

Find Joy - In Gains & Losses

Philippians 3:1 (NKJV)

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.

This is like me coming up here and preaching a sermon that I've already preached to you....I start out by saying rejoice in the Lord....be glad, find joy....it's no trouble for me to preach this to you again...it's not laziness but it's for your good, it's a true reminder, you need to hear this again!

I think that means it's important...we should really listen to what Paul is saying because he's not repeating himself because he's lazy but because we need to hear this again...

Philippians 3:2 (NKJV)

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

- Dogs - in the first century, dogs roamed the streets and were wild scavengers - he was speaking of those who have uncontrolled, sinful character, those who feed off of garbage and dead matter...
- Evil workers - he's referring to the Judiazers who prided themselves on being workers of righteousness, yet they were working to please God, to earn salvation rather than working to glorify Jesus and draw attention to Him, what they did glorified themselves
- Mutilation - this refers to their circumcision, which had no spiritual meaning, it was just physical mutilation

You need to know about these people, be aware, be alert and watchful. There are people that come around and have bad character that feed off of dead garbage...there are those who come and do all kinds of things but are constantly "look at me" people, wanting recognition for all they do, and there are those who check all the boxes, look like the real deal but there is no spiritual depth or transformation.

Philippians 3:3-4 (NKJV)

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, 4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:

See circumcision was an outward symbol of God's people, those in covenant with Him. But these were still under the law and the outward symbol didn't mean a thing without the inward reality of who Jesus is.

We are the circumcision (true), in Romans 2 we are told that we have circumcision of the heart BY THE SPIRIT....he cuts around, and cuts off what doesn't belong and that inner change shows through in the things we say and do!

Because of this work by the Spirit on your heart...you worship God in the Spirit, you rejoice in Jesus, you have no confidence in the flesh! (unredeemed humanness, your own ability and achievements)

But if anyone could have confidence in the flesh...it would be Paul as he lists his gains...

Philippians 3:5-6 (NKJV)

circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

- circumcised the eighth day - the right rituals, a devout Jew, they believed you had to become Jewish to be accepted by God
- of the stock of Israel - the right ancestry, born and raised a part of God's special chosen people
- of the tribe of Benjamin - the right pedigree, a little better, higher, purer than the rest
- a Hebrew of the Hebrews - the right orthodoxy (beliefs), an orthodox Jew as opposed to the more liberal Jews, kind of like the right denomination of church
- concerning the law, a Pharisee - religious leader, teacher
- concerning zeal, persecuting the church - enforcer, corrector
- concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. - holy, faultless

I don't know about you, but it seems like most of those things are irrelevant to us Americans, they don't really apply. But what about these things:

Right rituals - I go to church, give offerings, take communion

Right ancestry - Irish, German, British

Right pedigree - citizen of the USA

Right orthodoxy - conservative, non-denominational

Concerning the law - I know the bible

Concerning zeal - I can defend my position (with out of context verses)

Concerning righteousness - I am a good person (because I do good things)

All of these things we take some level of pride in, we could them as great profit or gains.

Some people these things are all that matter in life. Status, rank, position...

Philippians 3:7 (NKJV)

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

See these things are not all bad themselves, and sometimes they may seem to make you even more qualified to be used mightily by Jesus (they did for Paul)...but all of these gains can actually drive you away from Jesus.

Things that are good things can actually keep us from the best thing, Jesus!

"But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ"

Paul uses these accounting terms here because he is describing a transaction...a spiritual transaction that occurred when Jesus redeemed him.

He had all of these Jewish religious credentials in his profit column, all these great things that made him the best of the best, qualified to get in any place he wanted, tremendous gain in life...what more could you want...he had it all...

BUT...he has counted these things loss for Christ...

Think about what Paul is saying...the greatest gains in life that lead to tremendous status, rank, and position, the things I used to live for, that my identity was rooted in...I have now come to consider them absolutely worthless for the sake of Jesus and the purpose of my life!

I think Paul is on to something...

Matthew 16:25-26 (NKJV)

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

This is straight from the mouth of Jesus...I think Paul stole his idea! Jesus basically says that if your desire is to save your own life, by your status, rank, position, what you can work to gain...if that is life to you, then that's all that life will be, and you'll lose it, it will not have eternal gain, just temporary...

BUT if you lose your life for Jesus, if you consider all of these earthly things as loss and you do it because Jesus is gain, He is the horse you want to attach your cart to...you will actually find life.

You have to lose to gain. You lose some on earth to gain all in heaven.

Do the math...I'll wait.....it's worth it. Heaven's math is not taught in school. It's taught in Spirit. Holy Spirit give us revelation of the gain we have in Christ!

Philippians 3:8-9 (NKJV)

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 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Here's where we find joy...count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Jesus

Excellence - the be above, superior in rank, to surpass...

If rank and position are what you want in life...here it is...there is no higher place in life than to have a real relational knowledge of who Jesus is! This is the highest rank you can achieve...child of God, son or daughter

It's better than American, churchgoer, conservative, manager, elder, deacon, husband, wife...

Do you believe this church?

Paul said he actually suffered the loss of ALL THINGS and count them as rubbish (KJV dung).... I count every earthly thing as poop! Grind it up, spread it on the ground and let God grow something better up from it!

Why? So you can gain Christ and BE FOUND IN HIM! We are righteous by faith in Jesus!

Paul had moved from a religion to a relationship. Paul had to lose his religion to gain the experience of salvation. Paul proved that is possible to be religious yet not know Jesus, and knowing Jesus was now his life's aim.

Philippians 3:10-11 (NKJV)

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Know Him.....and know the power of His resurrection. Did you catch that? Now know of His resurrection...but know the POWER of His resurrection!

A minister was in Italy, and there he saw the grave of a man who had died centuries before who was an unbeliever and completely against Christianity, but a little afraid of it too. So the man had a huge stone slab put over his grave so he would not have to be raised from the dead in case there is a resurrection from the dead. He had insignias put all over the slab saying, "I do not want to be raised from the dead. I don't believe in it." Evidently, when he was buried, an acorn must have fallen into the grave. So a hundred

years later the acorn had grown up through the grave and split that slab. It was now a tall towering oak tree. The minister looked at it and asked, "If an acorn, which has power of biological life in it, can split a slab of that magnitude, what can the acorn of God's resurrection power do in a person's life?"

Tim Keller said: "The minute you decide to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, the power of the Holy Spirit comes into your life. It's the power of the resurrection—the same thing that raised Jesus from the dead Think of the things you see as immovable slabs in your life—your bitterness, your insecurity, your fears, your self-doubts. Those things can be split and rolled off. The more you know him, the more you grow into the power of the resurrection."

Church, it's so important that we know the power of His resurrection...to know the extent of that power, think about what happened, He was raised from the dead displaying His power over both the physical and spiritual worlds.

There is no higher power. It can not be stopped. It can not be contained.

Ephesians 1:18-19 (NKJV)

the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

Do you know Him? Do you know the resurrection power?

We're also to know the fellowship of His sufferings and be conformed to His death. We have a partnership with His sufferings where the Holy Spirit is able to comfort us because Christ knows your pain and more...

We are conformed to His death, He died to save lives and while we don't have the power to save, we have the Holy Spirit, the power of His resurrection, the gospel, which we give our lives for, even to death...let us save lives with this message and this power!

What are your gains in life...can you consider them loss for Jesus?

Can you find joy in the excellence of the knowledge of Him?

Righteousness in Him?

Power over the physical and spiritual in Him?

Heaven's math says for all you might lose for Jesus, it doesn't compare to the gain of knowing Him!