



You Are More Than Your Past Philippians 3:1-21

- I. Pray and read passage together (Philippians 3:1-21)
- II. Just a helpful FYI to organise your thoughts: Philippians 3 can be broken down into three parts, where Paul addresses the three tenses of salvation:
 - A. Vs 1-9: Paul speaks about justification “he has been saved”
 - B. vs 10-16: Paul speaks about sanctification: “he is being saved”
 - C. vs 17-21: Paul speaks about glorification: “he will be saved”
- III. Paul addresses some key “outward” identity markers in this passage. Discuss how these form and shape your own identity.
 1. Family heritage
 2. Genetic/Ethnic make-up
 3. Past Experiences- good and bad
 4. National/Cultural/Linguistic influences
- IV. In Phil. 3:1-9 Paul discusses the conversion of his “old ledger” where his former assets were now considered a liability in comparison to Christ. Discuss some how some of your greatest assets can really be liabilities in the Kingdom.
- V. In Phil. 3:1, Paul teaches that “Rejoicing in the Lord” is a safeguard for our faith. Rejoicing in the Lord means that HE is where we place our joy, confidence and security. . . He is our treasure. How does treasuring Christ above all else safeguard our faith?
- VI. How does Christ free us from the confines of our past? Read 1 Cor. 15:9-10 to see how Paul’s past has been redeemed by God. How does this help us understand Phil. 3:8?
- VII. In Phil 3:10, Paul begins this next section by saying “I want to know Christ” everything that follows is about “knowing Christ.” What does “knowing Christ” mean?
- VIII. In Phil. 3:14-15 Paul likens the Christian life to running a race, straining towards the end goal. . .forgetting the past, not letting the past hold him back. . . his eyes are forward looking not backward looking. How does this analogy help us understand the process of sanctification in our own lives?
- IX. How is baptism a vivid symbol of discipleship; of learning Christ and unlearning our sinful past?
- X. Discuss the significance of eternity for the Christ. How does our future glorification become much more formative and influential than our sinful past?
- XI. How does Justin’s letter to Diognetus inspire you to live out your identity in a secular world?
 - A. *“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.”*