

Audience of One - Philippians 3:7-11 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

So, let me be honest. If a dog bites or a bee stings raindrops on roses or whiskers on kittens are not going to do it for me. In fact, outside of the geese, nothing in the *Sound of Music* song is going to move my needle, and a few are actually annoying (give me gloves over mittens any day). I guess all of us have our own favorite things that we might include if we were to rewrite the song. But what about your favorite Bible verse or passage. Now that is a favorite thing for meditation when life is hard or priorities are out of order. We are going to have some fun this summer thinking on some of the favorite Bible passages chosen by our leaders. This week we begin with Pastor Mike's life passage, Philippians 3:7-11.

In this text the Apostle Paul takes on the cost analysis given by Jesus in Mark 8:36, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?" He looks at his previous life before the encounter with Christ that led to his conversion and evaluates its worth. If we knew Paul we would have considered him very successful. He was a scholar, studying under the most well known teacher of his day and as a leader he was ascending to the top of the religious and political world, serving as something like a clerk for the Supreme Court. His effort to ascend in this world led to his zealous persecution of Christians until the day Christ met him on the road to Damascus. On one level, Paul literally lost everything. He had been ostracized by the same community he sought to lead, losing all position and fame. The persecutor is now persecuted wherever he goes for the name of Christ. Paul gives a bit of his personal story here, asking this question, is Christ worth it? And his answer, inspired by the Holy Spirit is glorious.

Whatever was once gain to me, I count those things as loss, worthless, meaningless compared to the wonderful glory of knowing Jesus Christ, he says. How worthless are his fame, power, financial wealth compared to Jesus? In the ESV, he says they are rubbish. That sounds like a clean way to refer to trash, but in the original language this expression is much more crude. Paul is looking at his education, his position, his accomplishments and he uses a crude, almost slangish Greek word for poop to refer to those things. He says that the things he had in life that made him comfortable, powerful, and known were nothing more than a pile of the stuff our dogs keep leaving in the yard when you compare that to knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord, and being found in Christ (there's the phrase from our previous series). Paul has literally suffered the loss of everything, but he gained Christ, and the trade is beyond worth it. And the reason is clear. Look at the things we gain in Christ, when He alone is our passion. We are found in him, we receive the righteousness of Christ through faith in Him, we experientially know the power of His resurrection and His presence when we suffer. And one day we will gain the resurrection from the dead. And this all comes from knowing Jesus Christ. Paul uses a word here to know that means knowing through relationship and experience, not just intuition. In other words, what makes Christ so glorious is that he brings the presence of God near and enters into relationship with His people so that we are known and we know Him, intimately and personally.

Before his conversion, Paul lives his life for his own glory before a crowd of people whom he hoped would continue to move him up that ladder of mobility. But after he was rescued by Christ his whole direction and focus had changed. He no longer lived for the approval of the crowd or for his own sense of pride, Paul now lived his life for an audience of One. Throughout the centuries theologians have used the term "Coram Deo" (Latin for in the face of God or presence of God) as a way to define and describe the essence of the Christ-life. At the core this is the transformation that takes place in us. The believer looks at all the accolades of the world, the accomplishments of life, and the dreams of a better future here, and realizes that those things mean nothing compared to living our lives before Him, in

His loving presence. We live our lives for an audience of One, seeking His glory and knowing that when we live our lives Coram Deo His gracious approval is already settled. To know Him, and the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His suffering, being conformed to His death, so that someday we would join Him in our resurrection from the dead. The rest is just, well, rubbish. I need this reminder daily, so this verse resets my focus, and reminds me that knowing Jesus is better than anything else, and there is nothing I could lose that will not be worth it in the end. I need to live my life Coram Deo, for an audience of One.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Genesis 7	Genesis 8	Genesis 9	Genesis 10	Genesis 11	Genesis 12	Genesis 13

Reading from this past week: Philippians 3:7-11

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Ephesians 2:1-10

Family Worship

Song - *Lovingkindness*

<https://youtu.be/xV-fNmt6ZAo>

Gospel Project

Story: Paul's Third Journey

Story Point: Paul used every opportunity to tell people about Jesus.

Big Picture Question: What is sanctification?

Answer: Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Acts 18-21

New City Catechism

Question #23: Why must the Redeemer be truly God?

Answer: That because of his divine nature his obedience and suffering would be perfect and effective.

Verse: Acts 2:24

Scripture

Philippians 3:7-11

- What are some things Paul lost when he followed Jesus? What are some things we lose or might lose by knowing Christ? How does Paul help us realize that it is worth it?
- What does Mike mean when he spoke of living life for an audience of One?
- What are the blessings and benefits of having a relationship with Jesus in Paul's story here?

Prayer

*Pray that God would give you a passion to live your life Coram Deo, before the face of God, or for an audience of one.

*Pray for the International Mission Board and their efforts to share the Gospel, make disciples, and plant churches all over the world, and for the thousands of missionaries and workers serving overseas as part of this task.