

PHILIPPIANS 3

LOSS AND GAINS

STUDY 3

The book of Philippians is Paul the apostle's letter to the Philippian church, written while imprisoned in Rome around 60-62AD. The letter is filled with exhortations and encouragements towards this beloved community. He reminds the Philippian church to centre their lives on Jesus as 'citizens of heaven', urging them to live lives led by the Spirit.

Paul was an accomplished man. He came from a pedigree heritage, was a renowned scholar, full of zeal and popular. He was also a puritanical persecutor.

Then he met Jesus. And all he believed of himself to be righteous, faultless, and true became undone. What he had believed were 'gains', he realised were nothing of consequence or significance in the loss of his identity and life before he met Jesus.

What he believed to be his own righteousness, he realised was based on self. He found true righteousness, and a full identity in Jesus. This was his salvation, and future.

How can we shift from sometimes crippling self-centeredness to living life in the FULLNESS of our salvation?

EXPLORE TOGETHER

Read Philippians 3:1-21 in The Message together.

1. Boast in Jesus.

Read verse 3-4. Nothing is more important than knowing Jesus.

Question: How have you seen placing confidence in yourself rather than Christ affect your joy and relationship with Jesus?

2. Made righteous by faith, instead of 'works'.

Read verses 1-11. It was Paul's encounter with Jesus and its subsequent impact that transformed his identity and reason for living.

Question: Where is your 'confidence'? How does Paul's testimony encourage, or challenge, your own desire to be more like Jesus?

3. Lost? Be found in Jesus.

Read verses 7-12. Lose all things, to be found in Jesus - and experience the power of His resurrection.

Question: Is Jesus' righteousness enough for you in each moment of life?

4. Future or past?

Read verse 15. Mature in the promise of your future, not the shame of your past - by looking to each other for encouragement and example.

Question: Why does Paul view the ability to recognise and deal with our personal imperfections as a sign of wisdom and maturity?

PRAY TOGETHER

Pray together, and perhaps commit to praying each day in the week ahead.

Lord Jesus, help us boast in all areas of our life in You and You alone - the ultimate example of perfection. Help us shift from our self-centeredness to a life where we are found in You. Help us support one another with growing more deeply in You and less of our own selves. Help us move beyond our past and lift our eyes to see what You have for us ahead. Amen.

Thank you to Marley from Melbourne City Campus for these studies.