



PORTRAITS

Group Guide



Philippians 3:1-11

Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. ² Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. ³ For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— ⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

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.

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 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.

Paul // July 14, 2024

1. How does what Jesus did on the cross help me get to the place where I can say "Even if he doesn't?"
2. Read Philippians 3:1-3. Paul uses harsh language to describe his opponents. Why do you think he does this? Would you ever use similar language to describe your contemporary opponents? Why or why not?
3. Read Philippians 3:4-8. Paul lists the identity markers that set him above others within a first-century Hebrew worldview. He then states that he "considers them garbage," and intentionally "loses" these self-identifiers.
 - a. Share an experience where you felt a loss of your identity. Some possible examples: losing a job, facing a chronic illness, death of a loved one, self-doubt, discouragement, etc.
 - b. Losing a sense of your identity is painful. Why would Paul intentionally "consider everything a loss," referring to these markers of identity?
4. Read Philippians 3:8-9. Paul's central message is that we can't "build" ourselves a strong enough identity (a righteousness of my own). We need an identity that is *given* to us (the righteousness that comes from God). Tim Keller explains that the gospel is the only place where our identity is received, not achieved.
 - a. Does all this just seem like strange theological jargon to you? How might an identity that's received differ from one that's achieved?
 - b. Have you experienced anything like "the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith"? What is it like?
5. Read Philippians 3:10. Paul seems to believe that our identity in Christ means we must also live like Christ. Perhaps this doesn't sound radical, but here are two questions for reflection:
 - a. On a scale of 1-10, how effectively do you think the global church is embodying Jesus' sufferings and resurrection? Explain your answer.
 - b. On a scale of 1-10, how effectively do you think you are personally embodying Jesus' sufferings and resurrection? Explain your answer.





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[LEADERS NOTES]

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU FOLLOW JESUS

- centralheights.ca/followjesus

STORIES

- We love hearing how God moves in people's lives. If you or anyone in your group has a story and would be willing to share, we'd love to hear it and celebrate with you. You can share your story by emailing stories@centralheights.ca

MESSAGE Video and Audio can be found at:

<https://www.centralheights.ca/currentseries>