**SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH OF ORLANDO**

**604 West Jackson Street, Orlando, Florida 32805**

**Conference Call-In #: 978-990-5389; PC:147513**

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**MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY – AUGUST 20, 2024 @ 7:00PM EST.**

**LEARNING HOW TO COUNT, AGAIN!!! – PHIL. 3:7-11**

**INTRODUCTION:** Circumstances and people can rob us of joy, but so can *things;* and it is this “thief” which is addressed in this text. The Apostle Paul took no confidence in the flesh. He boasted only in Jesus Christ. It is easy for us to get wrapped up in “things,” not only the tangible things that we can see, but also the intangibles such as reputation, fame, achievement. Paul says “what things were gain” to him (Phil. 3:7), those I counted a loss to Christ. Some of these “things” were intangible, such as religious achievements (Gal. 1:14), a feeling of self-satisfaction.

Tangible things are not in themselves sinful. God made all things, and these things are very good (Gen. 1:31). God knows that we need certain things in order to live (Matt. 6:31–34). In fact, He “gives to us richly all things to enjoy” (1 Tim. 6:17). But Jesus warns us that our lives do not consist in the abundance of the things that we possess (Luke 12:15). Quantity is no assurance of quality. Many who have the things money can buy, have lost the things that money cannot buy (Salvation).

The key word in our text is **“count”.** In the Greek, the word means to evaluate, or to assess. “The unexamined life is not worth living”. Yet, few people sit down to weigh seriously the values that control their decisions, and directions. Many people today are the slaves of “things,” and as a result, they do not experience real Christian joy.

Like most “religious” people today, Paul had enough morality to keep him out of trouble, but not enough righteousness to get him into heaven! It was not bad things that kept Paul away from Jesus, in many situations, it was good things! He had to lose his “religion” in order to find salvation.

When Saul evaluated his life, he discovered that, everything he lived for was only a waste. Paul states that there are only two kinds of righteousness or spiritual wealth. There is the righteousness of works, and the righteousness of faith, but only the righteousness of faith is acceptable to God.

1. **WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE OUR PAST EXPERIENCES WITH CHRIST**:**– PHIL 3:7**
	1. The one thing in life that Paul sought was the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He knew that no matter how good he could become, he could never become perfect. He still fail short and he was still doomed to face death. His only hope for living forever was the righteousness of Jesus. He had to trust the righteousness of Jesus Christ to cover him **(Matt. 6:33).**
	2. God sees our faith, He knows whether or not it is genuine. Genuine faith makes a total commitment to Jesus Christ. A person who truly believes in Jesus Christ gives all he is, and all he has. He counts his own effort and works, his own righteousness as loss (nothing) in order to gain Christ **(Hebrews 11:6).** “All things” which Paul had gained before his salvation were devalued. This means that there was a wholesale change in Paul’s perspective on life.
	3. We like Paul must trust God to count our faith as the righteousness of Jesus Christ. His only hope was Christ and Christ alone. Paul believed with all his heart that if he trusted Jesus Christ, and if he sought after the righteousness of Jesus Christ, God would take his faith and count it as righteousness. God honors his commitment to us by accepting, and giving us eternal life **(Luke 9:23).**
	4. Paul had a great reputation as a scholar and as a religious leader. He was proud of his Jewish heritage and his religious achievements. All of these things were valuable to him; but he could not profit from them. His own “treasures” brought glory to him personally, but they did not bring glory to God **(Isaiah 4:8).** Becoming a Christian did not make him *less* a Jew. It made him a *completed* Jew, a true son of Abraham. He accepted the *higher* standard of living, conforming to Christ Jesus **(Rom. 12:1–2).** When a person becomes a Christian, God takes away the bad, but He also takes the good and makes it better.
2. **WE MUST MAINTAIN A CONTINUOUS EXPERIENCE WITH CHRIST –** **PHIL. 3:8**
	1. To “know Christ” means to have a personal relationship with Him through faith. Salvation is knowing Him in a personal way. Knowing about Christ was much more valuable than all the things he had gained before his conversion. Nothing in the world compared to knowing Jesus Christ. The knowledge of Jesus Christ is the most excellent knowledge in all the world. No other knowledge can give a person righteousness and perfection. No other knowledge can make a person acceptable to God and give him the right to eternal life **(John 14:6)**.
	2. *“For whom I have suffered the loss of all things”*. The words “suffered” mean to forfeit or to cast away. The phrase “*all things”* includes not only one’s religious position, but also the “social, financial, intellectual, and political” gains one has made. There is a cost to pay when your values change as a result of salvation. You will lose the things you no longer value but you will gain things you now value. *“Do count them but dung”* -His loss was great, but Paul devalued things he lost that he considered them but *“dung.”* He put all those things of the world, which meant nothing to him compared to Christ, in the category of manure**(Phil. 3:8).**
3. **WE MUST SEEK A FUTURE EXPERIENCE WITH CHRIST: PHIL. 3:9**
	1. Paul looked ahead either to death, or to the return of Christ. When he came face to face with God, he wanted to be *found in Christ*. He wanted to stand before God in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, not in his own righteousness. The righteousness of God does not refer to behavior, or works, or deeds of righteousness. No person can ever secure the righteousness of God by behavior, or works, or deeds, no matter how good the works or deeds may be. The righteousness of God is in Christ Himself. A person has to trust the righteousness of Christ to cover him if he wishes to become acceptable to God **(Rom. 10: 3-4)**.
	2. When Paul trusted Christ, he lost his own self-righteousness and gained the righteousness of Jesus. The technical word for this transaction is *imputation* **(Rom. 4:1–8).** It means “to put to one’s account.” Paul looked at his own record and discovered that he was spiritually bankrupt. He looked at Christ’s record and saw that He was perfect. Many today refuse to abandon their own righteousness that they might receive the free gift of the righteousness from Christ. When we faith in trust Christ, God put Christ’s righteousness into our account! Also, Paul discovered that his sins had been put on Christ on the cross **(2 Cor. 5:21).**
4. **WE MUST SEEK A VICTORIOUS EXPERIENCE IN CHRIST: - PHIL.3:10**
	1. Paul’s great pursuit in life was to know Christ. To have a *personal* experience to walk with Christ, to pray, to obey His will, and seek to glorify His name. Our world has put a great emphasis on knowledge, and we may know many things in life, but no knowledge is so valuable as the knowledge of Christ. Yet, the world does not consider that knowledge as a thing of worth. When he was living under Law, all Paul had was a set of rules. But now he has a Master, a Friend, a constant Companion, and a Savior **(John 15:15)!**
	2. “The power of his resurrection”. Most folk deny the resurrection of Christ. Paul wants the power of that resurrection in his own life. This is spiritual power, not just physical or material power. This power is the most valuable power of all. It is power to live a godly life; it is power to defeat temptation, and to serve the Lord well. The world certainly does not value experiencing these sufferings. Even many in our churches want nothing to do with these sufferings. But Paul puts great value on it. Experiencing these sufferings has much to do with our eternal glory. This speaks of our great submission to God. In fact there is no greater submission than that of Jesus Christ to God **(1 Peter 1:3).**
	3. Paul gained far more than he lost. Paul considered all other “things” nothing but garbage in comparison! Paul had joy because his life did not depend on the cheap “things” of this world, but on the eternal powers found in Christ. People who live for “things” are never really happy, because they must constantly protect their treasures and worry lest they lose their value. But not the believer with the spiritual mind, his treasures in Christ can never be stolen, and they never lose their value **(Matt. 6:19-21).**