

Losing All For Christ – Part 1
Philippians 3:4-11
Series: Joy and Gratitude in Christ

1. Introduction

- a. Last week we compared the difference between a mere profession and authentic Christianity.
- b. We concluded the matter with the thought that
 - i. A mere profession is based upon what the individual has done:
 1. What church he goes to, how moral he is, what ceremonies he participates in, a prayer offered, his works
 - ii. Authentic Christianity is based upon Jesus Christ
 1. Rejoicing in Christ, discernment, worship in the Spirit, glorying in Christ, leaving no room for the flesh.
- c. Today, we are going to examine the biblical truth that a disciple loses things that, before he knew Christ, he used to think were the most precious. He does so in order to gain that, which after his eyes have been open, he now knows to be beyond any comparison.
- d. We understand that salvation is a sovereign word of God but in this passage we are privy to the inner working of the Spirit upon the mind of the person that is being saved. Here we see the glorious miracle that occurred within Paul as God invaded his heart and overcame the darkness therein with his marvelous light.

2. Verse 4 – Personal righteousness introduced

- a. The following passage of scripture introduces us to what Paul had placed value on before his remarkable transformation on the road to Damascus.
- b. Paul spent his life accumulating what he imagined was personally earned righteousness that would achieve salvation.
- c. Paul describes salvation in accounting terms,
 - i. Gain, loss, zero
- d. Jesus used similar language when he stated:
 - i. **Matthew 16:25-26** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (26) For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?
- e. Matthew 13 has two parables along the same line that are instructive for us:

- i. **Matthew 13:44** "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
 - ii. **Matthew 13:45-46** "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, (46) who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.
 - iii. **Question to consider**: What is salvation worth?

- 3. Verses 5-6 – Imagined Spiritual Profits – Religious Credits that do not impress God
 - a. **Parental**:
 - b. Verse 5A – circumcised on the eighth day – Paul was not a proselyte like some but he had kept this command to the greatest degree
 - i. And yet, Paul would come to know that salvation does not come from any ceremony.
 - c. Verse 5B – of the people of Israel – Unlike a proselyte, he was a part of the physical descent of Abraham
 - i. And yet, no racial heritage can gain salvation. Nothing is gained by birth.
 - d. Verse 5C – of the tribe of Benjamin – Benjamin was one of the most prominent families within Judaism as he was Jacob’s last and favored son. Paul could trace his lineage. His family had remained pure.
 - i. Family status can save no one.
 - e. **Earned**:
 - f. Verse 5D – a Hebrew of Hebrews – As he grew, he maintained the family’s traditional Jewish values and customs. They were not sympathizers with Rome or the Greek (Hellenized Jew) culture.
 - i. Salvation is not by tradition
 - g. Verse 5E – as to the Law, a Pharisee – Paul pursued his religious devotion to the extreme. He joined the strictest, most exclusive religious group and excelled within.
 - i. No priest, monk, theological scholar, or member of a devout sect can achieve salvation by such involvement.
 - h. Verse 6A – as to zeal, a persecutor of the church – zeal to the religious Jew was the supreme virtue. It was two-fold. Loving what God loved and hating what he hated.
 - i. Salvation is not by sincerity
 - i. Verse 6B - as to righteousness under the law, blameless – Paul outwardly conformed to the righteousness that comes from the Law.

By all outward appearances, Paul was the most excellent example of living by the Law.

- i. Salvation is not by legalistic righteousness

4. Gospel Presentation

5. Benediction

- a. **Romans 10:9-11** because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (10) For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (11) For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."