

IDENTITY

WHO GOD SAYS YOU ARE.



You Are More Than Your Past

Philippians 3:1-21

10 Key Identity Markers

Your race, ethnicity, culture and nationality

Your gender and sexuality

Your physical and mental capacity

Your memories

Your family of origin

Your age

Your relationships

Your occupation

Your possessions

Your religion, convictions, values

Old Testament:

Primary identity found in the image of God; not inward, nor outward, but upward.

New Testament:

Christ comes as the perfect man, revealing to us the true and undistorted image of God. The Christian life is learning to live to true self and die to false self through union with Christ.



Family heritage

Genetic/Ethnic make-up

Past Experiences- good and bad

National/Cultural/Linguistic influences

Philippians 3:1-21

Vss 1-9: Paul's Past-The self-righteous accountant

vss 10-16: Paul's Present- The aspiring athlete

vss. 17-21: Paul's Future- The hopeful citizen

Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. 2 Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. 3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—4 though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put 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; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

| Past | Profit/Loss |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Circumscision | Asset |
| Family heritage | Asset |
| Ethnicity | Asset |
| Morality | Asset |
| Religious zeal | Asset |
| legalistic goodness | Asset |

What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage (lit. “manure”), that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

— Phillipians 3:8-9

| Past | Profit/Loss |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Circumscision | Liability |
| Family heritage | Liability |
| Ethnicity | Liability |
| Morality | Liability |
| Religious zeal | Liability |
| legalistic goodness | Liability |

“Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a **safeguard** for you.”

—Philippians 3:1

| Past | Profit/Loss |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Spouse | Liability |
| Children | Liability |
| Good job/education | Liability |
| A home | Liability |
| A fat salary | Liability |
| Material, security, morality | Liability |

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and from **JOY** over it goes and sells all that he has, and buys that fields.”

—Matthew 13:44

When we rejoice in the Lord, when He is our treasure, we can endure the loss of everything else around us, but no one can rob us of our joy because no one can rob us of Christ.

Philippians 3:1-21

vss 1-9: Past: No longer defines us because we place more value in our union with Christ as our primary identity marker.

For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect.

— 1 Cor 15:9-10

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. 16 Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

— Philippians 3:10-16.

Philippians 3:1-21

vss 1-9: Past: No longer defines us because we place more value in our union with Christ as our primary identity marker.

vss: 10-16: Present: A dynamic process of learning Christ and unlearning our sinful past.

17 Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. 18 For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

— Philippians 3:17-21.

When we rejoice in the Lord, when He is our treasure, we can endure the loss of everything else around us, but no one can rob us of our joy because no one can rob us of Christ.

Philippians 3:1-21

vss 1-9: Past: No longer defines us because we place more value in our union with Christ as our primary identity marker.

vss: 10-16: Present: A dynamic process of learning Christ and unlearning our sinful past.

vss17-21: Future: Eternal destiny redefines our past and empowers our present striving.

"Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language or customs. . . With regard to dress, food and manner of life in general, they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to be living in, whether it is Greek or foreign.

And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but do so as if they were aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country. Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not expose (infanticide) them. They share their meals, but not their wives.

They live in the flesh, but they are not governed by the desires of the flesh. They pass their days upon earth, but they are citizens of heaven. Obedient to the laws, they yet live on a level that transcends the law. . . . They live in poverty, but enrich many; they are totally destitute, but possess an abundance of everything. They suffer dishonor, but that is their glory. They are defamed, but vindicated. A blessing is their answer to abuse, deference their response to insult. For the good they do they receive the punishment of malefactors, but even then they, rejoice, as though receiving the gift of life.”

-The letter to Diognetus (Nn. 5-6; Funk, 397-401)