

Philippians 3:7-8 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[Philippians 3:1](#)
[Philippians 3:2](#)
[Philippians 3:3](#)
[Philippians 3:4](#)
[Philippians 3:5](#)
[Philippians 3:6](#)
[Philippians 3:7](#)
[Philippians 3:8](#)
[Philippians 3:9](#)
[Philippians 3:10](#)
[Philippians 3:11](#)
[Philippians 3:12](#)
[Philippians 3:13](#)
[Philippians 3:14](#)
[Philippians 3:15](#)
[Philippians 3:16](#)
[Philippians 3:17](#)
[Philippians 3:18](#)
[Philippians 3:19](#)
[Philippians 3:20](#)
[Philippians 3:21](#)

Philippians 3:7 But whatever things were (3SIAI) gain to me, those things I have counted (1SRPI) as loss for the sake of Christ ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [\[alla\] hatina en \(3SIAI\) moi kerde, tauta hegemaí \(1SRPI\) dia ton Christon zemian](#)

Amplified: But whatever former things I had that might have been gains to me, I have come to consider as [aone combined] loss for Christ's sake. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Lightfoot: All such things which I used to count up as distinct items with a miserly greed and reckon to my credit—these I have massed together under one general head as loss.

Phillips: Yet every advantage that I had gained I considered lost for Christ's sake. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: But whatever things were to me a gainful asset, these things I have considered a loss when it comes to my acquisition of Christ, and still so consider them. (Eerdmans)

Young's Literal: But what things were to me gains, these I have counted, because of the Christ, loss;

BUT WHATEVER THINGS WERE GAIN: [alla atina en \(3SIAI\) moi kerde:](#)

- Ge 19:17 Ge 19:26; Job 2:4; Pr 13:8; 23:23; Mt 13:44, 45, 46 16:26; Lk 14:26,33; 16:8; 17:31 17:32 17:33; Acts 27:18; 27:19 27:38 Gal 2:15 2:16; 5:2, 3, 4, 5
- [Philippians 3 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries](#)

those things which were profit to me (BBE)

But Christ has shown me that what I once thought was valuable is worthless (CEV)

These things that I once considered valuable (GWT)

whatever things were assets to me (ISV)

All such things which I used to count up as distinct items with a miserly greed and reckon to my credit—these I have massed together under one general head as loss. (Lightfoot)

But (alla) marks a definite and striking contrast between the before/after picture of who Paul was in the flesh versus who (and whose) he was now is in Christ. See discussion of importance of observing **terms of contrast**.

Paul is saying "I saw that all my acts of (self) righteousness were nothing on which I could depend for salvation; and that Christ crucified could alone profit me; for I have come to understand that it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.

Whatever things were gain - The apostle still speaks from his old standpoint —they were objects of gain, inasmuch as and so long as they were believed to secure acceptance with God. The **zemia** is opposed

Whatever things are similar to the **"things"** Paul warned the Colossians about (keeping certain days, abstaining from certain foods, performing certain ascetic practices, etc) declaring that *"these are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence"* (Col 2:23-note) because they were external works that produced no internal heart change.

Gain (2771) (**kerdos** [word study]) is an accounting term that means **profit** (excess of returns over expenditure in a transaction). The meaning is that which is gained or earned. **Kerdos** also refers to an **advantage** or any kind of benefit. In the plural (as in this verse = literally "gains") **kerdos** usually referred to money in secular Greek uses.

TDNT writes that " **kerdos** means "gain," "advantage," "profit," with the desire for it as a derived sense, also crafty counsels in the plural. ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

NIDNTT adds that **kerdos** "more rarely (was) used in Gk. for clever advice, cunning attacks; and in the plural (meaning) deceit, a frequent meaning from Homer onwards. The opposite of **kerdos** is **zemia**, disadvantage, loss, and (occasionally) punishment. The opposite of **kerdaino** is accordingly **zemioomai**, suffer loss, attested only after Homer. These contrasting pairs are brought together in Matt. 16:26 and Phil. 3:7. ([Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

Paul used **kerdos** in the preceding section to emphasis that

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is **gain** (**kerdos**) (Php 1:21-note)

The only other NT use of **kerdos** is in Titus...

Titus 1:11 (note) who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach, for the sake of sordid **gain** (**kerdos**).

Paul now repeats this bookkeeping metaphor using the noun form, **gain** (**kerdos**), in this verse and then the verb form, **gain** (**kerdaino**) to describe one side of the ledger. He uses **loss** here and twice in 3:8 for the other side of the ledger. When Paul met Christ a wonderful "business transaction" took place and he came to realize how futile and worthless were his "good" works to achieve God's standard of righteousness (**filthy rags** of Isa 64:6-note).

Paul lost some things, but he gained much more than he lost, for in Christ

are hidden **all the treasures** of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2:3-note)!

Remember Lot's wife? She was unwilling to count her **gain** as **loss** and so she **lost** everything. She ignored the angelic warning

Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away." (Ge 19:17)

Instead of obeying this clear warning she

looked back, and she became a pillar of salt (Ge 19:26)

Jesus Himself called on all who have ears to hear to

Remember (present imperative = command to keep remembering her "lot") Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. (Luke 17:32, 33)

Jesus gave similar warnings to His disciples declaring that

If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his **own** father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his **own life**, he cannot be **My disciple**." (Lk 14:26)

"So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions." (Lk 14:33) (bolding added for emphasis)

Jim Elliott missionary martyr had the same attitude as Paul writing that

He is no fool to give what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

THOSE THINGS I HAVE COUNTED AS LOSS FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST: *tauta hegamai* (1SRMI) *dia ton Christon zemian*:

- [Philippians 3 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries](#)

I now consider worthless for Christ (GWT)

Spurgeon comments that...

when we come to Christ, whatever we have to trust to, we must put away. We must write it on the other side of the ledger. We had entered it as a gain; now we must set it down as a loss; it is of no value whatsoever, it is a loss if it shall tempt us to trust any less in Christ.

Paul's faith in Jesus reversed all his former estimates, 'so that his gains he counted to be losses. He thought it so much the worse, concerning zeal, to have persecuted the church, and so much to his injury to have imagined that he was blameless in the presence of God.

Those things (5023) (*tauta*) is emphatic. Paul is saying in essence "these, yes these things". What things? Those things just mentioned such as physical circumcision. In a similar reminder Paul wrote to the Galatians who were being tempted to add law and works to justification by faith --

Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive **circumcision**, Christ will be of no benefit to you (if you are placing your "faith" in your "work" of circumcision). And I testify again to every man who receives **circumcision**, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. You have been severed from Christ, you who **are seeking to be justified by law**, you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit, **by faith**, are waiting for the hope of righteousness." (Gal 5:2, 3, 4, 5)

I have counted (2233) (*hegeomai*) is a mathematical term which says "Think about it and come to a conclusion." In the account book of Paul's life (so to speak) his entries on the **gain** side were transferred to the **loss** side. They were not merely useless, they were detrimental. After reflection (now with the mind of Christ) he considered them worthless.

Hegeomai - 28x in 27v - Matt 2:6; Luke 22:26; Acts 7:10; 14:12; 15:22; 26:2; 2 Cor 9:5; Phil 2:3, 6, 25; 3:7f; 1 Thess 5:13; 2 Th 3:15; 1 Tim 1:12; 6:1; Heb 10:29; 11:11, 26; 13:7, 17, 24; Jas 1:2; 2 Pet 1:13; 2:13; 3:9, 15. NAS = chief(1), consider(3), considered(2), considering(1), count(4), counted(1), esteem(1), governor(1), leader(1), leaders(3), leading(1), led(1), regard(5), regarded(1), Ruler(1), thought(2).

Counted is in the **perfect tense** which means that Paul made this accounting at a point in time in the past and that he still considered them as a loss. One could paraphrase it as follows...

These things I have set down as loss, and do so still.

The **perfect tense** here contrasts with his use of the **present tense** for the same verb ("**count**") in the next verse.

Jesus alluded to this same thought when He declared

what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? " (Mt 16:26)

Loss (2209) (*zemia*) describes the state of coming into a worsened situation from previous advantage. Thus *zemia* is translated as damage, disadvantage, loss, forfeit. In Herodotus *zemia* usually meant 'punishment' but in the NT it is only used of in reference to suffering the loss of something, with the implication of sustaining hardship or suffering.

In ancient Greek manuscripts *zemia* referred to commercial or business losses.

TDNT writes that **zemia** meant "Disadvantage (which) may take the form of monetary or material "loss" or "damage." It may also be moral or spiritual in the sense of "hurt" or "ruin," with a subjective nuance of "unpleasantness." Legally **zemia** early takes on the sense of "penalty" and **zemioo** "to punish." ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

NIDNTT - The opposite of **kerdos** is **zemia**, disadvantage, loss, and (occasionally) punishment. ([Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

Other than **Phil 3:7,8**, there are only 2 other Scriptural uses of **zemia**...

(The ship carrying Paul to Rome to stand trial, encountered a deadly storm, prompting Paul to declare), "Men, I perceive that the voyage will certainly be attended with damage (hubris) and great **loss (zemia)**, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives." (Acts 27:18)

Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete, and incurred this damage and **loss (zemia)** (Acts 27:21)

A similar historical illustration of "counting it all loss" is told of the Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez. After landing at Vera Cruz, Mexico in 1519 he was so intent on conquest that to assure the devotion of his men, Cortez set fire to his fleet of eleven ships! With no means of retreat Cortez's army had only one direction to move, into the Mexican interior. Cortez understood the price of commitment—and he was willing to pay it for a temporal, earthly treasure. Paul in contrast was willing to give up the earthly for the heavenly. **Am I? Are you?**

For the sake of Christ - This means "on account of Christ" or "because of the fact of Christ" (Vine)

Eadie explains **for the sake of Christ** as signifying "what was once gain was now reckoned loss, either because it did not commend him to Christ, or what was held as something won was regarded now as loss, for it did not enable to win Christ, nay, kept him from winning Christ. When he won, he was losing; nay, the more he won, the more he must lose. All his advantages in birth, privilege, sect, earnestness, and obedience, were not only profitless, but productive of positive loss, as they prevented the gaining of Christ, and of justification through the faith of Christ. ([Philippians 3 Commentary - Online](#))

In Paul's great renunciation, he gives us his own "Profit and Loss Statement" with **"those things"** in the preceding verses that had been gain to him, "writing" on one side of the ledger and "writing" on the other side the single word **Christ**. Paul's point is that all of man's glory amounts to nothing when compared with the glorious treasure which is found in Christ Alone. Where is your treasure... for

where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Mt 6:19, 20, 21-see notes Mt 6:19; 20; 21)

On the Damascus Road Paul had the unspeakable privilege of seeing the glory of the Risen Lord (Acts 9:3), and from that moment on all other **glories** seemed like nothing in comparison.

McGee - On the credit side of the ledger Paul had been adding up his background and his character and his religion. It seemed like an impressive list—and it was , on the human plane. Suddenly it all became a debit—he no longer trusted in those things because he met Jesus Christ. He had hated Him before and was on the way to Damascus to persecute His followers, but now the One on the debit side was moved to the credit side. He put his entire trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, my friend, if the bookkeeping system of this country were transformed like that, it would upset the economy of the world. It would be a revolution. Actually, any conversion is a revolution because what things are gain become a loss, and loss becomes gain. It turns you upside down and right side up. It gets you in an altogether different position. That is what conversion is. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

I Have Everything - Philippians 3:1-12 - I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. -- Philippians 3:8

The airline had mangled Debbie's luggage. Then her purse disappeared. Instead of entering the airport through an enclosed corridor, she stumbled off the plane in the pouring rain. She was drenched, far from home with no money, no identification, and no dry clothes.

Under normal conditions Debbie would have been furious, but that night it didn't matter. She had just survived the crash of Flight 1420 in Little Rock, Arkansas. "When I walked off that plane," Debbie said, "I walked off with nothing, then I stopped and thought, I have everything." She had suddenly realized that her life was more important than all she had lost.

It sometimes takes a dramatic turn of events to alter our perspective. That was true for Saul of Tarsus. He had treasured his hard-earned reputation for "righteousness" more than anything in the world (Phil. 3:4-6). But when he met Christ on the Damascus road

(Acts 9:1-6), his whole outlook changed. Later he wrote, "What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ" (Phil. 3:7).

Yielding our sinful pride and self-sufficiency to the Lord may seem as if we are losing everything. But only then will we discover that to have life in Christ is to have everything. —David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We think we have what matters most
Of what this life can give;
But when we yield it all to Christ,
We've just begun to live. —DJD

**When we have nothing left but Christ
We find that Christ is enough.**

WHEN ALL IS LOST - Philippians 3:7-14 - What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. —Philippians 3:7

I was rummaging around my son's garage and found all the trophies he had won in his years of athletic competition. There they were in a box—about to be thrown out.

I thought of the blood, sweat, and tears that had gone into gaining those awards, yet now he was putting them in the trash. They no longer had any value to him.

It reminded me of a whimsical children's poem by Shel Silverstein called "Hector the Collector." It describes all the things that Hector collected over the years. He "loved them more than shining diamonds, loved them more than glistenin' gold." Then Hector called to all his friends, "Come and share my treasure trunk!" And all the people "came and looked and called it junk."

So it will be at the end of our lives. All our possessions—the things we've spent a lifetime working for—will be nothing but junk. That's when we'll surely know that the best things in life are not things.

But we can have the right perspective now, as Paul did. "What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ" (Philippians 3:7). We can keep a proper attitude about our possessions, because we possess the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus our Lord.—David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold,
I'd rather be His than have riches untold;
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today. —Miller
© Renewal 1950 Chancel Music, Inc

Our greatest riches are the riches we have in Christ.

F B Meyer in his devotional commentary on Philippians...

SELLING ALL TO BUY THE PEARL

Phil 3:4-9

The Pearl of Great Price. In one of His most exquisite parables, our Saviour depicted a man leaving his house in the morning with a heavy bag of gold, and making his way to the market-place, where pearl-sellers displayed the precious ocean gems. He was seeking goodly pearls, and passed from stall to stall with the eye and touch of the connoisseur; but from each stall he turned away dissatisfied. At last he approached one of the sellers, and saw before him on the tray the most exquisite, perfect, and transparent pearl that his eyes had ever lit on. Asking the price, he discovered that it would take all the pearls he had bought, and all the gold in his pouch, to procure it. On starting, he had meant to get the pearls and keep his house and estate, but he learnt that to win that he must sell even these; and so pearls and gold, home and heritage, were all gladly parted with, that that one most priceless jewel might be his own. And always afterwards, when the purchase was concluded, though he was homeless and solitary, the fact that he had got that pearl more than compensated him; he counted all things else but loss.

When our Lord spoke that marvellously beautiful parable, He must have had Saul of Tarsus in His eye--a man with a rich religious nature, capable of an infinite hunger after God, who passed from one stall to another amid the religions of the world, seeking for the best. But finally, when he came where the gem of heaven and earth and sea, the pearl of great price, lay, translucent and

glistering, he gladly sacrificed all he possessed to win it; and in this marvellous paragraph he tells us that he counted all things else as loss and refuse compared with Jesus Christ. Oh, that we may understand the superlative excellence of Jesus, and turn from everything that would divide our heart with Him!

NOTICE HOW THE APOSTLE USES THE POWER OF CONTRAST

There are many ways by which we set forth the value of any possession. We may speak of its rarity; dilate upon its quality; or we may set it in contrast with things that men value. Let us look upon these contrasts, so enhancing "the Pearl."

THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST AND THE PRACTICE OF JUDAISM

(1) He contrasted "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" with the ancient and holy system of Judaism. The Apostle speaks of Judaism with profound reverence and affection. His was not a profane and irreverent soul, that could speak ruthless words about the holy system, which, for so many centuries, had satisfied his forefathers, and which, in his own early life, had been so treasured and dear. He never could forget that the architecture of Judaism had been given by God on Sinai's Mount; that the ritualism of the Tabernacle had been wrought out in the laboratory of the Divine mind; that the breath of God had quivered upon the lips of its prophets, and His fire burnt upon the hearts of its seers. He never could forget the generations of holy souls which in Judaism had found their solace, their inspiration, and their comfort; and therefore, with reverent, loving, and tender words, he spoke about that hoary system. What though the light of evening was now shining upon the hills of Zion! What though, ere long, Jerusalem itself must lie beneath the foot of the invader! Still Judaism was dear to him. But contrasted with Jesus Christ, and with that new view of God that Jesus Christ had brought, in which the veil was torn away, and the soul stood face to face with incarnate Deity, Judaism with all its sacred sanctions was but so much loss.

CHRIST AND SACRAMENTAL GRACE

(2) He contrasted the knowledge of Christ, next, with the virtue of sacramental efficacy. He mentions, first, the sacrament of circumcision. He says: "Circumcision was administered to me, not in mature life, as to a Gentile proselyte, but in my infancy. On the eighth day I received the initial rite, the badge of the Jew, the seal of the covenant." He made much of it. It is right that we should make much of the holy sacraments of our religion. Chiefest amongst our religious memories, treasured with unfeigned delight, are certain great moments when we have sat at the Table of our Lord with His saints, and have feasted high, whilst the tide of holy joy has borne us beyond the shores of earthly delight, to the very bosom of our Saviour. Sacraments have meant much to us, but how much to others! Paul said: Though I value beyond compare the sacraments of Judaism, what are these compared to the living Christ? They are but the empty grave from which He has gone forth; they are but the ceremonies of the tomb, whilst the living Christ passes along the Easter path.

CHRIST AND HIGH BIRTH

(3) He contrasted the knowledge of the Lord with high pedigree. To have been circumcised was much, but even if he had been the child of a Jewish proselyte he would have been circumcised the eighth day. It did not prove that he had the pure blood of Abraham flowing through his veins; therefore he says: "I was born a Hebrew; mine was the stock of Israel, the prince with God; I was of the tribe of Benjamin, from which Saul came, the first king of Israel; and which, amid the general faithlessness, clung still to Judah in maintaining the Temple rites. Moreover, I was a Hebrew of Hebrews; no Gentile blood had ever intermingled in our family." How good some count it to be able to trace back their pedigree to the Normans, or to the Saxons who preceded the Conquest. Some such pride might have been the Apostle's. He looked upon Rome, and Babylon, and Greece, but knew his descent lay further back than any. They might boast their splendour, but he came of the man who crossed the Euphrates, and settled in Palestine as the friend of God. In him flowed the blood of Moses, who dared behold God face to face; of Joshua, who bade the sun stand still; of Jeremiah and the prophets. But he cries: Compared to Christ, it is nothing. The soul that has won Him is related to a higher family; has received the title of a nobler lineage; is linked, not with the fathers of saintly piety, but to the everlasting Father, the eternal God, through Jesus Christ, the great Brother Man, who has lifted man into union with God. Compared with Him, high lineage and ancient pedigree are but dross.

CHRIST IN CONTRAST WITH PHARISAISM.

(4) He contrasted the knowledge of Christ with his membership in a noble order of men. Before Agrippa he said: "I lived a Pharisee"; and before the Council he cried: "I am a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee." He here boasts it again--"As touching the law, a Pharisee." The Pharisee in our time has come to be looked upon as the embodiment of pride, arrogance and supercilious contempt and scorn; but away back in the history of Israel the Pharisees stood for the purest, strictest morality. They were the maintainers of the Law amid the indifference of their time, They opposed the great parties of the courtly Herodians and of the skeptical Sadducees. What if they made their phylacteries broad! It showed that they revered the very text of the Word of God. What though they built the tombs of the prophets! At least they had reverence for the great past. What though they

flaunted an outward piety! At least there was the outward recognition of God. There was much to condemn, but they stood for the unity of the God-head, the resurrection of the Hereafter, and the strictest interpretation of the law. But Paul said that all this was as nothing to him now; he was prepared to be cast out by the Pharisees, to become an outcast and an alien, and be treated as the off-scourings of all things. To have Christ was an infinite compensation, which made all the rest seem but loss.

CHRIST IN CONTRAST WITH REPUTATION.

(5) He contrasted the knowledge of Christ with his own great reputation--"As touching zeal, per-securing the Church." Everybody knew how devoted he was to Judaism, and how intent in uprooting Christianity. Breathing fire and sword, he swept like a tornado through Palestine. The disciples trembled when he came near any city in which they were gathered, for there was every fear that he would drag them before the Councils and commit them to prison. In many cases he ruthlessly stamped out the infant church in blood. There was nothing he would not do, so relentless, so merciless, so unsparing. And with all this, he was building up such a reputation as would have given him prominence in all after time in his fatherland and amongst his fellow-countrymen. It is not a small thing for a young man of thirty to build up a reputation like that, because it means high marriage, power, wealth and prestige. It means everything that a man cares for and seeks; but when Paul stood, with everything of this world alluring him on the one hand, and with Christ on the other calling him to the cross, torture, isolation, poverty, and everything the flesh of man hates, he said: "I am married to Christ, and in Him am married to suffering, sorrow, and loss; but I look on it as a man who has made a good bargain--for I have won the Pearl, Christ."

CHRIST IN CONTRAST WITH PERSONAL UPRIGHTNESS

(6) He contrasted the knowledge of Christ with the satisfaction of blameless character--"As touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless." There is a tribunal always in session, a tribunal before which we are all constantly being tried; and we ourselves often sit upon that tribunal to try those above us, on our level, and beneath us. But in our quiet hours we leave that judgment-seat, and apply to ourselves the standards which we have been applying to our fellows. At such times we cannot but notice how, compared with many around us, our own character appears blameless and flawless. Thank God, we say, after we have been considering the case of the drunkard, the miser, or the dissipated, we are not as they are. And as we apply to ourselves the standard beneath which so many of our fellows have been condemned, we are disposed to take to ourselves considerable credit. "I go to church, I pay my subscriptions, I do not drink, I do not indulge the flesh, I keep my tongue in control; my dearest and nearest cannot accuse me of being anything but a loving, tender man; my life is blameless." Thereupon we conclude that we are right.

These are the people that it is hardest to win for Christ. They are enclosed and encased within the armour of their self-righteousness; they are so complacent that when the strongest sermons are levelled against congregations they shelter themselves beneath their armour-plate, and say: The sermon is good for others, but it cannot mean us. When a man wakes up suddenly to see that in God's sight all that counts for nothing; when Christ comes to him and casts the X-rays upon his inner life; when he sees the glory of the Great White Throne compared with the linen he has been washing for years with such arduous punctiliousness; when he sees that what he thought to be white and clean is only as filthy as rags to the Son of God, there comes the greatest fight of his life. Many a man would be prepared to give up his church, to renounce his sacraments, to step out from his high family, with its pedigree, and from the blamelessness of his earlier life; many a man would be prepared to sacrifice his reputation for earnestness: but when it comes to saying that his righteousness is but filthy rags; that the boat he has been constructing will not carry him across the mighty deluge of waters; that the tower he has built upon the reef will not resist the autumn storm, in counting even his blamelessness as loss and dross--yea as dung--then there comes the greatest fight.

CONTRASTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

(7) He contrasted the knowledge of God's Righteousness which is by faith, with his own righteousness, which was of the law. In the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle clearly describes the righteousness, which is of the law, "That the man which doeth these things shall live by them" (Rom. 10:5). The doing of the things prescribed by the Law in the heart, or the Law on the Tables of Stone, has occupied the minds and governed the activities of legalists and ritualists from the beginning of the world. It was this that prompted Luther to fastings and scourgings, beneath which his body was reduced to an extremity, and that encouraged Bunyan to hope that an outward reformation would satisfy the outcry of his conscience. But such men have always found their efforts unavailing. However zealous they may be in going about to establish their own righteousness, men discover that what has seemed a white and flawless robe is only as filthy rags, in the searching light of the great white throne.

But the Righteousness which is "of God," because it was designed by His wisdom, and is offered by His unmerited grace, requires no "going about." There is no need to say, "Who shall ascend unto heaven," or "Who shall descend into the deep." "The word of faith is nigh thee." Its one condition is the open hand of a faith, that takes what the risen Saviour offers. Just as soon as the soul trusts Him--not merely believing about, but in Him,--in that moment it is clothed upon with the Righteousness of Christ, wrought

out by His perfect obedience unto death, which is "unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rom. 3:22). It is only necessary to abandon our own righteousness to gain Christ and His righteousness. We cannot have both. But when we have resolved to drop the one, that we may take the other; in making the choice, we suddenly find ourselves in Him, and arrayed in the beautiful dress, Who was made sin for us that we might be made the Righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).

Have you come to Him? The time is coming when you will have to be found somewhere. The Apostle says, "That I may be found in Him." You will have to be found by the swirling tides of sorrow, by some supreme temptation, by the final test of death; you will have to be found in the Judgment; you will have to be found in the dissolution of the Heavens and the Earth. When God comes to find you, where will you be found? In the cardboard of your own goodness, or in the completed Righteousness of Jesus Christ, which He wrought out on the Cross in tears and blood, and which is yours directly you look with penitent trust towards Him? God grant that when you are found, it may be with the Pearl of great price in your hand, and with the Righteousness of Jesus Christ upon your soul! (F. B. Meyer. The Epistle to the Philippians - A Devotional Commentary)

Philippians 3:8 More than that, I count (1SPMI) all things to be (PAN) loss in view of the surpassing value (PAPNSA) of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss (1SAPI) of all things, and count (1SPMI) them but rubbish so that I may gain (1SAAS) Christ ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [alla men oun ge kai hegoumai \(1SPMI\) panta zemian einai \(PAN\) dia to huperechon \(PAPNSA\) tes gnoseos Christou lesou tou kuriou mou, di' on ta panta ezemiothen. \(1SAPI\) kai hegoumai \(1SPMI\) skubala hina Christon kerdeso \(1SAAS\)](#)

Amplified: Yes, furthermore, I count everything as loss compared to the possession of the priceless privilege (the overwhelming preciousness, the surpassing worth, and supreme advantage) of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord and of progressively becoming more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him [of perceiving and recognizing and understanding Him more fully and clearly]. For His sake I have lost everything and consider it all to be mere rubbish (refuse, dregs), in order that I may win (gain) Christ (the Anointed One), ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Amplified (2015) But more than that, I count everything as loss compared to the priceless privilege *and* supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord [and of growing more deeply and thoroughly acquainted with Him—a joy unequalled]. For His sake I have lost everything, and I consider it all garbage, so that I may gain Christ,

NET More than that, I now regard all things as liabilities compared to the far greater value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things— indeed, I regard them as dung!— that I may gain Christ,

Phillips: Yes, and I look upon everything as loss compared with the overwhelming gain of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord. For his sake I did in actual fact suffer the loss of everything, but I considered it useless rubbish compared with being able to win Christ. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Yes, indeed, therefore, at least, even I am still setting all things down to be a loss for the sake of that which excels all others, my knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord which I have gained through experience, for whose sake I have been caused to forfeit all things, and I am still counting them dung, in order that Christ I might gain, (Eerdmans)

Young's Literal: yes, indeed, and I count all things to be loss, because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, because of whom of the all things I suffered loss, and do count them to be refuse, that Christ I may gain, and be found in him,

MORE THAN THAT: alla menounge kai:

- [Philippians 3 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries](#)

Not only those things (ICB)

But indeed, therefore (Analyzed Literal)

But no, rather (Modern KJV)

Yes, indeed, therefore, at least, even (Wuest)

More than that (KJV = "yea doubtless") is actually **five** particles **alla**, **kai** and **menounge**, the latter representing a combination (**mén** = indeed + **oún** = but now, therefore + **ge** = an emphatic), the full significance of which is difficult to convey in our English translations and also a lit. "but indeed therefore at least even").

The sense is something like 'indeed, more than that, I therefore affirm at least even this' adding to and reinforcing what he has just said

Robertson explains this unusual but meaningful construction stating that "five particles before Paul proceeds (yea, indeed, therefore, at least, even), showing the force and passion of his conviction.

The particle **alla** would have been enough to put this verse in direct contrast with what he had just said but Paul clearly desires to unequivocally contrast his self righteous "religious" works with the incalculable treasures gained from knowing Christ.

God's Word Translation conveys the sense of Paul's passion paraphrasing it -- **It's far more than that!**

I (continually) COUNT ALL THINGS TO (continually) BE LOSS: hegoumai (1SPMI) panta zemian einai (PAN):

- Acts 20:24; Ro 8:18)
- Click devotional [Religion or Relationship?](#) ([Click devotional](#) by Spurgeon
- [Philippians 3 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries](#)

I now regard all things as liabilities (NET)

I am still setting all things down to be a loss" (Wuest) "I consider everything else worthless" (GWT)

Spurgeon - Paul thinks that to be righteous by faith is infinitely better than all the righteousness that can come by works and ceremonies. He therefore utterly despises that which he once thought to be more precious than gold; and he takes possession of, as his greatest treasure, that which he once trampled in the mire.

Count (2233) (**hegeomai**) is in the **present tense**, indicating that Paul continually (habitually) reflected on what he could do in his own strength to add even one "ounce" to his standing before God and he continued to come to the same conclusion -- it belonged in the loss column if it was not Christ's righteousness. As Paul so dramatically discovered on the road to Damascus, a person can have **tons** of religion without one **ounce** of salvation!

All things (pas) means all without exception and emphasizes that when Christ is on one side of the scale there is simply nothing that can match His worth. Thus Paul says he continually counts not just his religious achievements as loss but "**all things**".

Guy King adds that **all** means "**All** financial gain, **all** material gain, **all** physical gain, **all** intellectual gain, **all** moral gain, **all** religious gain—all these are no gains at **all** compared with the **Great Gain**. (bolding added) (Quote from Joy Way: An Expository Study Of Philippians, Ft. Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1952)

Spurgeon asks "Since you have not had to suffer the loss of all things, do you hold all things at God's disposal? Are you ready to part with comfort and honor for Him? Since God has left your worldly comforts to you, have you used all things for His sake?

Loss (2209) (**zemia**) describes the state of coming into a worsened situation from previous advantage. Thus **zemia** is translated as damage, disadvantage, loss, forfeit. In Herodotus **zemia** usually meant 'punishment' but in the NT it is only used of in reference to suffering the loss of something, with the implication of sustaining hardship or suffering.

Eadie writes that Paul does not "mean all things absolutely. It has not the article, indeed, but the meaning is limited by the context—all things of the class and character described—the things of which he says immediately that he had suffered the loss. The estimate was not a hasty conclusion from fallacious premises, nor the sudden leap of an enthusiasm which had for a moment urged him. It was his calm and deliberate judgment still. ([Philippians 3 Commentary - Online](#))

IN VIEW OF THE SURPASSING VALUE OF KNOWING CHRIST JESUS MY LORD: dia to huperechon (PAPNSA) tes gnoseos Christou lesou tou kuriou mou:

- Phil 3:10; Isa 53:11; Jer 9:23,24; Mt 11:25-27; 16:16 16:17; Lk 10:21 22; Jn 14:7 ,20; 16:3; 17:3 17:8; 1Cor 2:2; 2Cor 4:4 4:6; Gal 1:16; Eph 1:17 18; Eph 3:8 3:9;3:18 3:19 Col 2:2 2:3; 1Pe 2:7; 2Pe 1:3; 3:18; 1Jn 5:20
- **Lord** - Lk 1:43; 20:42-44; Jn 20:13 20:28
- [Wuest's Commentary Notes on Philippians](#) - rich in word study insights
- [Philippians 3:4-8 Religious Credentials](#)- John MacArthur
- [Philippians 3:4-11 Evaluating Your Relationship in Christ - 1](#)- John MacArthur
- [Philippians 3:8-11 Surpassing Value of Knowing Christ](#) - John MacArthur
- [Philippians 3 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries](#)

compared to the far greater value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord (NET)

for the sake of that which excels all others, my knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord which I have gained through experience (Wuest)

because of the priceless privilege of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord (Weymouth),

for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord (TEV)

compared to the possession of the priceless privilege (the overwhelming preciousness, the surpassing worth, and supreme advantage) of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord and of progressively becoming more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him [of perceiving and recognizing and understanding Him more fully and clearly] (Amplified - Classic)

KNOWING YOU JESUS IS THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD

Surpassing value (5242) (**huperecho** from **hupér** = above, over + **écho** = have) is literally to hold above and so to stand out or be superior in rank, authority or power. **Huperecho** speaks of that which excels, is superior or better and which is exceptional or excellent.

[Surpassing](#) means outstanding, exceptional, rare, phenomenal, stellar, transcendent, unrivalled, incomparable, matchless, and the list of synonyms will go on and on forever in eternity! Hallelujah!

Knowing Christ is of incomparable worth--of **more value than** anything! **The unfathomable riches of Christ** (Eph 3:8-note) surpass the value of anything and everything. If you are struggling with angst and anxiety and worry over your early possessions (that are possessing you!), memorize Paul's great words in Phil 3:7-10 and ask the Spirit of Christ saturate and renew your mind with these profound truths regarding our greatest Possession, our priceless, incomparable Lord Jesus Christ and as you rest in this truth the Spirit will make the things of this earth grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace. Amen.

Then play **Graham Kendricks great spiritual song** as you ponder the incomparable value of personally knowing the King of kings and Lord of lords

[KNOWING YOU](#)

All I once held dear, built my life upon
All this world reveres, and wars to own
All I once thought gain I have counted loss
Spent and worthless now, compared to this

Knowing You, Jesus
Knowing You, there is no greater thing
You're my all, You're the best
You're my joy, my Righteousness
And I love You, Lord

Now my heart's desire is to know You more
To be found in You and known as Yours
To possess by faith what I could not earn
All-surpassing gift of Righteousness

Oh, to know the power of Your risen life

And to know You in Your sufferings
To become like You in Your death, my Lord
So with You to live and never die.

AMEN!

Knowing (1108) (**gnosis** from **ginosko** = to know especially experientially) in simple terms is the possession of information of what is known. **Gnosis** describes the comprehension or intellectual grasp of something. **Gnosis** refers to knowledge gained by experience in contrast to intuitive knowledge. **Gnosis** is an "experiential knowledge," and not a mere passing acquaintance. Gnosis is not simply an intellectual (head) knowledge of Christ, but refers to a more intimate, experiential knowledge.

Louw-Nida says **gnosis** means "acquaintance with," which in the English dictionary refers to "personal knowledge" with synonyms such as familiarity with, knowledge of, experience with/of, awareness of, understanding of, comprehension of, grasp of.

John Walvoord - The "**knowledge**" of Christ Jesus which he mentions indicates personal acquaintance, experiential knowledge as opposed to theoretical. Because he really knows Christ Jesus as his Lord, the surpassing qualities of Christ and His salvation make any of his own claims for righteousness insignificant.

Gordon Fee - As v. 10 will clarify, "**knowing Christ**" does not mean to have head knowledge about him, but to "know him" personally (BAGD) and relationally. Paul has thus taken up the Old Testament theme of "knowing God" and applied it to Christ. It means to know him as children and parent know each other, or wives and husbands—knowledge that has to do with personal experience and intimate relationship. It is such knowledge that makes Christ "trust-worthy." The intimacy will be expressed in v. 10 in terms of "participation in his sufferings." In the light of such expansive language, therefore, the object of his "knowing" is not simply "Christ," nor even "Christ Jesus," but "Christ Jesus my Lord." (NICNT)

Ralph Martin on **knowing Christ** - The Pauline expression '**to know Christ**' is intimate (my Lord), and glows with the warmth of a direct relationship; it may therefore be taken as equivalent to 'fellowship with Christ' to which Paul was introduced on the day of his conversion (cf. 2 Cor. 4:6).

Wuest says **knowing Christ Jesus** "does not refer to the knowledge which the Lord Jesus possesses, but the knowledge of the Lord Jesus which Paul gained through the experience of intimate companionship and communion with Him. Paul came to know His heart, His will, as one comes to know another through intimate fellowship and close association with that person. The distinctive Greek word for "knowledge" (gnosis) used here, leads us to this interpretation."

Thomas Constable on **knowing Christ Jesus** - What he had learned to value was Christ Jesus his Lord. Consequently coming to know Christ, entering into a deeper and fuller appreciation of His person and work, was of primary importance to Paul. This knowledge (Gr. gnosis) is the kind that one obtains only by personal relationship. It is different from the knowledge we gain through objective academic study (Gr. oida), though information is part of our growing personal knowledge of Christ. To gain this fuller knowledge of Christ Paul had let everything else in life go. (Expository Notes)

Wiersbe adds that "**knowing Christ** means much more than knowledge about Christ, because Paul had that kind of historical information before he was saved. To "**know Christ**" means to have a personal relationship with Him through faith. It is this experience that Jesus mentions in [Jn 17:3](#). You and I know about many people, even people who lived centuries ago, but we know personally very few. "**Christianity is Christ.**" Salvation is **knowing** Him in a personal way." ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

John MacArthur on knowing Christ Jesus - The word knowing in the Greek text is not a verb, but a form of the noun **gnōsis**, from the verb **ginōskō**, which means to know experimentally or experientially by personal involvement. The surpassing knowledge of Christ that Paul describes here is far more than mere intellectual knowledge of the facts about Him. The New Testament frequently describes Christians as those who know Christ. In John 10:14 Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me." In John 17:3 He defined eternal life as knowing Him: "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." To the Corinthians Paul wrote, "For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6), while in Ephesians 1:17 he prayed "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him." In his first epistle John declared, "And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20). Salvation involves a personal, relational knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. (MacArthur NT Commentary)

The LORD Himself gave this beautiful explanation through the prophet Jeremiah

Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man

boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that **he understands and knows Me**, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD. (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

Spurgeon comments that...

Those are sweet words, "**my Lord.**" Remember how Thomas cried, in ecstasy, "**My Lord** and my God." Paul, by faith putting his finger into the prints of the nails, says, "**My Lord.**"

The godly pastor **F B Meyer** describes our intimate communion with Christ as a full, accurate and correct knowledge of Christ writing that

We may know Him personally intimately face to face (cp 1 John 3:2^{[note](#)}). Christ does not live back in the centuries, nor amid the clouds of heaven: He is near us, with us, compassing our path in our lying down, and acquainted with all our ways. But we cannot know Him in this mortal life except through the illumination and teaching of the Holy Spirit... We must not Rest until we "Know Him." We should never rest until we know Him as we know our friend, and are able to read without speech the movements of His soul. We should know by a quick intuition what will please and what will hurt His pure and holy nature. We should know where to find Him; should be familiar with His modes of thought and methods of action; should understand and identify ourselves with His goings forth, as, day by day, He goes through the world healing and saving. What a difference there is between the knowledge which the man in the street has of some public character and that which is vouchsafed to the inner circle of his home; And we must surely know Christ, not as a stranger who turns in to visit for the night, or as the exalted king of men—there must be the inner knowledge as of those whom He counts His own familiar friends, whom He trusts with His secrets, who eat with Him of His own bread. To know Christ in the storm of battle; to know Him in the valley of shadow; to know Him when the solar light irradiates our faces, or when they are darkened with disappointment and sorrow; to know the sweetness of His dealing with bruised reeds and smoking flax; to know the tenderness of His sympathy and the strength of His right hand—all this involves many varieties of experience on our part, but each of them like the facets of a diamond will reflect the prismatic beauty of His glory from a new angle. ([Devotional Commentary](#))

In his devotional on **Morning and Evening Spurgeon** writes about the **surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus**...

Spiritual knowledge of Christ will be a **personal knowledge**. I cannot know Jesus through another person's acquaintance with Him. No, I must know Him myself; I must know Him on my own account.

It will be an **intelligent knowledge**—I must know Him, not as the visionary dreams of Him, but as the Word reveals Him. I must know His natures, divine and human. I must know His offices—His attributes—His works—His shame—His glory. I must meditate upon Him until I "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

It will be an **affectionate knowledge** of Him; indeed, if I know Him at all, I must love Him.

An ounce of heart knowledge is worth a ton of head learning.

Our knowledge of Him will be a **satisfying knowledge**. When I know my Saviour, my mind will be full to the brim—I shall feel that I have that which my spirit panted after. "This is that bread whereof if a man eat he shall never hunger."

At the same time it will be an **exciting knowledge**; the more I know of my Beloved, the more I shall want to know. The higher I climb the loftier will be the summits which invite my eager footsteps. I shall want the more as I get the more. Like the miser's treasure, my gold will make me covet more.

To conclude; this knowledge of Christ Jesus will be a most happy one; in fact, so elevating, that sometimes it will completely bear me up above all trials, and doubts, and sorrows; and it will, while I enjoy it, make me something more than "Man that is born of woman, who is of few days, and full of trouble"; for it will fling about me the immortality of the ever living Saviour, and gird me with the golden girdle of his eternal joy.

Come, my soul, sit at Jesus' feet and learn of Him all this day.

FOR WHOM I HAVE SUFFERED THE LOSS OF ALL THINGS AND (continually) COUNT THEM BUT RUBBISH: di on ta panta ezemiothen (1SAPI) kai hegoumai (1SPMI) skubala:

for whose sake I have been caused to forfeit all things, and I am still counting them dung" (Wuest)

■ **loss** - Phil 3:7; Mt 19:27-29; 1 Cor 4:9-13; 2Cor 11:23-27; 2Ti 4:6

- **but rubbish** - 1Ki 14:10; 2Ki 9:37; Job 20:7; Mal 2:3
- [Philippians 3 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries](#)

Related Passages:

Matthew 19:27-29+ Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" 28 And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne (MILLENNIUM - cf Acts 3:21+ - 'the period of restoration of all things'), you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29" And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life.

LOSING TO GAIN

For Whom I have suffered the loss ([zemioo](#) - aorist tense) **of all things and count** ([hegeomai](#) - present tense - continually count) **them but rubbish** ([skubalon](#)) - Why was Paul motivated to suffer loss? It was for Christ Jesus his Lord. Christ was his all in all, and "all things" pale in comparison to He Who is all in all! He lost all things temporal to gain all things eternal. See [Spiritual Paradox in the Christian Life](#)

*Jesus Christ is not rightly valued at all
until He is valued above all!*

—Augustine

Suffered... loss ([2210](#))([zemioo](#) from [zemia](#)) means to affect with damage or to do damage to, to suffer injury, to suffer loss, to sustain damage, to forfeit or to fine. It means to experience the loss of something, with implication of undergoing hardship or suffering.

Zemioo was a business term meaning to "punish by exacting a forfeit" (Vincent).

A T Robertson writes that **zemioo** "occurs in the sense of being fined or mulcted (penalized by fining or demanding forfeiture) of money.

Marvin Vincent agrees noting that **zemioo** was "Often in the classics, of fining or mulcting in a sum of money.

Here in Philippians, **zemioo** is in the **aorist tense** which denotes a distinct point in time (~Paul's conversion) when in that "great crisis" (Vincent) all his legal "possessions" were lost. The **passive voice** is more literally translated "I have **been caused to forfeit**."

There are 6 uses of **zemioo** in the NT...

Matthew 16:26 "For what will a man be profited, if he gains (kerdaino) the whole world, and **forfeits** (zemioo - aorist tense) his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (**Comment: Vincent** has an interesting comment - "Note that both words are in the past (aorist) tense: *if he may have gained or lost*. The Lord looks back to the details of each life as the factors of the final sum of gain or loss." Wow! This is worth meditating on for a few moments!)

Mark 8:36 "For what does it profit a man to gain (kerdaino) the whole world, and forfeit (zemioo -aorist tense) his soul?

Luke 9:25 "For what is a man profited if he gains (kerdaino) the whole world, and loses (apollumi) or **forfeits** (zemioo - aorist tense) himself?

1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, **he shall suffer loss**; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

2 Corinthians 7:9 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not **suffer loss** in anything through us.

Philippians 3:8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,

Zemioo is used 6 times in the Septuagint (LXX) (Ex 21:22; Deut 22:19; Prov 17:26; 19:19; 21:11; 22:3)

Proverbs 21:11 When the scoffer is **punished** (Hebrew = 'anash = to fine, punish; Lxx = zemioo), the naive becomes wise; But when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

Proverbs 22:3 The prudent sees the evil and hides himself, But the naive go on, and are punished (Hebrew = 'anash = to fine, punish; Lxx = zemioo) for it.

Wuest adds that "Paul was a citizen of Tarsus. At the time he lived there, only families of wealth and reputation were allowed to retain their Tarsian citizenship. This throws a flood of light upon Paul's early life. He was born into a home of wealth and culture. His family were wealthy Jews living in one of the most progressive of oriental cities. All this Paul left to become a poor itinerant missionary. But not only did he forfeit all this when he was saved, but his parents would have nothing to do with a son who had in their estimation dishonored them by becoming one of those hated, despised Christians. They had reared him in the lap of luxury, had sent him to the Jewish school of theology in Jerusalem to sit at the feet of the great Gamaliel, and had given him an excellent training in Greek culture at the University of Tarsus, a Greek school of learning. But they had now cast him off. He was still forfeiting all that he had held dear, what for? He tells us, "that I may win Christ." ([Philippians Commentary Online- Recommended](#))

*Every action of our lives touches on some chord
that will vibrate in eternity.*

--E. H. CHAPIN

Count (2233) (**hegeomai**) was a mathematical term which conveyed the idea to think about something and then to arrive at a conclusion.

The **all things** were all conceivable worldly advantages, everything that Judaism held for him. The permanent honor, satisfaction and joy of the personal knowledge of Christ Jesus, and the abiding blessedness of owning Him as "my Lord," robbed everything else of its once supposed advantages. Moreover, that in the change it was not mere mental knowledge, but a knowledge that affected the heart, is plainly indicated in the "my." It is just this that proves incontestably the reality and validity of the facts of the Christian faith. For anyone to undergo such an experience, involving a permanently transformed outlook, attitude and aspiration, nullifies the force and reason of all skepticism regarding, and criticism of, the doctrines which can produce such effects.

Rubbish (street filth, dung) (4657) (**skubalon**) is literally any refuse such as the excrement of animals, off scourings, rubbish, dregs and so figuratively speaks of things that are worthless and detestable. It includes material thrown to the dogs.

Eadie explains that **skubalon** "expresses not only the utter insignificance which the apostle now attached to the grounds of his former trust, but the aversion with which he regarded them, especially when placed in comparison with Christ. ([Philippians 3 Commentary - Online](#))

Vine writes that **skubalon** "denotes "refuse," whether (a) "excrement," that which is cast out from the body, or (b) "the leavings of a feast," that which is thrown away from the table. Some have derived it from kusibalon (with metathesis of k and s), "thrown to dogs"; others connect it with a root meaning "shred."

Vincent adds that **skubalon** refers to "Either excrement or what is thrown away from the table; leavings. The derivation is uncertain. According to some it is a contraction from **to throw to the dogs** (*es kunas ballo*). Notice the repetition of gain, count, loss, all things, Christ.

Skubalon was a word used to refer to a half eaten corpse (gross!) and filth of various kinds including lumps of manure or human excrement. It was the word describing the portion of food "rejected" by the body as not nourishing.

Lightfoot adds that **rubbish** was "applied most frequently in one sense or other to food. The two ways this word is used are: (1) "**Excrement**," the portion of food rejected by the body as not possessing nutritive qualities. This sense is frequent in medical writers. (2) "**The refuse or leavings of a feast**," the food thrown away from the table.

TDNT adds that **skubalon** was "used of persons and things to denote pitiful and horrible remains, a corpse half-eaten by fishes as the remnant of a much-bewailed sea-voyage

The Judaizers regarded Gentile believers as dogs, while they thought that themselves were enjoying God's banquet. Paul seems to reverse this figure with his use of this term, implying that It is the Judaizers who are the dogs. Paul is saying that he counts everything in his life trash. He even counts all his religious achievements as rubbish for that deep intimate love relationship with the living Christ. This strong metaphor reminds one of Isaiah's description of ALL of men's righteous deeds describing them ([Isa 64:6](#)) as "filthy rags" which is an Old Testament term for menstrual cloths!

McGee - God is just not taking in dirty laundry. However, He will take in dirty sinners, and He is the One who will clean them up.

([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

It is worth noting that Paul does not dwell longingly or with any sense of loss on the past, as some Christian testimonies seem to do. Every believer has a "gutter to glory" testimony but the emphasis should always be on the glory not the gutter.

Barnes - The word here used--**skubalon**--occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means, properly, dregs, refuse; what is thrown away as worthless; chaff, offal, or the refuse of a table or of slaughtered animals; and then filth of any kind. No language could express a more deep sense of the utter worthlessness of all that external advantages could confer in the matter of salvation. In the question, of justification before God, all reliance on birth, and blood, and external morality, and forms of religion, and prayers, and alms, is to be renounced, and, in comparison with the merits of the great Redeemer, to be esteemed as vile. Such were Paul's views; and we may remark, that if this was so in his case, it should be in ours. Such things can no more avail for our salvation than they could for his. We can no more be justified by them than he could. Nor will they do anything more in our case to commend us to God than they did in his. (Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary)

McGee adds his usual pithy but practical comment - " Paul says that since that moment of his conversion he lives for Christ. He has suffered the loss of all things. Jesus Christ is uppermost in his thinking. The things that he used to consider most precious he now considers to be dung —that is strong language! He says he flushes his religion down the drain. He flushes away all the things he used to trust. Now he trusts the Lord Jesus and Him only for his salvation. I remember hearing Dr. Carroll say, "When I was converted, I lost my religion." A great many people need to lose their religion and find Jesus Christ as Paul did. He was so revolutionized that what had been his prized possession is now relegated to the garbage can! ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

Henry Blackaby - Garbage - Borrow [The Experience](#)

What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ. Philippians 3:8

What matters to you more than anything else? Your family? Your friends? Your reputation? Your health? These are all good things; they should matter to you. But there's one thing that should come before any of these: knowing Christ.

Before Paul was a Christian, he placed high importance on who he was and where he came from. He took great pride in his pure Jewish heritage, in his excellent education, and in his flawless behavior (Philippians 3:4–6). His reputation in the community was everything to him. Then he met Christ, and everything that used to be on the top of his priority list fell to the bottom. Once he experienced Christ, nothing else could come close to that experience. From the moment of his conversion, Paul put everything else below his goal of knowing God more intimately. As far as Paul was concerned, everything else in his life was as valuable as garbage compared to the value of knowing Christ. That's why he could willingly endure ridicule, physical abuse, and loneliness, as long as he still had Christ.

Is knowing Christ important to you? No one is asking you to stop loving your family, or to hate your friends, or to harm your body. But knowing Christ should be the first item on your priority list. When you choose to place Christ first in your life, you will see everything else in your life in its proper perspective. How important is knowing Christ to you?

David Jeremiah -HERE'S HOW [Morning and Evening Devotions: Holy Moments](#)

The excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . .PHILIPPIANS 3:8

How can we get to know the holy God? If He is so pure, so infinite, so high, and so lifted up, how can we approach Him, and how can we grow more intimately acquainted with Him?

First, we must come to Him by simple faith in Jesus Christ. Second, we must study our Bible and learn all we can about Him. Third, we must turn our knowledge about Him into knowledge of Him.

How can we do that? In his book Knowing God, J. I. Packer gave the formula. "The rule for doing this," wrote Packer, "is demanding but simple. It is that we turn each truth that we learn about God into a matter of meditation before God, leading to prayer and praise to God."

Packer defined meditation as "the activity of calling to mind, and thinking over, and dwelling on, and applying to oneself, the various things that one knows about the works and ways and purposes and promises of God."

It is this activity of holy thought, this practice and pattern of letting our minds dwell on Him, that helps us become more deeply

Andrew Murray - FULL CONSECRATION

Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord PHILIPPIANS 3:8

What was it that made just the disciples worthy of the high honor of being baptized with the Holy Spirit? The answer is simple: When Christ called them, they gave up everything and followed Him. They denied themselves and, in obedience, submitted to Christ's commands. They followed Him to Calvary. And even as Christ suffered and died, their hearts clung to Him alone.

Just as Jesus Christ had to sacrifice all to be a perfect offering to God, so we His people must give up everything to follow God's divine leading. This was true for Paul, too. To count all things but loss for Christ was the keynote of his life. It must be ours also if we are to fully share in the power of His Resurrection.

As the merchant who found the treasure in the field had to sell all he had to purchase it, we must relinquish our whole heart, life, and strength in order to claim Christ. It is only then that we can share with Him in His victory through the power of the Holy Spirit. The law of the kingdom is unchangeable; "Everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." It is in this that we find the path to the fullness of the Spirit.

Springs in the Valley - I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. (Phil. 3:8)

The Swedish Nightingale, Jennie Lind, won great success as an operatic singer, and money poured into her purse. Yet she left the stage while she was singing her best, and never returned to it. She must have missed the money, the fame, and the applause of thousands, but she was content to live in privacy.

Once an English friend found her sitting on the steps of a bathing machine on the sea sands with a Bible on her knee, looking out into the glory of a sunset. They talked, and the conversation drew near to the inevitable question: "Oh, Madame Goldschmidt, how is it that you came to abandon the stage at the very height of your success?"

"When every day," was the quiet answer, "it made me think less of this (laying a finger on the Bible) and nothing at all of that (pointing to the sunset), what else could I do?"

May I not covet the world's greatness! It will cost me the crown of life!

Distraction - Charles Stanley [On Holy Ground: A Daily Devotional - Page 221](#)

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Corinthians 2:14–16

KEY VERSE: Philippians 3:8

Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

After winning a gold medal in the 1988 Olympics, the muscular wrestler was asked if he had any secrets of preparation. "My only secret is that I didn't let anything hinder my goal of winning," he related. "I refused to be distracted by any other competition."

That same zealous pursuit of our relationship with Christ is the highest goal for the believer. Paul termed it "undistracted devotion to the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:35 NASB).

That is true for every Christian—married or unmarried, rich or poor, small or great. God will not tolerate competition (Matt. 6:24).

The relevant question then is, Is there anything or anyone in your life who is in competition with Christ's claim on your life? Does money, marriage, your job, recreation, or your hobby vie for your allegiance to Christ? Do you seek Him first by daily acknowledging His lordship and obeying His will?

When other objects or people distract us from this primary focus to serve and worship the Lord, our spiritual growth is short-circuited. Having undistracted devotion to Christ means putting Christ first in all of our activities, submitting them to His will and guidance. When we do, we always win (2 Cor. 2:14).

Precious Lord, I am easily distracted from the paths of my spiritual journey. Free me from all that competes with Your claims in my life. I want to put You first in all things.

A W Tozer - Stop! God Wants More Than a Minute

... I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.... Philippians 3:8

A thousand distractions would woo us away from thoughts of God, but if we are wise we will sternly put them from us and make room for the King—and take time to entertain Him!

Progress in the Christian life is exactly equal to the growing knowledge we gain of the Triune God in personal experience. And such experience requires a whole life devoted to it and plenty of time spent at the holy task of cultivating God.

God can be known satisfactorily only as we devote time to Him.

Without meaning to do it we have written our serious fault into our book titles and gospel songs.

"A little talk with Jesus," we sing and we call our books "God's Minute," or something else as revealing.

The Christian who is satisfied to give God His "minute" and to have "a little talk with Jesus" is the same one who shows up at the evangelistic service weeping over his retarded spiritual growth and begging the evangelist to show him the way out of his difficulty!

Some things may be neglected with but little loss to the spiritual life, but to neglect communion with God is to hurt ourselves where we cannot afford it.

God will respond to our efforts to know Him. The Bible tells us how; it is altogether a matter of how much determination we bring to the holy task!

NOTHING BETWEEN - Joe Stowell

I COUNT ALL THINGS TO BE LOSS IN VIEW OF THE SURPASSING VALUE OF KNOWING CHRIST JESUS
MY LORD.—Philippians 3:8 NASB

We've all been to sporting events, parades, and gatherings where we want to get a glimpse of the action only to have someone plop themselves right in front of us, making it impossible to see. How frustrating and distracting. I'm reminded of the Scottish poet who got stuck in church behind a lady with a large and imposing hat that blocked his view. Seeing a flea jumping in the hat, he became distracted, lost interest in worship, and wrote a now famous poem about the lady and her flea-infested hat.

What a metaphor of our dilemma. We are blessed with the gift of salvation that we might grow into an increasingly intimate relationship with Jesus. A relationship in which we can find solace, forgiveness, direction, purpose, companionship, and a dozen other pleasures that only He can provide. He is the action we are supposed to keep in clear view.

But there is so much that distracts us. And it's not just the sin in our lives that gets in the way. It's often innocent things and even good things. Paul knew that if He was to know and experience Jesus more fully there could be nothing between his heart and Jesus. So, he counted everything in his life—good, bad, and indifferent—to be secondary to the surpassing value of knowing Christ.

I love the words of that song I used to sing in church as a boy: (Play [Nothing Between](#) or [here](#))

Nothing between my soul and the Saviour, Naught of the world's delusive dream; I have renounced all sinful pleasure, Jesus is mine;
there's nothing between. Nothing between, like worldly pleasure, Habits of life though harmless they seem, Must not my heart from Him e'er sever, He is my all; There's nothing between. Nothing between like pride or station, Self or friends shall not intervene, Tho' it may cost me much tribulation, I am resolved; there's nothing between. Nothing between my soul and the Saviour, So that His blessed face may be seen; Nothing preventing the least of His favor, Keep the way clear! Let nothing between.

Amen!

NOTHING BETWEEN

[Click to play](#)

Charles A Tindley

Nothing between my soul and the Savior,
Naught of this world's delusive dream:
I have renounced all sinful pleasure—
Jesus is mine! There's nothing between.

Nothing between, like worldly pleasure!
Habits of life, tho' harmless they seem,
Must not my heart from Him ever sever—
He is my all! There's nothing between

Nothing between, like pride or station:
Self or friends shall not intervene;
Tho' it may cost me much tribulation,
I am resolved! There's nothing between.

Nothing between, e'en many hard trials,
Tho' the whole world against me convene;

Watching with prayer and much self denial—
Triumph at last, with nothing between!

Chorus:

Nothing between my soul and the Savior,
So that His blessed face may be seen.
Nothing preventing the least of His favor:
Keep the way clear! Let nothing between.

Paul could have written the following poem...

The Surpassing Worth

I counted it all, the gain I knew,
The trophies bright, the accolades too.
The wisdom sought, the paths once paved,
All but loss when by Christ I was saved.

For in His light, the shadows fade,
The fleeting glories of earth betrayed.
The wealth of man, the fleeting pride,
Are dust and ash when in Christ I abide.

"Indeed, I count all things as loss,"
Beneath the splendor of His cross.
The surpassing worth of knowing Him,
Makes every treasure pale and dim.

To gain my Lord, my All, my Prize,
To know Him more, my heart does rise.
Through joy or pain, through fire or loss,
My soul clings tightly to His cross.

So let the world its riches bring,
Its fleeting crowns, its golden ring.
For Christ alone is my delight,
My morning star, my endless light.

"To know my Savior," my song, my plea,
"To share His sufferings," eternally.
All else I lay at His feet today,
For Jesus is the only way.

RELIGION OR RELATIONSHIP?

I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. --Philippians 3:8

The 19th-century Danish theologian Soren Kierkegaard identified two kinds of religion -- Religion A and Religion B. The first is "faith" in name only (2 Tim. 3:5). It's the practice of attending church without genuine faith in the living Lord.

Religion B, on the other hand, is a life-transforming, destiny-changing experience. It's a definite commitment to the crucified and risen Savior, which establishes an ongoing personal relationship between a forgiven sinner and a gracious God.

This difference explains why for many years British author C.S. Lewis had such great difficulty in becoming a Christian. Religion A had blinded him to Religion B. According to his brother Warren, his conversion was "no sudden plunge into a new life, but rather a slow, steady convalescence from a deep-seated spiritual illness--an illness that had its origins in our childhood, in the dry husks of religion offered by the semi-political churchgoing of Ulster, and the similar dull emptiness of compulsory church during our school days."

We all face two pivotal questions: First, are we bogged down in the empty ceremonialism of Religion A? If so, we must receive Jesus as our Savior. Second, is our relationship with Christ growing more deep and vital? Author: Vernon C.

Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

You only are true life--
To know You is to live
The more abundant life
That earth can never give.
--Clarkson

You can have tons of religion without one ounce of salvation.

A Stone for a Pillow

Francis would not allow his resting place to be laid over with covers or garments when he received hospitality, but the bare ground received his bare limbs, with only a tunic between. When at times he refreshed his small body with sleep, he very often slept sitting up, and in no other position, using a piece of wood or a stone as a pillow.

When his appetite for something particular was aroused, as often happens, he seldom ate that thing afterward. Once, when in an infirmity he had eaten a little chicken, after he regained his strength of body he entered the city of Assisi, and when he had come to the gate of the city, he commanded a certain brother who was with him to tie a rope about his neck and to drag him in this way like a robber through the entire city and to shout in the voice of a herald, saying, "Behold the glutton who has grown fat on the meat of chickens, which he ate without you knowing about it."

Many therefore ran to see so great a spectacle, and weeping together with great sighs, they said, "Woe to us miserable ones, whose whole life is spent in blood and who nourish our hearts and bodies with uncleanness and drunkenness." And thus, pierced to the heart, they were moved to a better way of life by so great an example.

Often, when he was honored by all, he suffered the deepest sorrow, and rejecting the favor of men, he would see to it that he would be rebuked by someone. He would call some brother to him, saying to him, "In obedience, I say to you, revile me harshly and speak the truth against the lies of these others." And when that brother, though unwilling, would say he was a boor, a hired servant, a worthless being, Francis, smiling and applauding very much, would reply, "May the Lord bless you, for you have spoken most truly; it is becoming that the son of Peter of Bernardone should hear such things." —Celano, First Life. "Francis of Assisi," Christian History

William MacDonald -

"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." (Phil. 3:7, 8)

It is always eminently fine when a believer makes great renunciations for Jesus' sake. Here is a man whose talents have brought him wealth and fame, yet in obedience to the divine call, he lays them at the Saviors feet. Or a woman whose voice has opened doors to the world's great concert halls. But now she feels she must live for another world, so she gives up her career to follow Christ. After all, what are reputation or fortune or earthly distinctions when compared to the incomparable gain of winning Christ?

Ian MacPherson asks, "Is there anywhere a sight more deeply moving than that of a man laden with gifts, laying them all numbly and adoringly at the Redeemer's feet? And that, after all is where they were meant to be. In the words of a wise old Welsh divine, 'Hebrew, Greek and Latin are all very well in their place; but their place is not where Pilate put them, over Jesus' head, but rather at His feet.'"

The Apostle Paul renounced wealth, culture, and ecclesiastical status and counted them loss for Christ. Jowett comments that "when the Apostle Paul regarded his aristocratic possessions as great gains, he had never seen the Lord; but when 'the glory of the Lord' blazed upon his wondering eyes these things faded away into shadow and even eclipse. And it was not only that the Apostle's former gains were cheapened in the effulgence of the Lord, and stood revealed as contemptible nothings in his hands; it was that he ceased to think of them at all. They vanished entirely from the mind where they had been treated as supreme and sacred deposits."

It is strange, then, that when a man forsakes all to follow Christ, some think that he has lost his mind. Some are shocked and uncomprehending. Some weep and offer alternate routes. Some argue on the basis of logic and common sense. A few approve and are stirred to their depths. But when a person walks by faith, he is able to appraise the opinions of others properly.

C. T. Studd forsook a private fortune and fine prospects at home to devote his life to missionary service. John Nelson Darby turned his back on a brilliant career to become an unctioned evangelist, teacher and prophet of God. The five martyrs of Ecuador renounced the comforts and materialism of the United States to bring Christ to the Auca tribe.

People call it a great sacrifice but it is no sacrifice. When someone tried to commend Hudson Taylor for the sacrifices he had made for Christ, he said, "Man, I never made a sacrifice in my life." And Darby said, "It is no great sacrifice to give up refuse."

There is a legend of an artist who had found the secret of a wonderful red which no other artist could imitate. The secret of his color died with him. But after his death an old wound was discovered over his heart. This revealed the source of the matchless hue in his pictures. The legend teaches that no great achievement can be made, no lofty attainment reached, nothing of much value to the world done, save at the cost of heart's blood.

James Smith - Faith honors God, for it commits the soul to him, and seeks every blessing from him. It leaves the time when, the place where, and the means by which — the answer shall be given to the Lord. It never . . .

dictates to infinite wisdom,

complains of infinite love, or

doubts the faithfulness of the Most High God.

It leaves everything for him, or holds everything loosely, ready to surrender it as his command; and when all is gone for Christ and his cause, it rises like the lark from its torn nest and sings, "Doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him" (Philippians 3:8, 9).

D. Martyn Lloyd Jones,

The Christian, in other words, is not a man who has taken up something as an interest, he is a man who has been taken up by the interest and he cannot escape it. The Christian, therefore, can never be half-hearted, because he is conscious of this vice-like grip which holds him. I am not going too far when I venture to put it like this, because I sometimes think it is perhaps one of the most delicate tests we can ever give ourselves: Do we know what it is to feel sometimes that we would like to get away from it, but it has got us in a grip, it has mastered us? This is expressed in that well-known hymn: 'O love that wilt not let me go' -- that is it. There may be times in our folly and blindness and sin when we would like to be released, but he will not let us go, we are taken hold of, and grasped firmly.

That is the first thing that is true of this new life in which Paul finds himself. 'It is not,' he says in effect, 'that I have given up Judaism and taken up Christianity; it is not that having heard something about it, I find it rather interesting and I like reading about it and discussing it in a casual, external objective manner. Not at all! That is not the Christian position. The thing that is characteristic of the Christian in the first place is that he is suddenly aware that this thing has taken hold of him and he cannot get away from it; he is taken up, apprehended by it, and then he tries to apprehend.' [D. Martyn Lloyd Jones, Philippians, 2:48]

Christianity is never an addition to our lives, it is never something that is added on to that which we have previously had: it is central or it is nowhere. If it is not controlling the whole of your life, then you are just not a Christian. Christians are not people of whom it can be said that their lives are identical with everybody else's, they have an extra something in addition, and in the end they are seen to be Christians. No, to be a Christian, says Paul, means that at the very centre, at the very core of your being and existence, this new something has come in and controls everything. A radical change takes place when you become a Christian, you are suddenly aware of it; it is a change of outlook upon all things. I do not hesitate to use the term which the Apostle uses in [Philippians 3:8]--all things have become 'loss.' [D. Martyn Lloyd Jones, Philippians, 2:49]

Vance Havner - NOW THEE ALONE I SEEK

Christ Jesus, my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things.... Philippians 3:8.

Dear ones, possessions, career, self—do these things mean more to us than Jesus Christ? Is He our supreme love? Do we long to see others in the life to come more than Him? He Himself said we must hate all else if we follow Him. Water that down as you will, you cannot escape the fact that here is a priority most of us have never realized. Sometimes health, finances, dear ones are taken to free us from our crutches and throw us utterly on Him. When He is our Reward, and the Giver means more than His gifts, the Blesser more than His blessings, He will give us whatever else we need, but He must hold the throne of our hearts.

This Christ life is simply turning the little shop of life, so woefully perplexing, over to another. Christ becomes owner, manager, overseer; His is the responsibility, the upkeep. Your part is to be a faithful clerk, steward of the grace of God. You are to trust the management to Him and obey orders; take off the shelves anything displeasing, add anything He commands. But He is also your elder brother and His love takes out all the worry, fever, and tension. And one day, if you have been faithful over a few things, He will give you a heavenly shop in the city of the King!"—Charles H. Robinson

Amy Carmichael - Paul speaks of ". . . the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things" (Philippians 3:8). He was willing to lose all things and to keep looking and looking and looking into Christ so that he might know Him better (v.10).

How much are we willing to lose, that we may know, and so be able to see?

It is the I in you and me that blinds our eyes. The loss of I-that I may know Him, see Him with new clearness in all creation ... even in souls that are unlovable and unbeautiful. May the Lord grant this to us all.

I want more and more to see His goodness and His beauty. Not vaguely, nor just from time to time. I want to see Him truly, continually, in His work, in those who love Him, in His Book, in himself.

Costly Glory from Streams in the Desert :

Phil 3:8 "I even reckon all things as pure loss because of the priceless privilege of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. 3:8; Weymouth)

Shining is always costly. Light comes only at the cost of that which produces it. An unlit candle does no shining. Burning must come before shining. We cannot be of great use to others without cost to ourselves. Burning suggests suffering. We shrink from pain.

We are apt to feel that we are doing the greatest good in the world when we are strong, and able for active duty, and when the heart and hands are full of kindly service.

When we are called aside and can only suffer; when we are sick; when we are consumed with pain; when all our activities have been dropped, we feel that we are no longer of use, that we are not doing anything.

But, if we are patient and submissive, it is almost certain that we are a greater blessing to the world in our time of suffering and pain than we were in the days when we thought we were doing the most of our work. We are burning now, and shining because we are burning. --Evening Thoughts

"The glory of tomorrow is rooted in the drudgery of today."

Many want the glory without the cross, the shining without the burning, but crucifixion comes before coronation.

Have you heard the tale of the aloe plant,
Away in the sunny clime?
By humble growth of a hundred years
It reaches its blooming time;
And then a wondrous bud at its crown
Breaks into a thousand flowers;
This floral queen, in its blooming seen,
Is the pride of the tropical bowers,
But the plant to the flower is sacrifice,
For it blooms but once, and it dies.

Have you further heard of the aloe plant,
That grows in the sunny clime;
How every one of its thousand flowers,
As they drop in the blooming time,
Is an infant plant that fastens its roots
In the place where it falls on the ground,
And as fast as they drop from the dying stem,
Grow lively and lovely around?
By dying, it liveth a thousand-fold
In the young that spring from the death of the old.

Have you heard the tale of the pelican,
The Arabs' Gimel el Bahr,
That lives in the African solitudes,
Where the birds that live lonely are?
Have you heard how it loves its tender young,

And cares and toils for their good,
It brings them water from mountain far,
And fishes the seas for their food.
In famine it feeds them--what love can devise!
The blood of its bosom--and, feeding them, dies.

Have you heard this tale--the best of them all--
The tale of the Holy and True,
He dies, but His life, in untold souls
Lives on in the world anew;
His seed prevails, and is filling the earth,
As the stars fill the sky above.
He taught us to yield up the love of life,
For the sake of the life of love.
His death is our life, His loss is our gain;
The joy for the tear, the peace for the pain.
--Selected

Counting the Cost by Mrs. Charles E. Cowman

"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord" (Phil. 3:8).

This is the happy season of ripening cornfields, of the merry song of the reapers, of the secured and garnered grain. But let me hearken to the sermon of the field. This is its solemn word to me. You must die in order to live. You must refuse to consult your own case and well-being. You must be crucified, not only in desires and habits which are sinful, but in many more which appear innocent and right.

If you would save others, you cannot save yourself. If you would bear much fruit, you must be buried in darkness and solitude.

My heart fails me as I listen. But, when Jesus asks it, let me tell myself that it is my high dignity to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings; and thus I am in the best of company. And let me tell myself again that it is all meant to make me a vessel meet for His use. His own Calvary has blossomed into fertility; and so shall mine. Plenty out of pain, life out of death: is it not the law of the Kingdom? --In the Hour of Silence

Do we call it dying when the bud bursts into flower? --Selected

"Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is He sure to bless?
Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs,
Answer, 'Yes.'"

PHILIPPIANS 3:8

To be good is not necessarily to be godly. But to be godly is to be good. Failure to make this distinction leads to misunderstanding. Christians sometimes assume that just because their conduct is above reproach, they are right with the Lord. But this may not be true. The Bible says it is possible to be moral without relying on God or even knowing Him.

The Cheyenne, a group of native Americans who once lived in central Minnesota and northern South Dakota, were highly moral people. They practiced moderation, dignity, and generosity, and they manifested an almost unbelievable degree of self-control. Parents loved their children and gave them affection without spoiling them. They also taught them ethical values, so that most of them became dedicated, self-sacrificing, well-behaved human beings. Yet these people were not Christians.

Knowing that people can be good without being godly should cause us to inventory our own lives. If non-Christians can be moral in their own strength, so can we. But no matter how nice we may look on the outside, as long as we depend on ourselves, we displease the Lord. Being godly is a virtue that comes only through relying on Christ. Our goal should be goodness that comes from godliness. —M. R. De Haan II (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Holiness is a journey that leads to godliness.
(Ed: Watch out for the "potholes" on your way!)

[Springs in the Valley](#) - To one who asked him the secret of service, Mr. George Müller replied: "There was a day when I died, utterly died to George Müller"—and, as he spoke, he bent lower and lower until he almost touched the floor—"to his opinions, preferences, tastes and will; died to the world, its approval or censure; died to the approval or blame of even my brethren and friends. Since then I have studied to show myself approved only unto God."

We may not understand nor know
Just how the giant oak trees throw
Their spreading branches wide,
Nor how upon the mountainside
The dainty wildflowers grow.

We may not understand nor see
Into the depth and mystery
Of suffering and tears;
Yet, through the stress of patient years
The flowers of sympathy

Spring up and scatter everywhere
Their perfume on the fragrant air—
But lo! the seed must die,
If it would bloom and multiply
And ripened fruitage bear.
THOMAS KIMBER

Look at that splendid oak! Where was it born? In a grave. The acorn was put into the ground and in that grave it sprouted and sent up its shoots. And was it only one day that it stood in the grave? No, every day for a hundred years it has stood there, and in that place of death it has found its life. "The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn."

How shall my leaves fly singing in the wind unless my roots shall wither in the dark? PERSIAN POET

Contentment comes not so much from great wealth as from few wants.

A man there was, though some did count him mad
The more he cast away the more he had.

The more we seek to understand "the incomparable riches" of the Grace of God, ... the more conscious we become of the shallowness of our love for Him. That we ought to love Him, as we consider all He has done for us through His death on the Cross as propitiation for our sins, we are never in doubt, but whether we do love Him, in actual daily fact and experience, we may well begin to question. A deep yearning in our innermost being "to know Him more clearly, love Him more dearly and follow Him more nearly" is probably all to which we dare lay claim.

"Go Get Your Scars!"

It is said that when the knights of King Arthur's court, returned from the field of battle, if they did not bear in their bodies some scar of the battle, they were thrust forth by the king, with the command, "Go, get your scar!" How few of us can say with Jesus' faithful warrior, Paul, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. 6:17); "Christ Jesus my Lord... for whom I have suffered the loss of ALL THINGS" (Phil. 3:8). Remember that when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to be judged for the deeds done in the body, Christ is not going to look for medals. He is going to look for SCARS! —W. B. K.

The Hindu Kingdom of Nepal

The Hindu Kingdom of Nepal has been "saturated with the gospel" in the past five years, according to Luis Bush, International Director of AD 2000 and Beyond. There are 300,000-400,000 Christians worshipping in 2,000 churches in the tiny Himalayan country, Bush said. In 1991, Nepal had an estimated 560,000 Christians; in 1961 there were 25 known believers (NIRR 8/12/91). "We have experienced a supernatural visitation. There is just no other explanation," a Nepali church leader said at an AD 2000-sponsored conference in India last month.

During years of persecution, Christians "paid the price for our nation. Now it rightfully belongs to us," said Reshem Raj Poudel, a former Hindu priest who became a Christian in 1962. He has been arrested 22 times and served two years in jail for teaching about Christ. From 1961 to 1991, some 300-400 Christians were imprisoned for converting Hindus or baptizing converts. Although

Hinduism remains the state religion, a 1991 constitution granted religious freedom and amnesty for all religious prisoners (NIRR 7/15/91). Proselytism still is forbidden.

Rick Renner - [Spiritual Hoarders!](#)

... I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.—Philippians 3:8

I had always heard of house-hoarders—that is, people who hoarded belongings until they had so much “stuff” in their houses that they had to walk on top of it all or forge little trails to get through the maze. I even watched a TV program about hoarders, and I was horrified that anyone could live with so much garbage in his or her home.

Watching this hoarding experience on TV was mind-boggling to me. But then a relative needed help moving from her home to a new house. When I walked into the old house, I was stunned by what I saw. It was exactly what I had seen on the television program, if not worse. There were piles, piles, and more piles of goods that still had original tags on them, plus ceramic items that were stacked high on shelves. The wallpaper was falling off the walls, and there was a huge nest of mud daubers living in the corner of the living room! The only way to get from one part of the house to the next was to walk a tiny little corridor that had been left between the mounds of trash that had accumulated over the years. If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I would never have believed that a human being could live in such squalor.

The outside of this relative's house was no better. Rather than throw away old magazines, she had stacked them high, one on top of another—and they were rotting into a “wall” of magazines that surrounded part of her property like a barricade. It was truly beyond anything I had ever witnessed.

Hoarding. That's exactly what this dear relative had been doing—just like the hoarders I'd seen on TV. Only now it was my job to remove it all so that the house could be put on the market. Honestly, it would have been easier to bulldoze the house and start all over than to try to get the old one back into shape. I had never seen anything like it.

Some people's spiritual lives are like that. Rather than deal with issues and keep their lives clean and clear, the spiritual rubbish just keeps building up, deeper and deeper, until it seems almost impossible for them to clean up and put themselves back into working order. They have so many piles of unforgiveness, bitterness, and other forms of spiritual garbage that they can barely make it from one room to the next in their “house.”

When people hoard—or refuse to let go of—things like fear, doubt, jealousy, bitterness, and envy, their spiritual lives become a mess! Their lives can eventually be compared to those houses we see on TV in which the wallpaper is falling off the walls, the electricity doesn't work right, the sink in the kitchen is a slimy, wretched mess, and rodents and all kinds of other pests live in the midst—right along with the person who lives there with them!

When I saw this unbelievable mess at our relative's home—something I truly thought only existed in fantasy TV programs—I was speechless. There is no way a person can be healthy in his or her mind and emotions, and think that way of living is acceptable. It brought my mind to Philippians 3:8, where Paul uses the word “dung” to describe his life before Christ. He says, “... I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”

The word “dung” is the word skubalon, and it is the word for refuse. To be more pointed, it refers to things like a half-eaten corpse, filth, lumps of manure or human excrement, or food thrown away from the table and then left lying around, piled up on the floor as it rots. Skubalon would be a sickening sight that would tend to make one want to vomit.

When I saw how our relative was living in such chaos and squalor, I realized that it is impossible to live a normal life under such wretched circumstances. And when Paul used the word skubalon, which depicts this very type of scene, he was admitting that all he had done before he came to Christ was nothing more than a skubalon pile of rubbish; it was spiritual defilement. That may sound harsh to say, but that is precisely the word that the apostle Paul used to describe his life before He came to Christ. In the end—after Paul came to a saving knowledge of Jesus—he recognized that his entire life until that time had all been rubbish, with nothing worth saving. But after Paul came to Christ, he was set free from the spiritual garbage of his past and his life was cleansed and set apart to be used of the Lord.

As we approach the end of the year, I want to ask you: Are you living in spiritual squalor—or are you abiding in a lifestyle that gives glory to Jesus Christ? Many people pile up grief, resentment, bitterness, and other things that block their ability to function normally for the Lord. What about you? Are things as they ought to be in your spiritual life? It's something for you to really think about today!

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, I confess that there is spiritual trash in my life—and I've just tolerated it and let it grow deeper and deeper. Help me

recognize it for what it is and begin the process of removing it from my life. You can't use me as You wish if I'm surrounded by piles of squalor. So I ask You to help me, Holy Spirit, as I start the cleanup process so I can function freely and clearly when You have a job for me to do!

I pray this prayer in Jesus' name!

MY CONFESSION FOR TODAY

I confess that I've been a spiritual hoarder—letting things build up in my life that hindered my effectiveness. I repent before the Lord for letting this buildup of spiritual refuse take hold in my life. If I'm going to be used mightily of Him, I have to keep my heart and soul clean, so today I commit to making this a serious endeavor in my life.

I declare this by faith in Jesus' name!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. Can you think of areas where you've allowed yourself to hoard attitudes that are unproductive to your spiritual life? If yes, what are you going to do to start changing this mess in your life?
2. To be honest, when hoarding has already begun, it takes a very serious commitment to bring things back into order. Are you willing to make the kind of commitment that is required to bring order back into your spiritual life? God will help you, but you must turn and commit your way to Him.
3. What is the area in your life that gives you the most trouble in discarding spiritual "refuse" that isn't good for you? Can you name it?

Learning How to Lose - W Glyn Evans [Daily With The King - Page 16](#)

Lord, I will try to learn the lesson You have been teaching me all my Christian life—how to lose. The Christian life is the life of great losses. The natural man always wants to come in first; the true disciple of Jesus learns how to come in last.

Look how Jesus lost. He lost the confidence of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:3); He lost many disciples (John 6:66); He lost his dignity, respect, and clothing (Matthew 27:29,35); and most important, He lost His life.

Look how Paul lost. "For [Christ's] sake I have lost everything" (Philippians 3:8, Amp.). That "everything" included his life.

I will never amount to anything for Christ until I attend my own funeral. A disciple is like a house in a cyclone; every part gets blown away bit by bit until there is nothing left but the foundation. Then God builds a new structure. The trouble with me—and with most Christians—is that I want to live; I dislike dying. Paul said something profound about that: "Death works in us" (2 Corinthians 4:12). Lord, there have been many times when death did not work in me at all.

This is difficult to understand, Lord. I thought at first that the Christian life was verve, joy, vitality, victory, and an eternity of heavenly ecstasy. That is the way You treated me at first. Then the stripping began. What a list! Friends, health, ambitions, loved ones, and even common, human desires. God's plan for my life seems at times to be a story without a plot. God my Friend has often seemed to be God my enemy.

I am thankful for Him through whom all the promises of God are "yes" (2 Corinthians 1:20). When I deliberately make my life a no for His sake, He responds by making it a victorious yes.

"And let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; and do confirm for us the work of our hands; yes, confirm the work of our hands" (Psalm 90:17).

Robert Neighbour - "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil. 3:8.)

And shall I give thee up, O world,
A world with banners all unfurled,
With pomp of glory, pride of gold,
With matchless treasures all untold,
With fields all filled with ripened grain,
With ships that sail a stormy main?
Shall I give up thy joys of sin,
The very things men seek to win?
Thy pleasures, pastimes, frolics, fun.

And all thy things beneath the sun?

Yes, I will gladly count thee loss
To follow Christ, and bear His cross;
Yea, I will count thy loss, but gain,
So I, with Christ, may live and reign.

There is much in the world that falls under "the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life." All of these must be given up. He that loveth the world, does not possess the love of the Father.

There are other things that are in the world, but are not worldly. These comprise the things of the physical earth, such as its mineral wealth; its fields, waving with ripened grain; its humming factories; its sweeping trains; its ships that carry on the world's commerce. They are to be given up only as they hold sway over, and hinder, the spiritual life of saints. They may be used, but not abused. This, however, is always true: we must count all of the world—its lustings and its lure, its grasp for gold and its traffic in merchandising as no more than "refuse" compared to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Even honest business pursuits must be held subservient to the call of Christ.

The world that's bad, I utterly refuse,
The world that's good, I cautiously will use;
And ne'er become the slave of anything,
Except the slave of Christ, my Lord, and King:
He shall be first, in all pre-eminent
In all supreme, my chief acknowledgment.
His glory is my joy, my constant quest,
For Him I'll ever be and do my best.

A W Tozer - Philipians 3:8

What I'm preaching to try to bring about in the Church of Jesus Christ is a rediscovery of the loveliness of the Savior that we might begin to love Him again with the intensity of love such as our fathers knew.... I have said before and I repeat it now that the power and greatness of A.B. Simpson was not in his theology, for he positively was not a great theologian compared, for instance, with John Calvin or some of the other theologians. The power and greatness of the man lay in his unquenchable love for the Person of Jesus Christ the Lord....

There are certain things God let Paul have. He let him have a book or two, let him have a coat, and let him have his own hired house for two years in one instance ... but Paul never allowed those things to touch his heart. Any external treasure that touches your heart is a curse. Paul said, "I give that up so that I might know Him. That I might go on to deeply enriched and increasing intimacy and vast expanses of knowledge of the One who is intimate and illimitable in His beauty. And that I might know Him, I give all this up." He never allowed anything to touch his heart. SAT017, 021

Lord, wean me from the lure of earthly pleasures. Take me to that depth of which Paul speaks, that I would willingly give up all to know You more intimately. Amen.

Vance Havner - "Found in Him"

"That I may win Christ, and be found in him." Phil. 3:8, 9

I am eternally in him, safe and secure as to position; my life is hid with Christ in God. But I want to be found in him as to condition any moment of the day.

Does morning find you experientially "in him" and his words abiding in you, or does it find you cross and irritable and with a disposition like a cross-cut saw? Does noon with the burden and heat of the day find you "in him" calmly abiding or have you succumbed to the whirl around you? Does evening find you still "in him" in spite of the wear and tear of the hours?

Does success find you "in him" or has it turned your head? And failure—has it embittered you, or are you still constantly abiding? Has trouble grieved you out of fellowship, has adversity broken your communion, or do they find the peace of God garrisoning your heart and mind through Christ Jesus? Has death invaded your household and still you sorrow not as those who have no hope because it finds you in him who is the resurrection and the life? Does the ordinary, daily grind wear down your disposition and do recreation and pleasure find you forgetting whose you are and that your citizenship is in heaven? Does the call of duty find you fearful and afraid, your life a compromise when it should be a challenge, or does the hour for testimony find you resting in him to speak through you his message?

So live, dear friend, that every situation finds you "in him" in state as well as in standing; let not Satan scare or seduce you from your

blessed right in Christ Jesus.

Believer's Counting. - James Smith

1. Blood as Precious (1 Peter 1:19), in contrast with some who count that same Blood an unholy thing (Heb. 10:29).
 2. God's Thoughts, as preserved in the Bible, to be Precious (Psa. 139:17, 18).
 3. Himself as a Sacrifice, and to live, day by day, the sacrificial life (Acts 20:24).
 4. All Human Merit as loss for Christ (Phil. 3:7).
 5. Prepared to Undervalue everything, counting it as "dung" in order to gain a more excellent knowledge of Christ (Phil. 3:8).
 6. Count the Cost of loyalty and devotion to our Lord (Luke 14:28).
 7. Trials as Profitable (James 1:2).
-

BIG CIRCLE OR LITTLE DOT?

I count all things but loss, ... that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection. Philippians 3:8, 10

One consuming passion gripped the heart of the apostle Paul. Having met and owned Jesus Christ as Lord, his one desire was that the blessed Savior should be pre-eminent in his life. All else was of little importance. "Things" were counted as "refuse," while the Lord Jesus became everything to him.

The small daughter of General William Booth was invited to spend the day across town in the beautiful home of some rich friends. Upon returning to the small flat in the slums of London where her parents lived, she remarked in childish fancy, "I wish we had more things!" The father, overhearing her complaint, called the child to come sit on his lap. Taking a piece of paper and pencil, he drew a large circle. In the center of the page, he placed a little dot. Carefully he labeled the circle "things" and used the little dot to represent "Jesus." Then he said, "Honey, do you want Jesus at the little dot and things at the big circle in your life?" "O no, Daddy," she cried, "I want Jesus at the big circle and things at the little dot."

If our Christian experience were to be carefully examined just now, what would be the result of such an appraisal? The apostle Paul had relegated "things" to the dump heap along with all that had previously enamored him. Christ had become the continuing object of his affections and desires. "That I may know him" was the motivating force in all that Paul did. He could honestly say, "For to me to live is Christ!"

May the Lord always occupy the big circle of our lives, filling center and circumference!

Jesus in sorrow, in joy, or in pain,
Jesus my Treasure in loss or in gain;
Constant Companion, where'er I may be,
Living or dying — Jesus for me!
—Kirkpatrick

THE TROUBLE WITH ME - Joe Stowell

I COUNT ALL THINGS TO BE LOSS IN VIEW OF THE SURPASSING VALUE OF KNOWING CHRIST.—
Philippians 3:8 NASB

Knowing more about me is not always a pleasant experience. Selfintrospection often compounds my insecurities and doubts. Trips into my inner self often expose memories of past failures and resurrect fears of the future. That's why spending time getting to know Jesus is of such great value.

In fact, living to know Him is the key to understanding and making peace with ourselves. Trying to discover self-worth? You have it in Him—He died for you! Plagued by failure and guilt? He does what no one else will or can do for you—He forgives and forgets, kills the fatted calf as heaven rejoices, and clothes you with the best robes of His righteousness. Searching for significance? Search no more . . . you are His child. There is no greater significance than that. Trying to figure life out and wondering if there is any purpose for you to take up space on this planet? The mystery is unraveled in Him as He scripts your life to be lived for His glory and to reflect the reality of His character through your life. Let's face it, you'll never finally or fully make it on your own. Self is forever inadequate to satisfy your soul and is inept to solve the restless searching of your heart.

But until we learn that lesson, we will continue to discover that the trouble with self-focused living is that it is never resolved. Just when you think you know all about yourself you'll do something that surprises and disappoints you. Like the gerbil, who spends considerable amounts of time running in his wheel, self-absorbed people rarely get to resolution.

Life must be about more than getting to know ourselves. In fact if you are determined to spend a great deal of time preoccupied with yourself, life is bound to bore you to tears. None of us is that special.

Live to know Jesus.

Warren Wiersbe ([Be Joyful](#)) - I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

GAINING AND LOSING

Remember Jim Elliot's words: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." This is what Paul experienced: he lost his religion and his reputation, but he gained far more than he lost. In fact, the gains were so thrilling that Paul considered all other things nothing but garbage in comparison!

No wonder he had joy—his life did not depend on the cheap things of the world but on the eternal values found in Christ. Paul had the "spiritual mind" and looked at the things of earth from heaven's point of view. People who live for things are never really happy because they must constantly protect their treasures and worry lest they lose their value. Not so the believer with the spiritual mind; his treasures in Christ can never be stolen and they never lose their value.

Maybe now is a good time for you to become an accountant and evaluate the things that matter most to you.

Php 3:8 I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

Pastor Ray Stedman told of a little boy who was asked by his mother how his Sunday school class had gone that morning. The boy said, "Oh, we had a new teacher. Guess who she was." "Who?" she replied. "It was Jesus' grandmother," he informed her. Amused, she asked, "What made you think that?" The boy answered, "Well, all she did was show us pictures of Jesus and tell us stories about Him."

That youngster probably had loving, picture-toting grandparents. He saw that Jesus was all-important to his teacher, so he concluded that she must be His grandmother. His logic may have been faulty, but his response makes a strong point: We talk most about what or who is most important to us.

Is Jesus the focus of our life? Do others sense how important He is to us? If not, maybe we need to take more time getting to know Him.—P. R. V (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

THE MORE YOU THINK ABOUT CHRIST,
THE MORE YOU'LL WANT TO TALK ABOUT CHRIST.
THE WEALTH OF GOD'S CREATIVE SKILL
FILLS THE EARTH AND SEA AND SKY.

CHOOSING JESUS

THE SURPASSING VALUE OF KNOWING CHRIST JESUS MY LORD.—Philippians 3:8 NASB

Daddy are we famous?" Libby was only six when she asked the question. I was pastoring a church in a small town in the Midwest at the time, and it didn't take me long to respond. "No" was the only legitimate answer. She paused thoughtfully and then replied with confidence and a touch of consternation, "Well, we would be if more people knew about us."

Poor Libby, just six and already concerned with what people thought about us. Wondering where we registered on the Richter scale of people's opinions.

It is something that Libby will wrestle with the rest of her life. All of us end up being caught in the web of self-intrigue. Since earliest childhood we have been aware of and concerned about ourselves. We mastered words like my and mine long before we knew the word for friend or share. Growing up doesn't help. What do people think of me? Have I been sufficiently recognized for my accomplishments? How am I being treated? Does anyone care about me? These questions still haunt us.

Books about knowing and understanding who we really are consistently make the best-seller list. Obscene amounts of money go to therapists who offer to guide you on a journey through your inner self. Actually, I can't think of a more unsettling thought: to spend money for an inner journey through me. More important, it is a dreadfully unbiblical thought. If you are in the process of becoming a follower of Christ, life is not about a journey to get to know yourself but an adventure in getting to know Jesus.

Paul knew you can't have it both ways. Your life will either be about self-absorption or about a Savior who is adored. We will either live for the applause of men or the applause of heaven. No wonder that Paul, after listing his stellar accomplishments, would exclaim, "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:8 NASB).

Refocus. Concentrate on getting to know Jesus, and living to know yourself will seem insignificant and shallow by comparison.

More Of Him, Less Of Me

Read: Philippians 3:1-11

I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. — Philippians 3:8

While I was pastoring a church early in my ministry, my daughter Libby asked me, "Dad, are we famous?" To which I replied, "No, Libby, we're not famous." She thought for a moment and then said rather indignantly, "Well, we would be if more people knew about us!"

Poor Libby! Only 7 years old and already struggling with what many of us struggle with throughout life: Who recognizes us, and are we getting the recognition we think we deserve?

Our desire for recognition wouldn't be such a problem if it didn't tend to replace Jesus as the focus of our attention. But being absorbed with ourselves crowds Him out of the picture.

Life cannot be all about us and all about Jesus at the same time. This makes Paul's statement that he counted "everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ" (Phil. 3:8 esv) strategically important. Faced with a choice between himself and Jesus, Paul intentionally discarded the things that would draw attention to himself so he could concentrate on knowing and experiencing Jesus (vv.7-8,10).

For us, the decision is the same. Will we live to draw attention to ourselves? Or will we focus on the privilege of knowing and experiencing Jesus more intimately? — Joe Stowell (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, thank You for reminding me of the value of knowing You more intimately. Help me to keep myself out of the way as I pursue a deeper walk with You.

Do our choices bring honor to God or to us

J C Philpot - What is it to "win Christ?" It is to have Him sweetly embraced in the arms of our faith. It is to feel Him manifesting His heavenly glory in our souls. It is to have the application of His atoning blood, in all its purging efficacy, to our conscience. It is to feel our heart melted and swooning with the sweet ravishments of His dying love, shed abroad even to overpowering. This is winning Christ. Now, before we can thus win Christ, we must have a view of Christ, we must behold His glory, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." We must see the matchless dignity of His glorious Person, the atoning efficacy of His propitiating blood, the length and breadth, the depth and height of His surpassing love. We must have our heart ready to burst with pantings, longings, and ardent desires that this blessed Immanuel would come down from the heaven of heavens in which He dwells beyond the veil, into our heart, and shed abroad His precious dying love there. Now, is not this your feeling, child of God? It has been mine over and over again. Is it not your feeling as you lie upon your bed, sometimes, with sweet and earnest pantings after the Lord of life and glory? As you walk by the way, as you are engaged in your daily business, as you are secretly musing and meditating, are there not often the goings forth of these longings and breathings into the very bosom of the Lord? But you cannot have this, unless you have seen Him by the eye of an enlightened understanding, by the eye of faith, and had a taste of His beauty, a glimpse of His glory, and a discovery of His eternal preciousness. You must have had this gleaming upon your eyes, as the beams of light gleam through the windows. You must have had it dancing into your heart, as the rays of the sun dance upon the waves of the sea. You must have had a sweet incoming of the shinings of eternal light upon your soul, melting it, and breaking it down at His footstool, as the early dawn pierces through the clouds of night. When you have seen and felt this, you break forth—"O that I might win Christ!" Like the ardent lover who longs to win his bride, you long to enjoy His love and presence shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

[Springs in the Valley](#) Suffered the loss of all things...that I may win Christ. (Phil. 3:8)

Every great life has had in it some great renunciation.

Abraham began by letting go, and going out, and all the way it was just giving up; first his home, his father and his past; next his inheritance to Lot, his selfish nephew; and finally the very child of promise on the altar of Moriah; but he became the father of the faithful, whose inheritance was as the sands of the sea and the stars of the heavens.

Hear David saying, "Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing" (2 Sam. 24:24). David paid the full price. And we read, "The throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever" (1 Kings 2:45). Hannah gave up her boy and he became the prophet of the restoration of ancient Israel.

Paul not only suffered the loss of all things, but counted them but refuse that he might win Christ. And Paul stood before the common people, and in the palaces of kings.

So it is always: real sacrifice, unto complete surrender of self, brings to us the revelation of God in His fullness. As we have already seen, it was only on condition of Jacob's releasing and the brothers' bringing the best they had, Benjamin, that they could even see Joseph's face again. And when Judah went farther than this, and offered himself to be Joseph's slave forever, then it was that Joseph could keep back nothing, but found himself compelled to reveal everything to those for whom his heart yearned. It is God's own way with us. God in Jesus Christ does not, and apparently cannot, make Himself fully known in His personality and love, until we have surrendered to Him unconditionally and forever not only all we have, but all we are. Then God can refrain no longer, but lavishes upon us, in Christ, such a revealing of Himself that it cannot be told in words.

But the supreme sacrifice!

God had to sacrifice Himself, in Christ, in order thus to reveal Himself to us; but His sacrifice alone will not suffice. Not until we in turn have sacrificed ourselves to Him is the revelation possible and complete. But what a revelation it is! What glory does God give us in the life that is Christ as our life! How it changes everything for us thereafter from famine to royal abundance! MESSAGES FOR THE MORNING WATCH

I heard a voice so softly calling:

"Take up thy cross and follow me."

A tempest o'er my heart was falling,

A living cross this was to me.

His cross I took, which, cross no longer,

A hundredfold brings life to me;

My heart is filled with joy o'erflowing,

His love and life are light to me.

SELECTED

IN ORDER THAT I MAY GAIN CHRIST: hina Christon kerdeso (1SAAS):

- Mt 13:44-46; Heb 3:14; 1Jn 1:3
- [Philippians 3 Resources - multiple sermons and commentaries](#)

I threw it all away in order to gain Christ (GWT)

so that I may have Christ as my reward (BBE)

So why does Paul continually count all things that our flesh would do as rubbish or dung?

In order that (hina) is the Greek preposition which marks a purpose clause and so tells us clearly Paul's motivation for his counting of all things as the dregs. He wants only ONE THING in this world and in all eternity - to gain Christ. See discussion of importance of observing and querying **terms of purpose or result**.

Spurgeon comments that "He had every opportunity of advancement. He was a fine scholar, and might have reached the highest degree in connection with the Sanhedrim and the synagogue; but he thought nothing of all that, he threw it all away as worthless, and declared that this was his ambition: "That I may win Christ,"

Eadie says "and to win Him is to enjoy Him in every aspect. It is to have Him as mine, and to feel that in comparison with such a possession all else may be regarded as truly loss. To the apostle Christ was so identified with the truth, that when he gained Him he gained the highest knowledge; so identified with life, that when he gained Him he was endowed with the noblest form of it; and so identified with spiritual influence, that when he gained Him his whole nature was filled with power and gladness. The name of Christ, so used, covers His entire work and relations, and, as Wiesinger says—"Christ comes as gain in the place of the loss he has suffered." And the possession of Christ is real gain compared with Hebrew lineage, the seal of Abrahamic descent, or devotedness to the Mosaic ritual and law. ([Philippians 3 Commentary - Online](#))

Gain ([2770](#))(**kerdaino** from **kerdos** = gain) means literally to procure an advantage or profit, to acquire by effort or investment (as in

the parable of the talents Mt 25:16,17, 20, 22; James 4:13 = "make a profit").

In **1 Cor 9:19-22 kerdaino** is used 5 times and translated "might win", in each use this "gain" referring not to money but to men's souls, for those whom Paul might "gain" equates with those who were saved. This is the ultimate "good investment" which will pay "dividends" for eternity! **Are you placing more effort into investing in the market where the gains are temporal or in men where the gain is eternal?**

For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. **20** To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; **21** to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. **22** To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.

Gain also conveys the idea of to **win** in (**Mt 18:15**) apparently the "gain" being that the reprov'd brother repents. Peter also uses **kerdaino** figuratively of a submissive wife winning her husband.

The synoptic Gospels use **kerdaino** to emphasize the tragic state of a man who **'gains'** the whole world (Mt 16:26, Mark 8:36, Luke 9:25), this use speaking literally of money, possessions, investments, etc, but also figuratively of the position, power, acclaim, etc ("boastful pride of life"). The Spirit must consider this truth of great importance, to reiterate it in all three Gospels! Note also that **world** in each of these three passages is **kosmos** which refers to the world system of evil of which Satan is the head, all unsaved people his servants, together with the pursuits, pleasure, purposes, people, and places where God is not wanted.

Vine writes that **kerdaino** is used "metaphorically, (a) to win persons, said (1) of gaining an offending brother who by being told privately of his offence, and by accepting the representations, is won from alienation and from the consequences of his fault, Matt. 18:15; (2) of winning souls into the Kingdom of God by the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9:19, 20 (twice), 21, 22, or by godly conduct, 1 Pet. 3:1 (R.V., "gained"); (3) of so practically appropriating Christ to oneself that He becomes the dominating power in and over one's whole being and circumstances, Phil. 3:8 (R.V., "gain") ([Vine's Online](#))

Kerdaino is used 17 times in the NT (none in the LXX)...

Matthew 16:26 "For what will a man be profited, if he **gains** the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Matthew 18:15 "And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have **won** your brother.

Matthew 25:16 "Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and **gained** five more talents. **17** "In the same manner the one who had received the two talents **gained** two more... **20** "And the one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me; see, I have **gained** five more talents.' **22** "The one also who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted to me two talents; see, I have gained two more talents.'

Mark 8:36 "For what does it profit a man to **gain** the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"

Luke 9:25 "For what is a man profited if he **gains** the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? (**Comment:** **Vincent** notes that **kerdaino** is "A merchant's word. Jesus is putting the case as a common-sense question of profit and loss.")

Acts 27:21 And when they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete, and **incurred** (kerdaino) this damage and loss. (**Comment:** Here kerdaino pictures gain through avoiding loss. It could be translated "spared this damage...")

1 Corinthians 9:19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I **might win** (kerdaino) the more. **20** And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I **might win** (kerdaino) Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I **might win** (kerdaino) those who are under the Law; **21** to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, that I **might win** (kerdaino) those who are without law. **22** To the weak I became weak, that I **might win** (kerdaino) the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some.

Philippians 3:8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may

gain Christ, (The best investment anyone could ever make!)

James 4:13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and **make a profit**."

1 Peter 3:1 (note) In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they **may be won** without a word by the behavior of their wives, **Comment:** *Without a word* means without the wife's spoken words and does not mean that unbelieving husbands do not need to hear the Word of Truth which the "seed" by which one is born again - see **note 1** Peter 1:23)

NIDNTT writes that "**kerdaino** means to make to profit or gain an advantage, gain something or somebody for something; it can also mean to spare or avoid (e.g. in Acts 27:21), since avoiding loss brings a gain. The opposite of **kerdaino** is accordingly **zemioo**, suffer loss, attested only after Homer. ([Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

The verb speaks of a personal appropriation which makes Christ my own. Knowing Christ and making Christ my own outstrips everything, absolutely everything. The encouraging truth is that when we have nothing left but Christ, we find that Christ is everything we ever needed!

Wuest adds "**that I may gain Christ** does not refer to Paul's acquisition of Christ as Saviour, but to Paul's appropriating into his life as a Christian, the perfection, the graces, the fragrance of the Person of Christ." ([Philippians Commentary Online- Recommended](#))

How does this happen? Salvation (past tense salvation) takes place in a moment but sanctification (present tense salvation - daily being saved from myself and being transformed and conformed into the image of Christ) takes a lifetime.

He (Christ) must (continually) increase, but I must (continually) decrease." (Jn 3:30-note)

How? By daily, continually working "out (my) salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God Who is at work in (me), both to will and to work for His good pleasure. (Phil 2:12, Phil 2:13NLT- see **notes** Philippians 2:12; 13)

As I submit to this daily process in the practical tests He allows in my life, I will

grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2Pe 3:18-note)

Vine says that "**To gain Christ** is more than gaining the knowledge of Him; it is to gain Him in all His fullness; it is, to repeat a frequent quotation, "to lay fast hold upon Him, to receive Him into our hearts, and so to make Him ours and ourselves His, that we may be joined to Him as our Head, espoused to Him as our Husband, incorporated into Him as our nourishment, engrafted in Him as our stock, and laid upon Him as a sure foundation. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

How else does one **gain Christ**? **Jamieson's** comments are worth pondering

A man cannot make **other things his "gain"** or chief confidence, and at the same time "**gain Christ**." He who loses all things, and even himself, on account of Christ, gains Christ: Christ is His, and He is Christ's".

Jesus adds that "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it." (Lk 9:23, 24)

Spurgeon writing on Paul's desire **that I may win (gain) Him** reflects...

The very high value that the apostle Paul set upon the Savior, is most palpable, when he speaks of winning Him. This shows that the Savior held the same place in Paul's esteem as the crown did in the esteem of the runner at the Olympic games. To gain that crown, the competitor strained every nerve and sinew, feeling as though he were content to drop down dead at the goal if he might but win it. Paul felt that were he to run with all his might, if that, were the way of winning Christ, were he to strain soul and body to win Him, he would be well worth the effort. He shows his value of Christ by speaking of Him as the prize he panted to win. He uses the very same word which the soldier would use concerning the victory, when, with garments rolled in blood, amidst confused noise and clouds of smoke, he counts all things but little if he may but hear the shout of triumph. So, Paul, regarding Christ as more glorious and excellent than mountains of prey, considered such a prize to be worth all the fighting, even though he should agonize and sweat with blood. He would be well worth dying to win. I take it that he speaks of Christ here as though he felt that he was the very climax of his desire, the summit of his ambition. If he might but get Christ, he would be perfectly satisfied; but if he could not get Him, whatever else he might have, he would still remain unblest.

I would to God that you all felt the same. I wish that the ambition of every one of my fellow-creatures here assembled — and, indeed, the wide world over, — were this, that they might win Christ. Oh, if they did but

know His preciousness, if they did but understand how happy and how blessed He makes those to be who gain Him, they, too, would give up everything else for this one desire, — that they may win Christ. I hope that, perhaps, a few words of mine may be blessed of God the Spirit to stir up such a desire in the hearts of the congregation now assembled below then shall I begin? (See Spurgeon's full sermon "The Priceless Prize")

Religion Or Relationship?

READ: Galatians 1:11-24

Two kinds of religion exist in our world: Religion A and Religion B. The first is "faith" in name only (2Ti 3:5note). It's the outward practice of Christianity without genuine faith in the living Lord.

Religion B, on the other hand, is a life-transforming, destiny-changing experience. It's a definite commitment to the crucified and risen Savior, which establishes an ongoing personal relationship between a forgiven sinner and a gracious God.

This difference explains why for many years British author C. S. Lewis had such great difficulty in becoming a Christian. Religion A had blinded him to Religion B. According to his brother Warren, his conversion was "no sudden plunge into a new life, but rather a slow, steady convalescence from a deep-seated spiritual illness--an illness that had its origins in our childhood, in the dry husks of religion offered by the semi-political churchgoing of Ulster, and the similar dull emptiness of compulsory church during our school days."

Are you bogged down in the empty ritual of Religion A? If so, you must receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Then make sure your relationship with Christ is growing deeper and more vital every day. —Vernon C Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

You only are true life--
To know You is to live
The more abundant life
That earth can never give. --Clarkson

You can have tons of religion without one ounce of salvation.

Just Living? (READ: Ecclesiastes 1:1-11) I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. --Philippians 3:8

There's a gulf of difference--far wider than the Grand Canyon--between living for something and merely living. But what is a worthy purpose for our existence?

Ty Cobb, one of baseball's all-time greats, made a revealing admission: "For years I ate baseball, I slept baseball, I talked baseball, I thought baseball, I lived baseball." But then he added, "When you get beyond those years of playing professional baseball, you can't live on baseball."

Certainly there is a vast multitude of purposes to which we can devote our energies. But in the end none of them will prove sufficient. One purpose alone gives enduring motivation to life. The apostle Paul stated that lasting purpose this way: "For to me, to live is Christ" (Php 1:21-note).

Knowing Christ, trusting Him, abiding in fellowship with Him, and serving Him--this is the one driving purpose that saves life from being little more than a monotonous march of meaningless days (Eccl. 1:1-11). Even when we are old and infirm, we can serve Him through a ministry of example and intercession. This makes life a joyful journey with our Savior and Friend, the Lord Jesus, whose face we will see when we reach our eternal home. —Vernon C Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Those searching to know life's true meaning
Can find it in only one way:
By serving the Lord with commitment
And living for Him day by day. --J D Branon

Life's purpose is found in a person--the Lord Jesus Christ

God's Paradoxes - Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. --Matthew 16:25

The Bible tells us there is a wisdom that is foolish and a foolishness that is wise (1Cor 1:20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25). There is a gain that is loss and a loss that is gain (Phil. 3:7, 8, 9). And there is an exalted way that leads downward and a humble way that leads to exaltation (Phil 2:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11).

Statements like these seem to be contradictions, but they are actually paradoxes. A paradox is a statement that contains two truths, which at first glance seem to be incompatible.

A psychiatrist once unknowingly referred to one of God's paradoxes, remarking, "The greatest secret of mental health comes down to us in the words, 'Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will save it.'" He added, "I forget who said that, but it is a great truth."

Who said that? Our Lord Jesus Christ! He gave us that principle in Matthew 16:25. And the apostle Paul lived it out as he endured countless hardships for the benefit of others (2Cor 4:8, 9, 10, 11, 12). Yet Paul knew that even as his physical body was dying, his spirit was being renewed (2Cor. 4:16).

You cannot find your richest personal fulfillment until you sacrifice your time, strength, and resources to God's will. "Lose your life" for Christ. Start really living! --V C Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Take up thy cross and follow on,
Nor think till death to lay it down,
For only he who bears the cross
May hope to wear the glorious crown. --Everest

**Christ showed His love by dying for us
We show our love by living for Him.**