

Philippians 3:1-21

Finally, my brothers and sisters, be joyful because you belong to the Lord. It is no trouble for me to write about some important matters to you again. If you know about them, you will have a safe path to follow.

Watch out for those dogs. They do evil things. When they circumcise, it is nothing more than a useless cutting of the body. But we have been truly circumcised. We worship God by the power of his Spirit. We glory in what Christ Jesus has done and put no confidence in our weak human nature.

If anyone thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more:

- I was circumcised on the eighth day.
- I am part of the people of Israel.
- I am of the tribe of Benjamin.
- I am a pure Hebrew.
- As to the law, I am a Pharisee.
- As to zeal, I opposed and attacked the church.
- As to the law, I kept it perfectly.

I thought things like that were for my benefit. But now I consider them to be nothing because of Christ. Even more, I consider everything to be nothing compared to knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. To know him is the best thing of all.

Because of him, I have lost everything. But I consider all of it to be rubbish, in order that I might gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but that which comes

through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith

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- that I may know him and the power of his resurrection,
- and may share his sufferings becoming like him in his death,
- that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead and be joined to him.

I have not yet received all of those things. I have not yet been made perfect. But I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature in faith think this way. Maybe you think differently about something. But God will make it clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already reached.

Brothers and sisters, join with others in following my example. Pay close attention to those who live in keeping with the pattern we gave you.

I have told you those things many times before. Now I say it again with tears in my eyes. Many people live like enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame with minds set on earthly things.

But we are citizens of heaven. And we can hardly wait for a Savior from there He is the Lord Jesus Christ. He has the power to bring everything under his control. By his power he will change our earthly bodies. They will become like his glorious body.