

Counting All Things But Loss

Introduction

Philippians 3:4-11

1. **Many businesses issue periodic profit-and-loss statements.**
 - A. **Profit and losses are listed to show whether or not a company made money.**
 - B. **Jewish rabbis used this kind of accountant terminology to compare what was important and what was not.**
 - C. **Jesus used a similar approach.**

Matthew 16:26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

2. **In our text of study Paul included his own profit-and-loss statement.**
Philippians 3:7-8
3. **As we investigate the text before us, we will see what mattered to Paul and what did not.**
4. **Each of us need to ask, "What is truly important to me?"**
5. **In this sermon on priorities Paul says, "I count all things but loss."**

Dependence On One's Spiritual Heritage Is A Loss

1. Paul concluded in Philippians 3:1-3, after having challenging the Judaizing Christians, by saying....

Philippians 3:3

- A. His listeners might have said, "What do you know about being a Jew?"

Philippians 3:4

- B. Paul invited a comparison between himself and those who taught the necessity of keeping the Law.

Philippians 3:5: It is here that Paul gives an....

2. An Old Perspective.

- A. Paul here speaks of his life as a Jew and his qualifications.

- B. **"circumcised the eighth day"** – ritual purity.

- 1) He in effect says, "You want to talk about circumcision?" I was circumcised on the eighth day as the Law required.

- 2) He says, I was born a Jew.

- 3) "of the stock of Israel" – racial purity.

- C. "Israel" was the sacred designation of the Jews.

- D. Paul was proud of this.

- 1) "of the tribe of Benjamin" – racial purity.

- 2) By this day, tribal identities had blurred for most Jews.

- 3) Paul knew that this distinguished himself in the history of the Jews.

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- E. Paul summarized by saying, “a Hebrew of Hebrews” – cultural purity.**
- 1) This means that Paul was born of Hebrews parents and that he could speak the Hebrew language.**
 - 2) This statement also suggests that his family still remained true to the Hebrew customs.**
- 3. A New Perspective.**
- A. Paul’s Jewish life had been important to him.
Philippians 3:7a**
 - B. In the past he had considered his Hebrew heritage on the “profit” side of the ledger.**
 - C. But now,
Philippians 3:7b**
 - D. Sadly, some feel that one’s spiritual heritage alone is a profit – but Paul knew better.**

Paul said, "I count all things but loss" even my achievements

1. An Old View Point.

A. Paul also lists his spiritual achievements before he became a Christian.

B. "as touching the law, a Pharisee"
Philippians 3:5b

1) He had chosen to be of the strictest sect of the Jews.

Acts 26:5 They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

2) He was educated under the greatest teacher of the Pharisee – Gamaliel.

Acts 22:3 "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.

Acts 5:34 Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while.

3) The Pharisees were highly respected among the Jews.

C. "as touching zeal, persecuting the church"
Philippians 3:6a

1) Remember, Paul is listing his Jewish achievements – zeal was highly prized by the Jews.

2) Remember, also, that this disturbing aspect of his life was always on his mind.

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- D. “as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.”**
- 1) People could see by his actions that he held strict adherence to the law.**
 - 2) Could be awarded: “Most Zealous Man of the Year.”**
- 2. A Changed Viewpoint.**
- A. At one time he thought these achievements were a profit, but now...**
Philippians 3:7
- B. Paul had learned that:**
- 1) By the works of Law no man is justified.**
Romans 3:20
 - 2) Redemption is only found in Christ.**
Romans 3:24
- C. We live in a world that rewards achievement...**
- D. Many are tempted to think that personal achievement will determine whether we are saved or lost.**
- 1) Spiritual achievement is good, but we cannot rely on this alone.**

Luke 17:10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' "

Dependence On Anything Other Than Christ Is A Loss

1. **A look at what Paul inherited and achieved.**
Philippians 3:7
 - A. **Refers to all Paul inherited and achieved.**
 - 1) **He most surely means at his conversion.**

2. **In re-evaluating his profits and losses, Paul did not stop at his initial encounter with Christ, he continued....**
Philippians 3:8a
 - A. **Paul uses the present tense – indicating continuous action.**
 - B. **He had made it his daily decision to give all things in view of Christ.**

3. **Paul continues....**
Philippians 3:8b
 - A. **He lost his Jewish position, good standing among the Jews, lost friends, perhaps family...**
 - B. **Over night he went from the most loved to most hated.**

4. **Paul's next words would be shocking to a Judaizer.**
Philippians 3:8c
 - A. **When Paul thought of his former life, he was repulsed by it – when it is laid along side of Christ.**
 - B. **Paul refused to take his eyes off Jesus and focus elsewhere.**

5. **Did Paul regret his decision to follow Christ? NOT AT ALL!**

Dependence On Christ Is A Profit

1. There is profit in Knowing Christ.

Philippians 3:8

- A. Paul repeats the thought of “knowing” in verse 10.
- B. Getting to know Christ begins when we read about Him in the inspired word.
John 20:30-31
- C. Next, as penitent believers, we are baptized into Him.

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

- D. Then, as we walk with Him in daily study and obedience we come to know Him more and more – our relationship grows...
- E. Paul did not just want to “know” Christ, he wanted to be....

2. Found In Christ.

Philippians 3:9a

- A. He wanted to make Christ his permanent address.
- B. He wanted to be absorbed in Christ.
- C. Could Paul accomplish these goals through his own efforts?
 - 1) Paul says, No.
Philippians 3:9b
- D. We must obey God, but we must also rely on the grace of God.
- E. If we are going to know Christ, we must be found in Him.

Conclusion

- 1. Finally, in this sermon on priorities...**
 - A. In Philippians 3:10-11, Paul says he wanted to know everything he could about the Lord.**
 - B. What is really important to us?**
- 2. It was obvious what was important to Paul.**
- 3. He said, "I count all things but loss" except the Lord.**
- 4. May we consider all things standing between us and the Lord as rubbish – that we might gain Christ.**

