



Community Group Discussion Guide

To Be Content: In Our Power - Philippians 3:1-21

October 18th, 2020

I. Starter Questions:

1. What are some things that you are tempted to place more value on than your relationship with Christ?
2. What is an example of an earthly thing that you sometimes set your mind on?

II. Discussion of Scripture

Brief Explanation of Philippians 3:1-11: Paul again reminds the Philippians that they need to rejoice. He is warning the church to look out for the dogs—These verses refer to the problem of the Judaizers in the early church. These were groups of legalistic Jews who claimed to believe in the gospel but added their own works and traditions to it. Paul uses himself as an example that all these things they were putting confidence in were not enough. He makes it clear that worldly achievements are meaningless. By the Judaizer's own standards, he was the ultimate Jew. If anyone could save themselves by being a good Jew it was Paul.

Whatever gain Paul had, he counted it as loss for the sake of Christ. Before salvation he considered these things valuable. Afterward, he considered them a loss. The very best that the world has to offer and the very best that we can achieve is rubbish compared to what is truly important, knowing Christ.

Philippians 3:1-11 - Righteousness Through Faith in Christ - Finally, my brothers,^[a] rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.² Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.³ For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God^[b] and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—⁴ though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more:⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law,^[c] blameless.⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

For Discussion:

1. What does it mean that Paul has counted the things listed in verses 4-6 as loss?
2. What are some earthly or religious achievements that you may need to count as “loss”?
3. Based on verses 7-8, does your perspective toward this world need to change? If so, how?
4. What is Paul’s goal in verse 9?

Brief Explanation of Philippians 3:12-21 Paul realizes he hasn’t achieved sanctification yet. He, like all believers is on the way. God chose Paul for the purpose of sanctifying him. This is why God chose all of us. Although we may never achieve perfection in this world, it should still be our goal. This is an athletic illustration. Like athletes. We are to press on for the finish line. We are not to be complacent believers. Paul sets himself up as an example to the Philippians, not out of pride but out of a desire to see them grow in Christ. Lastly, our citizenship is in heaven. Paul reminds us that our core identity is as followers of Christ.

Philippians 3:12-21 - Straining Toward the Goal ¹² Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. ¹⁶ Only let us hold true to what we have attained. ¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

For Discussion:

1. Paul says I press on to make “it my own.” What does “it” refer to?
2. What is involved in pressing on to become sanctified?
3. What does it mean to you that our citizenship is in heaven?
4. Knowing this, how should we act while we are on earth

III. Responding in Prayer:

1. Ask God to reveal to you the things you exalt in or worldly things you hold on to. What is keeping you from following Christ to the fullest?
2. Pray that God will help you to better represent Christ as His ambassador. In recent years there is increasing arguments and division. How can you shine the light of Christ as you go about your day?