

## Philippians 3:1-16 Confident?

**Question: What are some things you are confident about?**

A) Example: When I head out to my car in the mornings, confident – key in – start!

B) May not be your experience – (been there before – unreliable cars) – but now I am confident – start.

C) I am confident that there will be gas in the car  
1) I don't let it get below empty rarely

D) Now there was a time when my wife and I were sharing the car – not so confident – 😊  
1) I am hoping there is gas in the car

**When I was a kid – learning to Swim –**

A) Dad would stand at the edge of the pool- Jump – “catch you – not let you go under”

B) Jump - So fun – back up farther and farther – pretty soon I was going under – he HAD ME

C) It was a blast – confident in my dad's ability to catch me and not let me drown

**Here are some things I am not confident in**

A) Anything that has to do with electricity.

B) Scares me to death – electrocuted

**Singing: Fear Closing a service on my own- worst! – few times – hanging**

A) Praying – waiting to hear that door open – or hear the worship leader plugging in his guitar

B) If I don't hear them – start to sweat – dragging out the prayer –

C) Car problems – I can handle basics – oil change etc – anything beyond that I am lost

D) Having confidence or not having confidence can really affect the way that you approach life  
1) Or how you approach a particular situation

**Spiritually – who and what you are confident in makes all the difference in the world.**

A) But when it comes to spiritual matters, we have to resist the temptation to be confident in ourselves

B) Paul is talking this here in chapter 3 he is going to give some insights on this using his own experience

**V.1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe (or fitting is the idea)**

Guzik- “This abiding joy is fitting for the believer because it shows that we really do trust in a God whom we really believe is in control. When we believe this, it isn't any surprise that we are then filled with joy.”

**V.2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!**

A) Paul gives a warning against those who might try to steal our Joy!

B) Beware 3X - Paul is using strong language – that is meant to get our attention

C) **Beware of dogs, .....evil workers, ....mutilation!**

D) What is Paul talking about here?

**These are Paul's descriptions of false teachers**

A) Dogs because they bite and devour, evil workers because they undermine the work of Christ

B) The Mutilation - Paul is painting a picture here of what legalism does to true faith it mutilates it  
1) It destroys it and leaves you spiritually deformed and marred

C) These legalistic leaders were coming into the church and saying that to believe in Jesus wasn't enough

D) Really saved – you had to also do XYZ

1) But Anything that puts a confidence in the outward actions – mutilates or destroys genuine faith

**E) It robs you of your joy – puts you on the performance treadmill**

**One of the big ideas that the legalist and Judaizers were spreading through the gentile churches was circumcision**

A) If you really wanted to be a follower of Jesus you needed to embrace Judaism – circumcised

B) Galatians – Cut themselves off – castrate ....

C) These guys are trying to Mutilate your faith

1) Warning- Beware of legalism – Joy stealer

3 For we are the circumcision, {it is implied we are the true circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

A) Here is what Paul is saying; Followers of Jesus spiritually are the true circumcision

B) It is not about a meaningless outward mark –

1) It is the inward mark that counts – His spirit in our hearts

C) True worship is not about outward actions and rituals and markings

1) It is the inward attitude of the heart - In the spirit means – real – authentic

D) We are rejoicing in Christ – celebrating the work and victory in Jesus

**E) NO CONFIDENCE IN OUR FLESH – in our actions, works etc.**

**Paul is going to use himself here as an example:**

A) Of what Legalist and Judaizers would deem as a person who could have confidence in his flesh

4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, {Law of Moses in Lev. 12} of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, {prominent tribe – King Saul a Hebrew of the Hebrews; {both parents 100% pure – concerning the law, a Pharisee; {conservative – Saducees were liberal 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; {talk Zeal/ concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. {Nobody could accuse me of anything!

B) That is quite a resume for the flesh – but the problem is –

1) none of that Gave Paul the assurance that he was right with God!

C) None of that filled his heart with Joy!

**So Paul wants us to understand that it is not who we are in the flesh that matters – to God**

A) It is who we are in Christ

B) Who we used to be is not what matters – what matters is who we are now –

1) and that we are moving forward.

C) Your standing with God is based solely on who you are in JESUS

1) Paul discovered this – conversion – missing it

**His Declaration**

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the **excellence** of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

**Because His confidence was no longer in his flesh – Paul did this: But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.**

A) Profit and loss statement – things I used to view as assets- as gains were now in the loss column

**Loss Column**

- His pedigree
- His religious training
- His Jewish heritage
- His religious zeal
- His religious works

B) His confidence for right standing with God was no longer placed in those things

C) He counted them as Loss

**Note: Counted is past tense:**

A) So 30 yrs ago – I met Jesus – I counted all of what I used to trust in as loss – because I had Jesus

B) 8 Yet indeed I also count (Count is present tense) all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord

C) Counted it lost – still counts it loss – why?  
1) The flesh rears its ugly head

D) His flesh continued to try and get him to place his confidence in those things.  
1) So I continue to **COUNT THEM AS LOSS**

E) Then just so we don't miss the point – Paul says **I Count as rubbish – Garbage**  
1) Actually stronger – **Dung in the KJV** – animal excrement -

### Loss Column

- His pedigree
- His religious training
- His Jewish heritage
- His religious zeal
- His religious works

E) What goes in the gain column is all about who Paul is in Jesus

### Gain Column

A) The righteousness of Jesus - and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith

B) Justified by faith – Romans 5:1 – Declared righteous –

C) Intimacy with Jesus that I may know Him  
1) Know him intimate knowledge – by experience

D) Not even possible in Judaism –

### Know Him!

A) Paul has been a follower of Jesus for 30 yrs when he writes this

B) Still focusing on getting to Know Jesus –  
1) Paul after 30 yrs don't you know him by now?

C) Oh yes – but there is still so much of him to know!

1) Treasure chest of insight – application

D) His passion 30 yrs later was the same as it was the day he got saved – Who are you Lord

### E) I hope that is an inspiration to you – Bible study

1) To know Him – see him – grow in your intimacy with Jesus – NOT JUST INFO

### GAIN COLUMN

The Righteousness of Jesus  
Intimacy with Jesus

Resurrection Power – 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection,

A) The redeemed life is a life of power – The power that brought Jesus from the grave is available to us

B) We can walk in Victory – Fight for victory but from a position of victory – Jesus has won the war!

C) In legalism it is the opposite – no power or confidence –

1) The treadmill of religious performance always leaves you feeling like – haven't done enough

D) Paul's gain column: Righteousness of Jesus, intimacy with Jesus – Resurrection Power

1) LIFE TRANSFORMATION

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

When Paul says that I may know him the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

A) I think he is referring primarily to what he was discovering about the crucified life

B) The more Paul died to his self and placed his confidence in Christ –

1) the more he discovered of the Resurrection Power of Jesus working in Him

C) Weak – He is strong –

1) I need to decrease – He can increase

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. **Galatians 2:20**

**So Paul is making a strong case here for making sure that your confidence is in Jesus and not yourself**

A) But then Paul reveals that the Christian life is to be a life where we are always pursuing growth

B) Never content with the status quo – never feeling that we have arrived – but always wanting more

1) More of Jesus – V.12

V.12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

C) The KJV puts it this way: **I press on that I may apprehend the reason that I have been apprehended by Christ Jesus.**

**D) Hear that word – Apprehend what you think? – Cops – apprehended a suspect**

**Good description of Paul's life –**

A) His conversion on the road to Damascus – He was apprehended by Jesus

B) Jesus cut him off at the pass

C) Some of you can relate to that- You were running as fast as you could away from Jesus – **and he chased you down!**

1) He apprehended you! – He laid hold of you.

**Now I know that some of you don't relate to that –**

A) You grew up in a Christian home – always believed – **NO TESTIMONY?**

B) NOT TRUE: Some have been saved out of the pit – Jesus pulled us out –

1) Others saved from it – Jesus got a hold of us before.....

**But here is the thing I want you to understand and catch from what Paul is saying:**

A) Whether you were saved **OUT of the pit or FROM** the pit –

➤ **Jesus has laid hold of you for a REASON –**

➤ **A PURPOSE.**

B) Paul found great joy in discovering – the reason why Jesus laid hold of him!

1) On going revelation – each new city – encounter

**The same can be true for us.**

A) Everyday can be a part of the revelation of why we have been apprehended by Jesus

B) When we allow him to use us in the lives of others

1) Helping hand

2) Show his love and grace

3) Share the gospel

4) Lead someone to faith in Jesus

C) When we are teaching our kids what it looks like to walk with Jesus and love Jesus ...

D) Life can take on a whole new meaning if we would simply say each day –

1) Lord show me today why you have apprehended me? What purpose do You want reveal in my life today

V.12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

<sup>13</sup> Brethren, 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, <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Paul has been walking with Jesus for 30 yrs and he says – guys I haven't arrived yet.**

A) That is so encouraging to me – Paul was amazing – He never arrived – this life

**B) I find Great Joy in knowing this Race is a process**

1) We are all in Process – no perfect people here. –

C) No such thing in this life of reaching a state of sinless perfection.

Charles Spurgeon said he met a couple of young men who walked up to him one day, claimed that they were morally perfect, that they had attained SINLESS PERFECTION

Spurgeon happened to have a pitcher of water in his hand, And he just couldn't resist the temptation, and he poured the pitcher of water on THEM to watch their reaction – Boy did they get mad – and violently aggressive – He proved his point

**There is Joy in knowing that we are in process!**

**A)Life is about the journey not the destination –**

**B)We know where we are going – we know the outcome- See Jesus be like him**

**C)Right now is about the process that God is putting us through to move us in that direction.**

**D)There is a purpose to the process! –**

**1)Purpose is to make us more like JESUS**

**Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,**

**A)Paul is telling us that forgetting is essential to having Joy in the race!- Forgetting what lies behind**

**B)Problem is the Past is hard to forget! – We all have things in our lives – failures – BC days – regrets**

**C)Memories that we would like to forget that have a way of resurfacing in the memory banks of our hearts, soul and minds**

**D)So it is important to understand what Paul is really saying by this statement forgetting those things which are behind**

**E)He is admonishing us to not dwell on the past! – Don't let your past influence your present**

**Don't dwell on the past in two ways.**

**A)1<sup>st</sup> is our failures – Satan loves to use our failures to bring condemnation**

**B)Enemy loves to use our past – Paul – bad one He had Christians killed and imprisoned**

**C)But also our victories**

**1)Listen it doesn't matter what you did with Jesus or for Jesus 20 yrs ago**

**D)What matters is what are you doing now – Finish strong**

**<sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

“The Greek word for the phrase press toward carries the idea of strong exertions made in the race; every muscle and nerve is exerted, and he puts forth every particle of his strength in running. He was running for life, and running for his life.” Adam Clarke  
The prize is the **upward call of God**. The **prize** is the **call** itself, not the benefits that come from the call or any other thing. The prize is being able to run the race at all, working with God as a partner to do the work of His kingdom. David Guzik

When Spain led the world exploration (in the 15th century), their coins reflected their national arrogance and were inscribed *Ne Plus Ultra* which meant “*Nothing Further*” - meaning that Spain was the ultimate in all the world.

After the discovery of the New World, they realized that they were not the “end of the world” - they changed the inscription on their coinage to *Plus Ultra* - meaning “**More Beyond.**”

**Which motto better expresses your Christian life - “Nothing Further” or “More Beyond”?**

**Still pressing forward – still making progress**

**Question: Spiritually what are you reaching forward toward right now?**

**A)What new thing are you praying about today?**

**B)What are some of the Desires or burdens that God has placed on your heart –**

**1)Burden is from the Lord – it doesn't go away!**

**C)Wrap up V.15-16**

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

**D)Lets not be satisfied with the status quo – let's all be pressing forward – to know Jesus more !**