

# JESUS STRONG IN GOSPEL GAIN

Part 7 of Jesus Strong. Philippians 3:1-14.  
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. November 3, 2024.

## PHILIPPIANS 3:1-14 (CSB)

**Transition:** 1 In addition, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. To write to you again about this is no trouble for me and is a safeguard for you.

**Two Religions:** 2 Watch out for the dogs, watch out for the evil workers, watch out for those who mutilate the flesh. 3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who worship by the Spirit of God, boast in Christ Jesus, and do not put confidence in the flesh — 4 although I have reasons for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he has grounds for confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised the eighth day; of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; regarding the law, a Pharisee; 6 regarding zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness that is in the law, blameless.

**Christ Is Gain:** 7 But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. 8 More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them as dung, so that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ — the righteousness from God based on faith. 10 My goal is to know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death, 11 assuming that I will somehow reach the resurrection from among the dead.

12 Not that I have already reached the goal or am already perfect, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, 14 I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

## **STAGE ONE: WE LEAVE OUR RELIGION - 3:2-6**

**Paul's earlier life was deeply rooted in Judaism.**

- He depended on his ethnicity, religious rituals, and Mosaic Law.
- He described its teachers as “dogs, evil workers, mutilators.”

**Paul was very religious but spiritually lost, so he got out.**

- He describes his previous commitments as “loss and dung”.
- The message: Anything that keeps us from Christ is a spiritual dead-end.
- The only solution is to leave it behind.
- Leave behind unhelpful religious ideas and practices. Working our way to God. Skepticism about Jesus. Family approval. Self-reliance. Whatever keeps us from Jesus.

## **STAGE TWO: WE TURN IN FAITH TO JESUS - 3:7-9**

**Paul turned from Judaism to Jesus because he wanted to be right with God.**

- Getting right with God is THE most urgent issue in our lives. He loved the congregation as Paul loved them.
- Paul's religious efforts were failing because, while he looked good on the outside, his heart was corrupt and sinful.

**The righteousness he needed had to come from outside of Paul**

- Philippians 3:8b-9 (CSB) so that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, **not having a righteousness of my own** from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ — the righteousness from God based on faith.
- We need the perfect righteousness of Christ. Theologians call it an alien or imputed righteousness because it is from God, not us.

"Therefore a man can with confidence boast in Christ and say: 'Mine are Christ's living, doing, speaking, his suffering and dying, mine as much as if I had lived, done, spoken, suffered, and died as he did.'" (Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings, p.155)

- Christ's righteousness is of "surpassing value" - the greatest gift of all.

### **STAGE THREE: WE OBEY GOD - 3:10**

**Stage two is not the ultimate goal.**

- There is more to the Christian faith.

**Paul relied on Christ's resurrection power to give him the will and the way to obey God.**

- This is how we live as Christians:
  1. Faith: "know Christ."
  2. Spiritual power: "power of his resurrection."
  3. Obedience: "fellowship of his sufferings, conformed..."
  4. Ultimate transformation: "resurrection of the dead."
- The Christian life is a process of transformation, through obedience, by the resurrection power of Christ.

### **STAGE FOUR: WE PURSUE THE GOAL - 3:12-14**

**Paul pictured life as an athletic contest. He was running to win.**

- The prize or goal is heaven with Jesus - "the heavenly call" - verse 14.
- The goal isn't a place, it's a Person. We want to be with Jesus.

**Paul stretched every spiritual muscle to get there.**

- Only possible by Christ's resurrection power in us.

# SMALL GROUP GUIDE

## Review

- Review the November 3 study guide (<https://www.famousgod.com/study-guides>).
- What were the highlights of the passage or Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- Use the S.P.E.C.K. method to reflect on and apply the teaching:
  - S: Sins to confess
  - P: Promises to claim
  - E: Examples to follow
  - C: Commands to obey or Christ to rest in
  - K: Knowledge or insights to consider

## Discuss

- Share with the group what it was like to leave your past behind in order to trust in and follow Jesus. What did you need to leave in order to trust in Jesus? See stage one in the sermon.
- In what ways does alien or imputed righteousness impact your life? See stage two of the sermon.
- What are some ways the resurrection power of Jesus has transformed your life? In what areas have you overcome sins, the devil, self-reliance?
- What do you do to keep the ultimate goal in mind - resurrection, seeing Jesus face to face, glorification? See stage four of the sermon.

## Prayers

- Pray for the whole Cornerstone family to experience Paul's four stages of the Christian life.