He wants to lay hold of these men.

Peter uses it over in 1 Peter 3.1. He says, In the same way you wives be submissive to your own husbands so that even if they are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives. They may be gained. They may be laid hold of.

Brought into where you want them to be. You can win them. You can gain them.

That's the word that he uses here. I count them as rubbish so that I may get hold of Christ. Have Christ as my possession.

Be co-located with Him. And be found in Him. You remember the whole Eureka? Anybody that took California history knows Eureka.

I have found it in Balboa and the whole thing. Well, this is heurisko. And it means to discover.

To see and find. And it's got a broad range of meanings. It's complimentary to seek.

Seek and find. You don't find something unless you seek it. And when Paul says that I may be found in Him, this means that when God looks at the earth, who is it that I can bless? Who is it I can grant inheritance to? Remember in the Old Testament in the Psalms it talks about God is seeking all through the earth, trying to find someone who is responsive.

And in that generation, Israel says they're all fools. They've all gone back. There's none that doeth righteousness, no, not one, in this group that God has.

It doesn't mean that there never has been or there never will be or that the writer himself is not a seeker after God. But God is seeking those who will respond, who will be obedient, who will operate in faith. And Paul says, I want to be found.

When God does that seeking, I want to be one that He says, there's one. That's what I'm looking for right there. And Curisco is finding after a search or finding in the process of a search.

You don't just stumble over it, bump into it by accident. I want to be found in Him. Not having my righteousness, the kind of righteousness that comes from the law, but, and this is great in Greek, but the through faith of Christ, the from God righteousness.

That's how it reads in Greek. This is the exact word order. Not having my own righteousness, that from the law, but the through faith of Christ, the from God righteousness, by faith, upon faith, epipistis.

Faith is in there twice. Why? Because it's through Christ and it's from God. And you have double faith.

And it's not bad in the New King James, that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith. But you notice there's two faiths and there's two members of the Trinity. You've already had the third.

The Bible never talks about the Trinity. We just had the Holy Spirit up above. The Spirit of God.

Now we've got Christ and we've got God right here. God the Father. So that, and here's the punchline.

Verse 10. To know Him and the power of the Anastasios of Him. Anastasis.

Remember I told you about Anna and Kata? Anna is up, Kata is down. Anastasios. This is the standing up.

This is the resurrection. Isn't that great? You know the Bible always talks about believers falling asleep in Jesus. Those who sleep in Jesus, she's not dead, she's asleep.

And what happens when you wake up? We don't say you wake down. We don't say you wake over. You wake up.

You come up from sleep. You stand up. Hopefully at some point after you wake up.

They talk about rolling out of bed, but you don't roll through the rest of your day. You stand up. You wake up and you stand up.

What happened when Jesus raised the little girl in the upper room? Talitha Kumi. Stand up. Rise.

Take up your bed and walk. Stand up. Anastasios.

So Paul says, look, I've shoveled away all of this trash that is just a big loss so that I can gain... That's the real gain is Christ. Christ Jesus my Lord. And I want to be found in Him not standing there in Him trying to cling to my own righteousness, which isn't any righteousness, not with a big trash bag in my arms full of three-day-old organic rubbish, but the through faith and from God righteousness by faith.

And then verse 10 in Greek says to know Him and the power of His resurrection. The standing up of Him is what it literally says. The power of the standing up of Him.

Now, this seems kind of an odd turn. We're talking about righteousness by faith and not by works. And I've shoveled away all my works and all of my credentials and my feel-good-about-myself stuff.

And I want to be found standing there with the righteousness of God that comes by faith so that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. Now, he's already said I count all these things as loss for the overarching superior having-it-over knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I

lost these things and count them as rubbish so that I may gain Christ. What does it mean to gain Christ? Well, there are three references to the same thing.

The first one is up there when he says for the superiority of the knowledge of Christ. Now, he didn't get rid of his good stuff, his Phariseeism and his Hebrew of the Hebrews and his Benjamite status and all the rest of it and immediately have the knowledge of Christ. He said, I got rid of it with that in view.

It's a superior thing but I don't have it yet. He said, this is a hope, this is a goal. If you are going to get new furniture, you got to figure out what to do with your old furniture.

When they say, we are delivering your new furniture on Friday, we're delivering your new refrigerator on Friday, we're delivering your new whatever it is on such and such a day. If it's big and bulky and you've got an old one, what do you have to do? I have got to get rid of my old scratched up furniture, my old whatever it is. It has to go first.

And it doesn't mean because you got rid of the old that the two were just attached and you just slid one out and there was no gap. There's usually a gap. I get rid of my old house, now I buy a new house.

I can be working on the two simultaneously, but I can't actually move into my new house until I sell and move out of my old house. And there's usually a transition period. It's kind of a crude analogy, but Paul says, look, I got rid of all this stuff looking at, I recognized what the superiority of the knowledge of Christ is.

He doesn't say, I've got all of that knowledge and that's why I dumped over the old stuff. I learned about Christ and well, I just don't care about that Pharisee stuff. He says, no, I wanted to know.

I recognized that the knowledge of Christ would be a superior thing if I could get it. So, I shoveled this old stuff out in anticipation of, and how do we know that? Because he says, so that I may know him, in verse 10. To gain Christ at the end of verse 8 is to gain this superior knowledge.

That I may know him. There's three references to the very same thing. You can just circle it.

The knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, gained Christ, that I may know him in the power of his resurrection. That's all the same thing. That's what you shovel the garbage out for.

That's the goal. And it isn't going to come right away. But you're never going to get there as long as you're hanging on to the old stuff.

It's got to go first. There is a hope. There is a goal of knowledge of Christ.

You don't get the gospel and say, well, I know Christ now. You don't say, you know, I love that incarnation, first and second advent, and you know, the lamb takes away the sin of the world.

Okay, I've got the knowledge of Christ.

No, you don't. And you never will. We never will get it until we shovel these old things out.

But even when those are gone and we say, I know that I am hopeless, helpless, and useless. Okay, fine. But the knowledge of Christ is something that we pursue.

Now, this is the Apostle Paul. And this is well into his apostolic ministry. He's been an apostle now for a couple of decades.

And what does he say? So that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Now, he's not saying if I do good enough, I'll get raised. That resurrection from the dead is another reference back to the power of his resurrection.

That I may know Christ and the power of his resurrection. The two are one thing. What is the power that raised Christ from the dead? It's God the Holy Spirit.

It's God the Father. It's over in Romans. The Holy Spirit raised Christ from the dead.

And we'll look at this a little bit more next time. But here's the point. I've tried to cover this entire two paragraphs to get to this final point.

If you are going to rejoice in the things of Christ, which is the theme of this letter, if we are going to offload self-interest and onload or inload or upload Christ knowledge, there is a decision that we make. There is a policy that we set. I am selling out.

I am divesting myself of the things that I used to think defined me and made me a worthwhile individual. I'm not going to be patho about that anymore. I'm not going to be confident about it.

I'm not going to invest myself in it. I'm not going to be sure people know after the first two hours of meeting me that, hey, did you know that I played the piano? Do you know that I graduated from here and I've done this? In the Marine Corps, there were guys that had to tell you where they had been. Well, I was in Vietnam.

I was in Grenada. I was in here. I was in there.

You couldn't know the guy five minutes before he's telling you what makes him special. And all of us have these things that we kind of rest our foundation on. Hey, I'm worth something because look at what's unique about me.

We're never going to get to the knowledge of Christ as long as we cling to those things and hug them to our... Why do you think Paul talked in the last chapter who emptied himself, did not think equality with God was not a thing to be grasped? Did Jesus walk around telling everybody that he met, hey, did you know I'm God? Did you know I'm the second person of the Trinity? Did you

know I've been in... Do you see this creation? How do you like that? You know I did that. Do you know who I am? What did Jesus come and preach and teach? He's God. He's the second person of the Trinity.

He's the ruler and creator of the universe. He didn't go around flashing his ID card at everybody and saying, hey, I just want you to know I'm God. What did he do? He offered salvation, deliverance out of this present evil age.

Look, your heavenly father loves you. Your heavenly father wants to give you the fulfillment of all of these covenant promises. This is what God wants to do for you.

He put the interests of the people to whom he came ahead of himself. And he couldn't have done that if all he could think about was, boy, you know, it sure is tiresome being this little puny human. I mean, I'm God.

You ought to treat me with more respect. I mean, where's the red carpet? Where's the fine meals? I mean, you know, I'm God. Where's my hero's welcome? I mean, you people, you Jews, you've got the book.

You've been reading about me for a couple thousand years here. Where's the glory and honor? Jesus spent his whole time praying for people, weeping over people, ministering to people, trying to demonstrate to people that God had a wonderful plan and purpose. He put the interests of others ahead of himself.

How did he do that? The first thing he did, and we went through this in the last chapter, is he made the decision to let go of who he was. I'm not going to push myself. I want to talk to you about what God can do, what God has done.

And now Paul is talking about that very same thing here in his own case. He says, look, I couldn't be an apostle if I hadn't offloaded all this Hebrew of the Hebrews junk and been pursuing the knowledge of Christ. That's what overarches.

That's what's hooper echo. And it's a difficult thing because we say, okay, fine, that was Bible class, but now I'm going to get in my car, I'm going to go to my house, I'm going to do stuff tomorrow, I'm going to push a lawnmower, I'm going to fix stuff, I'm going to wash stuff, I'm going to try to get things done on my list. But here's the thing.

We, sooner or later, come in contact with other people and we're invested in certain things. There are certain things we want. There are certain things we expect.

We have an identity. We have an ego. We have a self-image and we feel like certain things are due us.

We feel like we ought to be appreciated for certain things. And the real place where this makes a

difference, when Paul came to the Philippians, he didn't say, you know, send a little resume in advance. You know how a speaker is going to come and they send you that little thing.

This guy commanded, especially in the military, commanded this, was ahead of that, you know, sink, pack, gear, and you know, squadron this, and army that, and regimental this, and you know, you just get this big thing and it's like, well I, okay. Paul didn't send one of those ahead. He said, I didn't come to you with dazzling stuff.

I showed you the power of the Holy Spirit. I communicated to you Jesus Christ. I lived it out in front of you.

Well, this is our goal. If we want to shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, we don't have to dazzle people with our qualifications. We don't have to make an issue of ourselves.

And we should not, and we cannot, to ourselves or to anybody else. Paul said, just read this paragraph a few times and think, where do I match this? Who am I trying to impress? What are my expectations because of who I am? And Paul says, I want to be found in him not having my own credentials, not resting on my accomplishments in the flesh. I want righteousness by faith.

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection. You know what's great about the power of his resurrection? You know, the single great thing, we'll talk about this next week. Jesus did nothing.

What is the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ? What did Jesus do in the resurrection? Even though he's the second person in the Trinity, even though he's the incarnate Christ, what did Jesus do in the resurrection? What was the power of Jesus' resurrection? It is fully and entirely and centrally in history a manifestation of God acting and working and glorifying himself in and through a human being. The humanity of Jesus Christ was resurrected by God and Jesus didn't do a thing. God, this is one place where a human becomes totally transparent and you see the magnitude and the magnificence and the utter incredible power and glory of God in the single greatest thing that has ever happened in history.

The single greatest thing that has ever happened is not the cross, although it's probably number two. Number one is the resurrection. That's the victory.

That is the triumph over death and the grave and sin and Satan and the conflict and everything else. And the humanity of Christ, Jesus contributed exactly nothing to that. He made decisions and was obedient and was faithful and did a lot of things that brought him to that point, but the pinnacle is when you reach the place where God is absolutely visible and reflected through and that's the power of the resurrection.

If you want to know what this means when he says, I want to know him and the power of his

resurrection, Paul says, I want to reach the place where I am transparent and God absolutely shines through. He does it all. I take no credit.

I get no credit. People look at this thing and they see God. That's what the resurrection is.

The fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death, being conformed to his death. How active was Jesus in his death? He was in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. He was dead.

If by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. What's he talking about? If by any means I can be that same kind of window into the throne room of God, into the heavenly power and plan and purpose of God. That's what Paul is aiming for.

That's what we should aim for. Well, we'll talk a little bit more about that next time, but we'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for this letter and for the truth that it contains.

Thank you for the ministry of your Spirit who is here to teach us and to impress these things on our hearts in a way that will be meaningful and practical and real to us as we leave Bible class and move back into the challenges and the tasks and the opportunities of daily life. We ask that as we meditate and try to apply these truths individually that the glory and the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ will be manifest not only to us and to each other, but also to the world so that our presence here will be salt and light and will reflect your glory both now and in the eternal ages ahead. We pray all these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.