

[PHILIPPIANS]

AN UNCOMMON JOY

Knowing Christ – As Good as it Gets!

Paul's Impeccable Resume...

Philippians 3:4b-6 (NIV) *If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.*

Key Thought: A vote of NO CONFIDENCE in the flesh.

The start of the journey...

Acts 9:1-6 (NIV) *1 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. 3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" 5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. 6 "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."*

The journey continues...

Philippians 3:7-8 (NIV) *7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ...*

Paul's Big Idea: Nothing compares to the surpassing greatness and value of KNOWING CHRIST.

What are those things we value that creep into being more important than knowing Christ?

Philippians 3:9-11(NIV) *9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. 10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.*

Key Thought: Knowing Christ in His DEATH and RESURRECTION.

*"The pattern is always the same. All roads lead to Calvary. We reach life only through death; we learn tenderness only through pain; we come to light only through darkness...we must be formed in the pattern of his death if we are to become Easter men and women."
— Brennan Manning*

Like Paul, we must read our own life stories into the larger story of God's saving purposes for His creation. Our lives and our Christian communities must be the revolutionary, transforming story of God's grace revealed in Christ.

Life Groups

Scriptures that Relate:

Monday: 2 Timothy 1
Tuesday: 2 Timothy 2

Wednesday: 2 Timothy 3
Thursday: 2 Timothy 4

Friday: Titus 1
Saturday: Titus 2

Talk it Over:

1. Why should we have no confidence in the flesh?
2. What does it mean to you to really know Christ?
3. **When we call Jesus "Lord," what are we saying?**
4. What are the areas that sometimes get in the way of us really knowing Christ?
5. How does your story reflect the Cross and the Resurrection?