

Wednesday, June 7, 2023 • Philippians 3:7–4:1

Questions from the Scripture text: What has the apostle counted as loss (v7)? For Whom? What else does He count as loss (v8)? For what? Who is Christ Jesus to Him? What has the apostle suffered for his Lord? As what does he count them? In order to gain what (Whom)? What else does the apostle want to do with Christ (v9a)? Of what does the apostle have none of his own? What is the only righteousness that he can have? From Whom is this righteousness? By what is this righteousness? What three things does the apostle come to know/have through the knowledge of Christ (v10)? Of what is the knowledge of Christ the only means to the attaining (v11)? What hasn't the apostle already done (v12)? What hasn't already been done to him? So what does he do? In order to lay hold of what? What doesn't he count himself to have done (v13)? Upon how many things does he focus? What does he forget? In order to reach for what? Toward what does he press (v14)? What is the prize? Whom does the apostle now address (v15)? Whom does he include in this group? What are they to have? Who will do what if they think otherwise? What are they to do with whatever they have already attained (v16)? By what should they walk? What should they be? Now whom does the apostle address in v17? What does he tell them to do? And at whom else to look? For what purpose has God given the apostle and such other men? Who walk (v18)? When has the apostle told them? What is he doing as he writes this now? As what do they walk? What is their end (v19)? What is their god? What is the true nature of that in which they glory? Upon what do they set their mind? Where is our citizenship (v20)? What else is in heaven? For what are we eagerly waiting? Who is that Savior? What will He do to what (v21)? What will He make our body like? What is He using the same power to do? How many things is He subduing to Himself? What four things does the apostle call them in v1? What does he command them to do?

What is the most valuable treasure? Philippians 3:7–4:1 looks forward to the public reading of Scripture in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these sixteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the most valuable treasure is that for which Christ has laid hold of us: that we would be His own and have Him as our own.**

The things that “were gain” in v7 and the “all things” that are loss but counted as rubbish in v8 are the religious things of v5–6. Some of them were gifts/commands of God, but there is just no spiritual value apart from Christ Jesus. Whatever we must lose in order to gain Him is worth it. And only those things which God commands, by which to look to Christ for life, are worth doing.

The greatest spiritual treasure is knowing Christ (v8), because it is through faith in Him that we get righteousness from God (v9). Whatever superficial spirituality or religiosity is lost in order to gain this is worth it in order to have Him. Even with respect to physical/material blessing, Christ is all.

Christ is the greatest thing that we can have even in a physical sense because we will be conformed to His resurrection and enjoy the new heavens and new earth—emphasis here on “earthly”—in resurrected bodies that are glorious like unto His (v10–11). Certainly, an eternity of that enjoyment is an almost infinite physical/material treasure compared to whatever we might lose, or whatever we might suffer, in this world. Christ prevailed by suffering and prevailed by dying. The believer should be glad to do the same.

The apostle is determined to lay hold of that all that is in Christ (v12–14). Why so urgent? Certainly not for the possibility of failing to obtain it. This is what Christ has laid hold of him for (end of v12). Who can take him out of Christ's hand? Was it not Jesus himself Who said that no one could take us out of His Father's hand or His own hand (cf. John 10:28–29)? No, he is not “pressing on to lay hold” because the outcome is in doubt.

Instead, the greatness of the urgency is because of the incalculably glorious value of this outcome that has been assured by Christ. If it is what Christ wants for him, then it is something that he wants for himself, and he is eager to give himself entirely to the process of coming into possession of it.

Not just the apostle, but all mature believers, have this mindset (v15). And all genuine believers, even if they are immature, God will reveal to them whether they are valuing what he values (end of v15). What a great encouragement to us who know that we are not going after it as much as we should or valuing it as much as we should! And how humble the mature ought to be, since it is God Who gives maturity. But this determination should be the mindset of all believers (v16).

Not everyone in the church who thinks that he is mature is actually mature. Some, like in v17, are given to us as examples like the apostle; they do not think that they have attained to anything yet.

Ironically, the self-satisfaction of those whom he describes in v18–19 itself exposes that they are not mature in Christ. For they are satisfied enough, though they are not yet resurrected (“their god is their belly”), and they are proud enough, though they are not yet sinless (“they glory in their shame”). This is all the satisfaction and glory they will have. “Their end is destruction.” Not only do they show that they are too easily satisfied with their fools' gold in spiritual things, but also that they have an inordinate love for the things of this world. Rather than receiving them as good gifts from God, Who will give them so much better, these enemies of the cross of Christ (v18) too happily settle for less than Christ earned on that cross.

Those who are mature in Christ identify not with earth, but with heaven (v20). In heaven, saints are already sinless and enjoy the immediate presence of the Redeemer. And they are no more satisfied with physical imperfection than they are with spiritual perfection. They are eager not just to be sinless but for Christ's return (v20b), and for the physical perfection that comes on that day (v21).

And what treasures will we then be able to take from this life, besides our sanctification? Besides Christ Whom we have by His spirit? We will take with us only other believers, and the fruit which God gave them through our edification and fellowship in the Lord... not carnal fellowship, but gracious fellowship that is actually aimed at edification. This is why the apostle calls them his “joy and crown,” and this is why in this life, our greatest investment ought to be in serving God in the gathering and building up of His saints.

Upon what do you spend discretionary time? Upon what do you spend discretionary funds? At what do you aim in fellowship? What is the Lord showing you about your mindset by comparison to His?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for being puffed up about ourselves or satisfied with this world. And forgive us for when our effect upon others is to bring them down to such things. Make us to press toward the goal for the prize of Your upward call, and to be examples and helpers to others, that they may be our joy and crown with You in glory, which we ask in Your Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP73C “Yet Constantly, I Am with You” or TPH446 “Be Thou My Vision”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Philippians 3 7 through chapter 4, verse 1. These are God's words. But what things were gained to me, these, i have counted loss for christ. Yet. Indeed, i also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of christ.

Jesus, my lord. For him, i have suffered the loss of all things. And count them as rubbish. They may gain christ. And be found in him. Not having my own

righteousness, which is from the law. But that was just through faith in christ. The righteousness, which is from god by faith.

That i may know him. And the power of his resurrection. And the fellowship of his sufferings. Being conformed to his death. If by any means i may attain, To the resurrection from the dead. Not that i have already attained, or i'm already perfected. But i press on that i may lay hold of that.

For which christ jesus has also laid, hold of me. Rather than i do not count myself to have apprehended but one thing i do forgetting those things which are behind And reaching forward to those things, which are ahead. I pressed where the goal. For the upward for the prize of the upward call of god in christ jesus.

Therefore, let us as many as our mature have this mind. And if in anything you think otherwise God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule. Let us be of the same mind. Brother enjoying in following my example, and note, those who walk Who so walk as you have us for a pattern.

For many walk. Whom i've told you often and now tell you. Even we think, That they are the enemies of the cross of christ. Whose end is destruction. Whose god is their belly. Whose glory is in their shame. Is set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven.

From which we also eagerly wait for the savior, the lord jesus christ, who will transform our lowly body? Then it may be conformed to his glorious body. According to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things to himself. Therefore, my beloved and longed for brethren.

My joy and crown. So, stand fast in the lord. Beloved. So far the reading of gods inspired and And there and twerk. In which he teaches us in verse 7 and 8. That we are to have. Christ, as the treasure, that is worth. Losing everything else. In fact, everything else put together is like, rubbish by comparison to the lord jesus.

This particular rubbish includes all of the things that Uh, in the The previous versus three through six, the apostle thought were to his credit. Uh, but to which he refers in verse 19, when he says glory and getting their shame, Realizing how imperfect everything he had. Uh, been proud of before is and it's actually shameful.

Not not glorious. So that if we try to glory even in the good that the lord gives us to be able to do by grace, If we think we have attained, Um to to what christ has earned for us. Then. Uh, we are deceived because what he's earned for us is full enjoyment of him and full conformity to have And so, You and i must never be proud of any good that we do or think in this life.

Because it's so imperfect. Being proud of that would be to, to glory and shame. But it also includes all of the pleasures of this world. Um, This, he refers to, as Um, those whose god is their belly. Selling their mind, not only on the earthly things of their own works.

But and on the earthly things of the pleasureable, things of this world. No, christ is the the infinitely better. Treasuring both cases. The treasure that we enjoy and the treasure of our righteousness. So he says, in verse 9, And be found in him not having my own righteousness. Why?

Because we need to righteousness that will stand in the last day, we need a righteousness that will make our resurrection to be a resurrection to life, not a resurrection unto death. Because we we want to enjoy christ forever, not only Um, soul, but soul and body. And so, if we have him now with sufferings We're fine with the sufferings if we can have him.

In fact, we have fellowship with him in the sufferings and the sufferings Uh, become sweet to us by the fellowship. That we have. And then when we have death, the death is like his death. Um, verse 10. Uh, way by which we come into glory just as he was glorified in the resurrection.

Uh, from the dead. And so we enjoy suffering with him. We enjoy dying in him. Um, Precious and the sight of the lord is the death of the saints. Blessed, are they who die in the lord? A grave or as i victory, oh death whereas Uh, whereas i sting And we enjoy.

Suffering with him, we enjoy dying in him. And of course, We enjoy him and the resurrection. Therefore, Uh, He's not satisfied with earthly pleasures of the body because he's looking forward to a resurrected body in the enjoyment of christ forever. And then he worth And he's not satisfied with any spiritual attainments.

That he has in this life because he's looking forward to being perfected in christ. Enjoying them fully and being perfectly. Holy and so he says, The mature in christ. So value him. So value, the resurrection. So value holiness. That they are always pressing forward. Not to that with which the flesh could be satisfied.

But they let jesus's desires drive their desires. And so what are they press? Press on? Um, Or the press, toward the goal, in the prize, for to lay whole, what do they press toward to lay? Hold of They pressed till they hold of that, for which christ has laid.

Hold of them. Perfect holiness. Resurrection body, everlasting enjoyment of him and glorifying him. You heavens new earth. That's what we are to press. For today. To that is the aim, the price. Uh, that we press for today and every day. Of this earthly life. And that's how Mature, believers think he says in verse 15, He says, if you don't think this way you're not mature, And you might think you are mature.

But god will be merciful if you're a believer if you think, otherwise if you're think you're mature but not but god will expose you, god will reveal even this to you. He says, in verse 15. So he says, don't be satisfied. With your works. Self-satisfied don't be satisfied. With physical temporal pleasure.

Earth. Earthly worldly satisfied. I find your satisfaction only entirely in christ. Something. That you will not have. Until the resurrection and sustained fast in christ and keep going forward. Don't ever come to a place. Where you can, where your complacent? In your christian life in this world. You have not yet become what you must become.

If not begun. You have not yet fully enjoyed enjoyed the fullness of what christ has secured for us. And that for which christ has secured us. So, to spray, For his help to. Live this way today.

We ask Lord jesus for the ministry of his birth. To continue that, you would write. This truth, on our hearts, And that we would look to you and love you and delight in you. And serve you. And that you would give us great joy in the confidence. That you are taking us, ultimately.

Perfection of holiness. Resurrection of body. A fullness of enjoyment of you. Forever. And we pray lord that you would then. Help us today to live as those. Who are pressing towards this? We'll pray that your spirit. And would give us humility and gratitude, And eagerness. And zeal. And that we would be.

Content. Even in suffering and find suffering sweet. If we have fellowship with you, in it, Right in this part. Of our life. So help us by your spirit, we ask and your own name of jesus. Amen.