Knowing Jesus Christ
Phil 3:1-11
SS Lesson for 01/20/2013

Devotional Scripture: John 14:6-14

OUTLINE

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**Introduction**

**Overview and Approach to Lesson**

The lesson teaches the value of **Knowing Jesus Christ**. The **study's aim** to understand get a mind-set about the meaning and purpose of our lives realizing that knowing Jesus should be our goal. The **study's application** is to adopt the learned mind-set of knowing Jesus in our daily walk with God.

**Key Verse: Phil 3:7**

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

**Commentary on Phil 3:7 from The Biblical Illustrator**

What things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ --

The Christian's accounts: -- The Christian keeps an accurate account book. He reckons up with an enlightened judgment his gains and losses. And most important is it that he should: for the question of questions is, What is gain to me and what is loss?

The ANSWER GIVEN BY THE WORLD. Examine the accounts of nine-tenths and you will find --

1. Health and money entered as clear gains, comfort, ease, tranquility, prosperity, carried to the side of profit.
2. Sickness, disappointment, contraction of the means of pleasure, decay of trade, sorrow, bereavement, entered as unmixed loss.
3. And when we come to matters bearing on the interest of the soul we find that the natural heart has entered on the side of eternal gain, good character, punctuality of attendance at Christian ordinances, a conscience silent as to definite injuries against neighbors. And gain it is in a sense, for it is better to have a good conscience than a bad one, to be moral than immoral. St. Paul says no word about morality being a loss, or that he would have valued Christ more had he been a greater sinner.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ANSWER. For Christ's sake Paul now accounts as loss all that he had once accounted gain. He was an Israelite of direct descent. Would he have been a better man had he been born a Gentile and an idolater? He had been blameless in his observance of the ceremonial, and, as he understood it, of the moral law - does he regret that he had not habitually broken it? None of these things. The loss was that he had trusted in these things, and looked to them for salvation. He thought that God must be satisfied with so unexceptionable a genealogy, so diligent a worshipper.

In this point of view many of us need instruction and warning. What are we trusting in?

1. Some of us are putting off the question altogether and saying, "I will live while I can and die when I must; I will not torment myself before the time -- many years hence I hope."
2. But this childish and suicidal infatuation is not in all of us. There are those who have religion. What is it? Is it more than a moral life, a Sunday worship, a trusting in God's mercy? But where is Christ in all this? What know you of the thought, "What things were gain to me," etc? What of your own are you discarding in order to rest in Christ alone? Where are your transfers from one side of your reckoning to the other because of Christ? And many of us die in the strength of a gospel which has no Christ in it; no demolition of self, either of self-confidence or seeking, and no exaltation of Christ on the ruins of self, either as Savior or Lord. We are at best what St. Paul was before his conversion -- alas, without his good conscience or scrupulous obedience.

**Commentary on Phil 3:7 from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator**

One of the first questions that must be answered in life is: Who or what determines the value of anything? What makes a diamond, or gold, or silver, or any other thing valuable? What might one consider more valuable than these precious commodities? What about a good reputation? Would that hold more value than an abundance of earthly treasures? Solomon wrote, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold" (Prov. 22:1). We would expect that an unconverted man might indeed place value on...
things that give immediate pleasure. Jesus spoke of a man who treasured his material wealth more than anything else. "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:20-21). Paul was a very religious man, zealous to serve God. He wanted Israel to be faithful to the Lord and not follow other gods. His motives were good, but he lacked wisdom concerning what was truly most important. When he spoke of "gain," he was referring to his reputation as a Pharisee. He was meticulous in obeying God's law, almost without fault. When Christ comes into a man's life, his whole value system changes, and a new set of values arises. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). After all, what is the most precious thing that a person can possess? Eternal life, of course! When it comes to getting satisfaction from the treasures of this world, it is limited, and rest is always out of reach. This question was once asked of a wealthy man: "How much is enough?" His answer was "Just a little more." Paul knew personally how frustrating life can be when a person works hard but finds he is not achieving his goals. He found no sense of fulfillment in all his honors as a Pharisee. We can hear the cry of his heart as he wrote, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). Indeed, he felt hopeless in all his worldly honors. They had no lasting value. We can see this frustration in the lives of many whom we would call successful by the standards of the world, in the political field or in business, it seems that people are always reaching for a higher position, and often there is a feeling of never reaching their goals. The Bible instructs us to be satisfied wherever we are. Apparently, one of the effects of our sinful nature is always wanting more. In contrast, Paul declared, "For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:11). This frame of mind must be learned; it is not something that we acquire naturally. This spirit of contentment comes from total trust in God, who gives us victory over the frustrations of life. Ambition is something that can easily lure us from centering on God's plan for our lives. We need to accept His perfect will and adjust our goals to His. We should never forget that we are servants and that the Lord gives what is good to those who serve Him.

Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson
The major outlines were determined by reviewing the Scriptural Text to find out what it teaches us about how best to get to Know Jesus Christ. Using this goal, I found the following lesson points from the Scriptural Text phrases as outlined:

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Lesson Background
From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
In his Pastoral Epistles (that is, 1 and 2 Timothy; Titus), Paul instructs leaders of the churches to protect sound, biblical doctrine. He sets that goal as one of their primary responsibilities. Sometimes we refer to false teachings and false doctrines as heresies (see 2 Peter 2:1). Heresies have taken various forms through the centuries. The primary heresy in Paul’s day seems to have been the error of Judaizing. We discussed Judaizing in the commentary on Philippians 1:16 in Lesson 6, but perhaps a bit more can be said. The Judaizers of Paul’s day worked actively to undermine the message of salvation by faith. They taught that Gentile men had to be circumcised and otherwise adhere to the Law of Moses to be “true” followers of Christ. This implied that Christ’s work on the cross was not sufficient for salvation. There is debate among scholars as to whether the Philippian church had been infected with Judaizing. Paul’s language in today’s passage may lead us to believe this was the case, but the evidence is not conclusive. Perhaps Paul’s language in Philippians 3 is preemptive in warning his readers should the teaching of the Judaizers ever come along. In other words, “forewarned is forearmed.” In any case, today’s passage reveals some of Paul’s deepest doctrinal convictions. These are gently blended with a discussion of the practical needs of the church at Philippi. When we study the churches of this
formative era, we conclude that the spiritual maturity of most believers had not progressed very far (1 Corinthians 3:2; Galatians 3:1-5; Hebrews 5:12; etc.). We get the sense that there were few spiritually mature people for newer Christians to turn to for discernment. The false teachers were crafty, and their message seemed compelling, so it was easy for new believers to be swayed. With this fact in mind, Paul decided that the issues of pedigree and accomplishments were important to address.
Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Hindrances to Knowing Jesus (Phil 3:1-6)

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.
2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!
3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the 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, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;
6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Don’t let hindrances keep us from rejoicing in the Lord (1)

Commentary on Rejoicing

The main thrust of verse 1 is Paul’s instruction to rejoice. Let me make several observations from this verse. *First, notice with me that Paul is commanding us to rejoice.* The form of this verb is imperative. We are not given an option as to whether or not we should rejoice; our only option is whether or not we will obey this command to rejoice. *Second, the command to go on rejoicing is given to Christians—and can only be accomplished by Christians.* Paul instructs us to “rejoice in the Lord.” Only the Christian can truly rejoice in the Lord. *Third, Paul is repeating himself when he commands Christians to keep on rejoicing.* Paul admits that he is repeating himself, and he makes no apologies for doing so. The reason repetition is justified is that rejoicing is fundamental to the believer’s Christian life. *Fourth, rejoicing is a safeguard for those who practice it.* Contentment is crucial to perseverance. When we think through the Old Testament, we see discontent at the center of Israel’s disobedience to the God who created them as a people. In spite of all of God’s marvelous provisions for His people, they murmured and complained. It all started with Satan himself. From what we read in Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-15, we can piece together the sequence of events which led to Satan’s downfall. Satan was a created being who had “the seal of perfection” (Ezekiel 28:12). He was given great power and authority, but he was not equal with God. Satan was not content with all that God had given him, and so he rebelled in an attempt to attain equality with God (Isaiah 14:13-14). His discontent led to disobedience, and that disobedience will bring about his destruction. *(Adapted from "Paul’s Perspective on Profit and Loss (Phil. 3:1-11) by Bob Deffinbaugh; from the Series: To Live Is Christ: A Study of the Book of Philippians")*

False Doctrines (2)

*Avoiding false doctrine by watching doctrine closely (1 Tim 4:16)*

16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

*Avoiding false doctrine by not seeking to suit own desires (2 Tim 4:3-4)*

3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.
Avoiding false doctrine by not following rebellious teachers (Titus 1:10-11)

10 For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. 11 They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach — and that for the sake of dishonest gain.

Avoiding false doctrine by not following false prophets (2 Peter 2:1-3)

2 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

Avoiding false doctrine by not listening to those who appeal to lustful desires (2 Peter 2:18-19)

18 For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. 19 They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity — for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

False Confidence (3-6)

Position

False confidence can come from wanting a position that others have (Est 3:1-5)

3 After these events, King Xerxes honored Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles. 2 All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor. 3 Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?" 4 Day after day they spoke to him but he refused to comply. Therefore they told Haman about it to see whether Mordecai's behavior would be tolerated, for he had told them he was a Jew. 5 When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged.

False confidence in a position can leave no room for God (Ps 10:4-6)

4 In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God. 5 His ways are always prosperous; he is haughty and your laws are far from him; he sneers at all his enemies. 6 He says to himself, "Nothing will shake me; I'll always be happy and never have trouble."

Not wanting to lose a position can cause false confidence (James 1:9-10)

9 The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. 10 But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower.

Praise from others

Wanting to be seen by others as a reward can cause false confidence (Matt 6:1)

6 "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

Getting approval and praise of others can cause false confidence (Gal 1:10)

10 Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

The acceptance and praise of others can lead to false confidence (John 12:42-43)

42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.
Authority

False confidence is manifested when one in authority wants to lord over others (1 Peter 5:2-4)
2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

False confidence is manifested in authority when one forgets that there is a Master in heaven over all (Eph 6:9)
9 And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

False confidence is manifested in authority when one thinks he is above judgment (James 3:1)
3 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

False confidence is manifested in authority when one is not prepared to have authority (Prov 30:21-23)
21 "Under three things the earth trembles, under four it cannot bear up: 22 a servant who becomes king, a fool who is full of food, 23 an unloved woman who is married, and a maidservant who displaces her mistress.

Knowledge and Wisdom

Knowledge puffs up and leads to false confidence (1 Cor 8:1-2)
8 Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. 2 The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know.

Never be wise in our own eyes because it leads to false confidence (Prov 26:12)
12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Assuming about tomorrow and what we can do can lead to false confidence (Luke 12:17-20)
17 He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' 18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.' " 20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

Seeing ourselves as pure and full of wisdom can lead to false confidence (Prov 30:12)
12 those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth;

Advantages of Knowing Jesus (Phil 3:7-11)

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.
Commentary on Gains and Losses

Paul has spoken about those things that he once looked upon as assets but has now come to look upon as liabilities compared with Christ. What is it, then, that Paul now considers his ‘assets’? At the end of verse 8 through verse 11, Paul begins to look ahead to his ultimate goal, which he describes as ‘gaining Christ.’ How does Paul ‘gain Christ’? He does so experientially, day by day. He experiences the resurrection power of Christ in his daily walk (verse 10). This is explained more fully in the Book of Romans. Paul knew full well that his salvation called for a new lifestyle. In Christ, he had died to sin and had been raised to newness of life through the resurrection of Christ (Romans 6). While he was obligated to give up his old way of life and live for Christ, he was not able to do so in the power of the flesh (Romans 7). The works of the flesh that could not save him cannot sanctify him either. His problem was that his body was incapable of resisting sin and of accomplishing righteousness acceptable to God (Romans 7:24). The good news of Romans 8 is that, in Christ, Christians are no longer under condemnation for their sin, and that God’s Spirit now indwells them. The same Spirit that raised the dead body of our Lord to life is the Spirit who indwells us, giving our dead bodies resurrection life (Romans 8:1-11). Our “body of death,” which was incapable of resisting sin or performing righteousness is now indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit raises our dead bodies to newness of life, just as He raised the body of our Lord to life. As Paul lived his life in reliance on Christ, and the power of His Spirit, he experienced “the power of His resurrection.” Paul experienced Christ in yet another way. He experienced Christ through sharing in His sufferings (Philippians 3:10). What an amazing truth this is. The Jew tended to assume that suffering was the result of sin and was divine punishment (John 9:1-2). This is precisely what Job’s friends persisted in telling him as they sought an explanation for his suffering. But Paul now sees suffering in a very different way. Our Lord voluntarily suffered in obedience to the Father, for the salvation of the saints (Philippians 2:5-11). As Paul suffers for Christ, he in some way also suffers with Christ. There is a kind of sharing or bonding in this, so that Paul comes to know Christ more intimately. Thus, Paul purposes to know Christ more intimately through suffering for Christ. (Adapted from “Paul’s Perspective on Profit and Loss (Phil. 3:1-11) by Bob Deffinbaugh; from the Series: To Live Is Christ: A Study of the Book of Philippians”)

Spiritual value of receiving eternal life through the Holy Spirit (John 4:14)

14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Spiritual value of being transformed into the likeness of Jesus (1 Cor 15:46-49)

46 The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. 47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. 48 As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we be the likeness of the man from heaven.

Spiritual value of being cleansed into perfection (Heb 12:22-24)

22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Spiritual value of power to be steadfast that comes from putting on the full armor of God (Eph 6:12-13)

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.
Spiritual value of power in the inner being (Eph 3:16-19)

16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Righteousness (9)

A righteousness in God because righteousness is in God alone (Isa 45:24)

24 They will say of me, 'In the Lord alone are righteousness and strength.' All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame.

A righteousness in God through Jesus (Rom 3:19-23)

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. 21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

A righteousness in God revealed through the gospel (Rom 1:17)

17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

A righteousness in God through the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:5)

5 But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.

A righteousness in God that should be pursued (2 Tim 2:22)

22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Fellowship (10)

A fellowship that is based on love and obedience (John 14:23)

23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

A fellowship that calls for living righteously (1 John 1:6-7)

6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

A fellowship because of being a temple of God (2 Cor 6:16-17)

16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." 17 "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

A fellowship through the call of God (1 Cor 1:9)

9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.
Resurrection (11)

Attaining a resurrection because Jesus was the firstfruit of the resurrected (1 Cor 15:20-23)

20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

Attaining a resurrection that is imperishable (1 Cor 15:42)

42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;

Attaining a resurrection because it is a trustworthy truth (2 Tim 2:11)

11 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him;

Attaining a resurrection that leads to a new life (Rom 6:4)

4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Attaining a resurrection that presents the believer into God's presence (2 Cor 4:14)

14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.

Attaining a resurrection that transforms our bodies into a glorious body (Phil 3:21)

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.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

In 1927, a man named John Sung boarded a ship from the U.S. bound for Shanghai, China. John had been in the United States for seven years while he earned three degrees, including a Ph.D. Just as the ship was about to anchor at Shanghai, he threw two of his diplomas, his medals, and his fraternity keys overboard. He did keep his doctorate diploma long enough to show it to his father. You see, John had received Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord and was determined to serve Him for the rest of His life. He wanted to live only for what counted for eternity (Hia, Our Daily Bread, Radio Bible Class). This man led many to faith in Christ and was known as China's Billy Graham. He, like the Apostle Paul, counted all he gained as loss so that he might put Christ first in his life. The Scripture studied in this week's lesson (Phil. 3:7-11) reveals to us the burden of the Apostle Paul to live for Christ at all costs.

It is so easy to forget what God wants most from us. We get so busy getting and doing things that we forget what is most important. God does not want us to throw away or get rid of what we have earned and go somewhere to just wait for Jesus to return. Some have done that in the past only to find out that they were wrong in their understanding of what God expects from His people. The things the apostle said he came to count as loss were not wicked things. They were not things God disapproved of in themselves. In fact, they were admirable things—circumcision, being a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, being a Pharisee, living full of zeal, and obeying the law. The apostle's problem was not his accomplishments or his lifestyle. Rather, his failure was thinking he could make himself acceptable to God by means of his religion. No one's religion makes him right with God. Religion does not save. Only Christ and Christ alone saves sinners. We contribute nothing for our salvation. Our faith in Christ alone is not doing something; it is receiving what Christ has already done for us. All of the things
Paul claimed for himself were true of him before he met the Savior while he was on the way to Damascus to persecute more Christians (Acts 9). That experience caused him to realize that everything he had gained was loss. We too need to gain Christ and give Him first place in our lives.

What exactly did the gain for Paul consist of? What was it that he gained? He gained Christ! He was found in Him! The righteousness from God became his when he stopped trusting in what he had achieved, what he had earned. All of that became loss; what he received from Christ was gain. The heart of this week's lesson is that we as God's people should allow our Savior to have first place in our lives. When we do that, we are given power, the power that raised Christ from the dead. He took our place on Calvary and paid the debt we owed. The longing of God's heart is that we would make Him Lord of our lives. Jesus Christ is the Lord, the sovereign Savior, but He longs for us to by faith crown Him Lord of all in our lives. Why not start today to make Him Lord of that area in your life that you have been trying to withhold from Him? The old saying "If Christ is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all" is not true. He is Lord whether we acknowledge Him as Lord or not. So let us acknowledge Him with everything we have!

**Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator**

1. When we follow God's life plan for us instead of seeking our own way, we are not losing but ultimately winning (Phil. 3:7)
2. Nothing this world offers can match the joy of knowing Christ (vs. 8)
3. Human accomplishments are temporary, but all we do for Christ is eternal
4. God provides the strength and guidance we need to do His will (vs. 9)
5. God may not ask us to forfeit everything for Him, but He does ask that we be willing to do so (vs. 10)
6. Submitting to God's will is like entering a new life, with a fresh attitude toward serving Him (vs. 11)