

## Phil Ch 3 Vs 4-11

Found in Him

Believe me when I tell you that when it's all said and done, that's all that's going to matter, that you be found in Him, that is in Jesus Christ It's not going to matter who you are, what you've done, or where you've been if you're not found in Him, then you're going to be in a heap of trouble because only those who are in Christ have their names inserted in the Lamb's book of Life. and Only those who's names are found written in the Lamb's book of Life will inherit age abiding, everlasting, eternal life, in Christ you can live forever, if you're not in Christ then you're dead while you live, dead in sins and trespasses. You see in Christ we go from life to life, Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."* and But those who are not in Christ tragically go from death to death, everlasting torment in eternal separation from God, being cast into outer darkness having refused to come to the Light of the world. In Rev 20:15 we see a glimpse as to what the future holds for those who's names aren't written in the Book of Life and we read there, *"anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."*

You know it's not going to matter what self-righteous works we may believe we may've done in that day Jesus said that many would come to Him on that day and say, *"Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* You see, didn't we do this and didn't we do that, surely we've merited some sort of acceptance, after all there are a lot of people out there who are a lot worse than I am. So many people use the "good ol' boy" approach with God. and You hear them say things like well, "I never murdered anyone, or stole anything, so I figure God will understand and let me in." Oh really, is that right? "Yeah, I mean after all I'm a pretty good guy." Really, compared to who? Charles Manson, Adolph Hitler? You see we have this tendency to compare ourselves or measure ourselves up against people of whom we believe are lesser in moral character but the bible says that they that are, *"measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."* I can look around and eventually find someone who will make me feel pretty good about myself, make me feel pretty righteous, but on the flip side of that there are those who look at me and in light of who I am, feel pretty good about themselves. But the bible says that it's not wise to compare ourselves among ourselves, because none of us are God's standard, Jesus Christ is God's standard. and When compared to Him, no one who's ever drawn breath measures up, because He was in all ways tempted as you and I are tempted and yet He was with out sin.

So since God demands perfection and not "pretty good" we're all in desperate need of a Savior, and that's where Jesus comes in, He and He alone qualifies as the One Who's shed blood is able to cover you in the righteous requirements of the Father. and Only those who are found in Him will be accepted by the Father, no other "righteous work" will suffice.

That's what Paul is seeking to get across to the Philippian believers in our current text. There are those who are seeking to come a long after he has won the hearts of precious souls to Jesus Christ by grace through faith, and proselytize them over to a "works oriented" religious effort rather than a rest oriented personal relationship with Jesus Christ. As they rest in the finished work of the cross, and he calls them evil workers, and dogs, those who seek to get you to take confidence in the flesh, what you can do to be right with God, thereby adding to the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

We read in 2 Cor 11:13-15 where he said that, "*such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*"

Now, Paul would never argue the fact that faith in Jesus Christ will produce righteous works in your life, but the fact that you're right with God is what makes those works righteous, you see those works don't commend you to God. They are simply an overflow out of your love relationship with Jesus, you were saved and justified before you ever lifted a finger for God by simply trust and faith in Jesus Christ for the salvation of your soul, so don't now think that somehow those works make you better. You don't get any better than covered in the blood of Christ, we can never add to that, all we can do is take away from it by means of trying to be accepted by God by means of something other than that, be it works or whatever. Vs 3 tells us that those who are right on with God are those who worship God in Spirit, who's assurance and boast is in Christ Jesus, (as opposed to themselves), and have no confidence in the flesh. Those who take confidence in the flesh are those who I spoke to you of in Matt ch 7 who will say "Lord, Lord" but they never *knew* Christ personally, and that's what's so critical, knowing Christ. and Here Paul is saying that *these* guys don't know Christ either and that in trying to become justified by the law they have become estranged from Christ and have fallen from grace. and Believe me Paul knew what he was talking about when it came to trying to be justified by the flesh, justified by trying to do "good works" in order to be accepted by God. and That's where this next portion of scripture finds us, sighting the vanity of seeking to be made right with God by means of our own efforts. If there was ever anyone who stood a chance at being justified in the flesh, if that were even possible, (which it's not), it was Paul, and he's going to tell us why. Let's read from Vs 3

Vs3-6

So this is a pretty impressive pedigree that Paul possessed here. and The point in even bringing it up was simply to illustrate to those whom he's speaking to here that he didn't despise the things that the Judaizers were speaking of because he didn't possess them or couldn't maintain them.

You see they may have been arguing well, of course Paul says that these things aren't necessary, that's because he has no fortitude, no discipline, and he's simply seeking to justify his weakness by deceiving others into believing that these things aren't necessary. But Paul is saying no way, you tell these losers to take a hike, I've been there, done that, and as he says in vs 4 that if anyone could've found grounds for confidence in the things that they're trying to purport it was him, way more than any of them ever dreamed. Those guys were in preschool by comparison to Paul, who had a master's degree for all intents and purposes.

What he's saying is that even though it looked real spiritual it was all born out of the flesh therefore it was worthless regarding the salvation of the soul, because that which is of the flesh is flesh, that's what Jesus said. and No matter how you paint it, it's still flesh, but God is Spirit, so we have a problem trying to appease God in the flesh, when God is Spirit. and In vs 5-6 he lists out 7 things that were to his credit as far as the flesh is concern, 4 of which he possessed naturally, or by means beyond his control, 3 of which he obtained externally by means of his own zeal. The point being that he had every ground of confidence in the flesh, which anyone could have, and that if there was any advantage for salvation to be derived from birth, and blood, and external conformity to the law, he had it. (From Barnes' Notes)

Something that the vast majority of his opponents couldn't claim and so he's presenting an airtight case that their pompous mouths might be stopped. The 1<sup>st</sup> thing that he mentions is that he was *circumcised the 8<sup>th</sup> day*, you recall these guys were making such a big deal of circumcision. But many of these guys were proselytes; they were converted into Judaism later in life meaning that they were circumcised possibly as adults. Or at least beyond the 8<sup>th</sup> day, but if you want to stick to the letter of the law concerning those who were God's covenant people, Both in Gen ch 17 and the Lev law calls for all males to be circumcised in the foreskins of their flesh on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

Paul was saying that he qualified, how about you? Ishmaelites were circumcised when they were 13; this also tells us that Paul had godly parents, those who sought to honor the Lord through means of the Law. The book of Acts tells us that Paul's dad was a Pharisee, which in our day is sort of synonymous with the word hypocrite but that wasn't the case in Paul's day (we'll speak a little bit about that in a minute). and So from the very get go, straight out of the shoot Paul was being subjected to the fulfillment of the law according to the flesh, even from his birth he started out on the outwardly righteous path. Next, *of the stock of Israel*, in other words he was of Jacob's lineage to whom the covenant was made, there were other groups of people who could argue that they were the sons of Ab.

The Ishmaelites, the Edomites who came from Esau who came from Isaac Ab's son, but the covenant wasn't made to any of those people, they weren't God's chosen nation, Jacob

was. He was the one who became Israel and had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel and Paul was saying that His lineage led pure, straight back to Jacob. He wasn't a proselyte nor were any who were ever in his family, so all the covenant rights to be held that would be to his advantage by being of pure descent from Jacob himself were his. *Of the tribe of Benjamin*, so he was even from the favored tribe, Benjamin was Jacob's favorite son, because he was born of the woman he truly loved and she died in childbirth. and So she named him "Benoni" which means "son of my sorrow" but Jacob changed his name to "son of my right hand" the right hand being the favored position. Benjamin was a tribe that was known for its faithfulness when everyone else was blowing it, not that they didn't have their problems, but overall they had a much better track record in many cases than the others did. They were a powerful war faring tribe and gave Israel their 1<sup>st</sup> king, king Saul, and I can't prove it, but I have a notion that before Paul changed his name that his dad named him after their 1<sup>st</sup> king, his name was Saul prior to his conversion.

So not only was he from one of the most reputable tribes, but Israel's favorite son, you see his legal righteousness is mounting up and we're not even ½ through with the list and we're not going really into depth on any of them. Next a *Hebrew of the Hebrews*, now there are a couple of things that this could stand for both of them being true, it could be a referral to the fact that he was a pure blooded Hebrew. As opposed to many who were his contemporaries that day after the dispersion so many being of an intermarried descent, in Acts ch 6 you find the Hellenists, those being the Greek speaking Jews, Samaritans were interracial Jews. and Though Paul was born in a pagan area, Tarsus, both of his parents were pure blooded Hebrews, and all of his ancestors were pure blooded Hebrews, he was a man of the covenant through and through.

This could also point to the fact that he was one who excelled amongst his contemporaries, he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and he'll add to that fact in his next statement, turning now beyond birthright and blood to external works. *Concerning the law, a Pharisee*, now as I said, we see this as synonymous with hypocrite, but in Paul's day this was a badge of the highest honor with in the religious community, they were the spiritual elite. Never more than 6000 at any one time, these being the guys that separated themselves from everything else to dedicate their entire lives to the study and upholding of the Law of Moses. They would study the meticulous details of the law and follow them to the letter, and if anyone had it right according to the law in the eyes of man, it was these guys. The very name Pharisee means "Separated one" and they were so serious about the details that they would even tithe things like their salt and pepper, 9 grains for me, 1 grain for God. That's why when Jesus said, *"I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."*

That everyone's world was rocked. Because if *they* weren't making it, then from the way things appeared it would be impossible for anyone else to. and That's what Jesus was trying to tell them, nobody makes it by their own works, but Paul says I was one of the elite of Israel, a Pharisee, these guys couldn't claim that. and Paul doesn't mention it but if you study

his life you find out that he excelled above the majority of his Pharisee contemporaries and he sat under one of the most reputable rabbi's of his day. Vs6 *concerning zeal, persecuting the church*, those who were of "the way" and they derived that title from when Jesus said that He was the way the truth and the Life and that no one came to the Father but by Him. and Since Jesus said He was "the way" those who followed Jesus were called those who were of "the way".

Time doesn't permit us but if you study the gospels you'll discover why the Pharisees had such an utter hatred for Jesus, primarily because He was always busting their chops concerning their self-righteousness telling them that the only place that it was going to take them was straight to hell. Read Matt 23 sometime, and that infuriated these guys because they worked their whole lives in order that they might be righteous before God and be seen as righteous before people. They were a very sincere people about what they did, (kinda shows you how people can be so sincere concerning their religion and still wind up in hell doesn't it?) It's not a matter of sincerity it's a matter of truth, and since Jesus is the truth, no matter how sincere you may be, it only makes you sincerely wrong. But since they hated Jesus, they hated those who followed Him, the church. Because they considered them blasphemers of the Law, and Paul says concerning my zeal for God, I persecuted the church above measure. He actually believed he was doing God a favor by getting rid of these blasphemers called "the way" those who seemed to try to be righteous apart from the law by looking (in his mind) to the ultimate blasphemer, Jesus.

He wasn't content when they had scattered the church in Jerusalem, all the rest of them seemed to breathe easier then, not Saul, he went to the high priest getting warrants for the arrest and persecution of Christians in other cities. It wasn't enough to purge them from Jerusalem, they needed to be gone from the planet, prior to his conversion Paul was a ruthless man who had the entire body of Christ in a semi-panic. and When he was converted they didn't even believe him, they thought it was some sort of covert operation and they feared for their lives. It would be like Charles Manson walking through those doors saying hey guys I gave my heart to Christ, can we meet in your house for home fellowship? You'd be all, "uh, well, uh" and that's the way they were with Paul at 1<sup>st</sup>. But concerning *the righteousness that was in the Law*, Paul says, *blameless*. Not sinless, blameless, meaning he atoned for his sin with all the proper sacrifices, he tithed, he touched or ate nothing unclean, he followed the letter of the law to the T. and These things gained him high social status, they were great gain to him in the world and so he's saying these guys are child's play, they don't even hold a candle to where I've been and what I've done concerning legal righteousness.

Vs 7-11

Vs7 says that all these things that so worked to his advantage he counted them loss for Christ, all the things that were to his credit, did an immediate reversal now becoming a debit, working against him in the face of Christ. So he threw them all away, he's making an allusion

to that day 30 yrs prior on the Damascus Rd when he met Jesus Christ and He said, “*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me, it’s hard for you to kick against the goad.*” So many people kick against the goads, knowing that God would have them give their lives to Christ and yet they fight it (maybe this morning). But on that day Paul quit kicking, throwing all those things away that were in between him and Jesus, that he might gain Christ. Matt 10:39 “*He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.*” Again, Matt 16:25 “*For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*” All those years Paul thought he’d found life, he was fighting to save his life, but when he was finally willing to lose those things, to count them loss for Christ, he found what life was really all about and gained eternal life. So many people fight so hard to hang onto those things that drag them to hell, their own way, their own will, “I did it my way”, that’s too bad, because had you done it Christ’s way you’d live forever, but by doing it your way, you forfeit true life.

Vs8

You see any and everything that constituted a block between him and the Lord he counted as loss, he got rid of it, so that he might gain Christ. Turn to Mark ch 10 Vs17-22 Now so many people make money out to be the issue here, and in his life it was, but that might now be true for your life, maybe it’s your job, maybe it’s your car, maybe it’s your guitar, or whatever. The point was that there was something that was blocking him from giving himself completely to Christ, there were some things that he wanted to hang onto, that he wasn’t willing to let go of, that he was willing to “count as loss” for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, therefore the sad fact is, he didn’t gain Christ.

Now maybe later he repented, but the scriptures never report that, what is it that you’re hanging onto this morning? You see in vs7 Paul was talking about an experience that happened in his life 30 yrs ago, but in vs 8 it translates into his present life, notice in vs 7 the word “counted” is past tense, but in vs 8 it’s in the present tense “count”. I’m still counting anything loss that seeks to distract me from Christ, so many people rely on an experience that they had with Christ yrs ago. and They tell you of this one time when this happened and it was such a moving experience and God delivered them from this or they removed that, but so often the things that were counted as loss 5yrs ago or 20yrs ago have over the yrs been sort of picked back up. It’s not that I’m not interested in what God did in your life then, but I want to know what’s He doing today?

The only way an experience from 20 yrs ago is validated is if it’s still translating into your life today, Paul says this happened to me 30 yrs ago and I’m still right there with the whole thing counting all things loss, and for what? The excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, not a head knowledge, this is speaking of an intimate experiential knowledge. Paul wanted to know Christ, intimately and personally and I love this because after 30 plus yrs as an

apostle he still wanted more, a lot of people seem to be at a place where all their doing is shining their halo's and waiting to get on with eternity, they already know it all.

Paul, who I believe knew more than I'll ever have the privilege of knowing on this side of eternity concerning the intimate person of Christ, realized that no matter how much he experienced Christ there was more. He says, I've suffered the loss of all things, now I can't say that, I haven't suffered the loss of everything for Christ, and I would venture to say that most of you haven't either, which leaves us with a great responsibility. If God has left in your hands the comforts of this world whose glory do we utilize them for? We need to be careful that when we give our lives to Christ that be sure to include it all, it has to do with losing your life for His sake, if He is your Lord then He has the right to your things, and we need to be careful to give them over to His disposal whenever He may choose to use them. and He says that everything that got in the way of him and Christ is but rubbish, specifically in regards to legalism. Rubbish was the trash heap that the dogs would scavenge through, and you begin to see the picture that Paul is painting in regards to the dogs he mentions in vs 2. Some of your bibles say dung, which was the result of the dogs scavenging.

Yet that's the picture that God paints concerning the righteousness that comes from the flesh, in Isaiah He called the righteousness of the flesh used menstrual rags, that's the way God sees our efforts of self-righteousness, and Paul is saying these guys are just reveling in garbage, but I've cast all that aside that I might gain Christ.

Vs9

As we're getting into the word today, I pray that this word is getting into us. Everything in our lives is at best trash compared to our desperate need to be found in Christ. If you get nothing else out of this study, get this, nothing in your life is worth not being found in Christ, get rid of those things that are between you and Him. Don't try to do things to make you right with God, believe me when I tell you, that you don't want to have your own righteousness, which stems from legalism. You want simply that righteousness that is from God, not yourself, but from God through faith in Christ, don't place your faith, your confidence, or your assurance anywhere else accept the person of Jesus Christ and His work on the cross.

With out faith it's impossible to please God, and the only righteousness He will impute to you is that which comes through faith in His Son, Paul wanted to be found in Him, to be identified with Him, so that when he was examined, when he fell under the scrutiny of God on judgment day, his life would be examined having been filtered through the blood of Christ, coming up pure, white as snow. Paul wanted to get rid of anything in his life that hindered him

from knowing Christ deeper, notice vs 10

Vs10-11

This is where we'll pick up (Lord willing) next week, but suffice it to say that there are no short cuts to resurrection power. Death comes 1<sup>st</sup> and until we are conformed to His death, we will not attain to the resurrection. We need to be found in Him, identified with His death, if by any means we may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

This morning if you're here and you don't know Jesus Christ, you know in your heart that if today was your last day on this earth and you were to stand before the Father, that you wouldn't be found in Him. I want to give you that opportunity, the opportunity to call upon His name that all things might be made new in your life, the opportunity to count all the things that you've been hanging onto for so long as rubbish that you might gain Christ. and Be found in Him, not having your own righteous which comes from your own personal list of do's and don'ts, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith. If God is dealing with you this morning I urge you to respond, don't harden your heart if you're hearing His voice.