

Sermon-Based Study Guide

Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Being Right | April 3, 2022

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1. Introduction to this Study

We continue our series on waving the white flag, throwing in the towel, raising our hands in surrender.

Author Bob Goff quits something every Thursday. He explains, “We can’t change much if we don’t quit much.” So, Bob quit having an office. Instead, he works on a lobster boat he dubbed the “Goffice.” He quit leaving phone messages. How much time is wasted with that back and forth? He quit making appointments, saying, “friends don’t make appointments.”

This week, I want us to give up being right. Which is especially tough when we KNOW we are!

1. Connecting with One Another

Think of the last time you had an argument with someone, but knew you were right.

What was the issue at hand? Was it resolved? If so, how? Where does your relationship now stand?

1. Study the Text
2. Read **Philippians 3.1-3**.

What two things does Paul instruct the Philippians to do?

Why? What is his justification for these instructions?

1. In the first century, dogs weren’t lovable family pets like many of us have today. Most dogs roamed the streets, rummaging for scraps, while others guarded a home (but were *never* allowed inside). Jews commonly referred to Gentiles as “dogs.”

How do you think that put down was received?

Why do you think Paul turns this around on his own fellow countrymen?

1. First century Jews were committed to following the rituals, rules, and regulations of religion. But Christians, Paul claimed, were accepted into the family of God because of Jesus, by grace through faith.

How does this first century debate factor into these first three verses?

1. Reread **Philippians 3.1-3**, then continue reading **verse 4**.

Sometimes in Paul’s letters, “flesh” refers to sinful behavior. What, though, do you think it refers to here?

1. What does Paul mean when he says “I myself have reasons for such confidence”?
2. Read **Philippians 3.5-6**.

If someone like Paul were writing verses 5-6 with examples from our culture today, what types of things would be included? In other words, what human identity and accomplishment – what *good things* – would be on the list?

1. One author explains, “Paul’s problem was not that he couldn’t make the grade; it was that he *did* make it, only to find out that it was the wrong standard of measurement.”

When have you made the grade, but found out it was the wrong standard of measurement?

1. Read **Philippians 3.7-11**.

Think of a ledger, checkbook, academic degrees, or material possessions – all the things you’ve gained. Paul says that all he gained, earned, and profited from are all garbage in comparison to knowing Christ.

What *good things* in our lives are garbage in comparison with Jesus?

If that’s too dramatic a thought, why do you think that is? Is it because our stuff is *that good?* Or because we haven’t experienced the connection with Jesus that Paul had?

1. In **verse 9**, Paul shifts from terminology of human identity and achievement, to a passive verb: “*being found* in Christ.”

Why do you think that is? Why doesn’t he say *he* found Jesus?!

How have you “been found” in Christ?

1. The knowledge Paul discusses in **verse 10** isn’t merely an intellectual knowledge, it is an intimate knowledge shared only between close friends and spouses.

Why do you think Paul says knowing Christ this way begins and ends with resurrection?

1. Pray
2. Thank God for the good things in your life, but ask Him to help you keep them in perspective, seeking first His kingdom and righteousness.
3. Lift up those you know who haven’t yet “been found” by Jesus.
4. Ask God to prepare us to welcome guests and celebrate well on Easter Sunday.
5. Digging Deeper
6. Read **Acts 9.1-19**, which details how Paul was “found in Christ.”

Where had Paul’s identity and achievement gotten him when he was found?