

Sermon Notes

What do you really trust in?

The Bible Reading

Philippians 3:1-11

¹ Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. ² Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. ³ For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh — ⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

⁷ But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming

like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. (NIV)

A prayer

Almighty God and loving heavenly Father, guide me and teach me about you from your Word. Help me and others to see the wisdom and value of living life according to your word the Bible; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

The Bible Study

Questions:

Read Philippians 3:1-11

1. Why does Paul use such harsh language to describe those who wanted to impose Jewish rules on Gentile Christians?
2. What three characteristics of the true people of God does Paul give in verse 3? How far are they true of you?
3. What reasons does Paul give in vs. 4-6 for 'confidence in the flesh'? Do you think many churchgoers today rely for salvation on grounds like these? Other than Christ, what

would you be most likely to trust in for acceptance before God? Why?

4. Instead of this form of confidence, what does the true Christian rely on? Why does Paul reject 'confidence in the flesh' (vs. 7-8)?
5. What does righteousness mean? Why is righteousness which comes through faith in Christ so much better than righteousness based on the law? Can you explain what it means to receive Christ's righteousness without using the word "righteousness" (or any other words a non-believer would likely not be familiar with)?
6. Since salvation doesn't depend on our efforts or merits, why does it matter if we continue to sin?
7. What does it mean in practice to know Christ? How does this affect the way you view your own suffering