

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
PURSUING CHRIST FOR THE FULLEST EXPERIENCE
AND ENJOYMENT OF CHRIST**

Message One

Gaining Christ—the Goal of the Believers' Pursuit of Christ

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:4-14

- I. In Philippians 3:3-16 Christ is presented as the goal of the believers' pursuit:**
- A. For Christ to be our goal means that He is the highest enjoyment.
 - B. Our goal is the all-inclusive Christ as the prize to be awarded to us; when we reach the goal, the goal will immediately become the prize—v. 14.
 - C. Paul's pursuit was toward one goal, one aim—Christ; he took Christ as his goal, pursuing to obtain the prize to which God in Christ Jesus had called him upward—vv. 12-14
 - D. Since our goal is to gain Christ, we should forsake all others things and pursue nothing but Christ—vv. 7-8.
- II. On account of (or because of) the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, .Paul counted all things to be loss—v. 8a:**
- A. Paul placed great value on the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; this is indicated by the words *my Lord*, which convey his intimate, tender feelings concerning Christ.
 - B. Paul's eyes were opened to see the excellency of the wonderful, all-inclusive Christ; on account of this excellency, he counted as loss all things, whether they related to religious gain or natural gain.
 - C. In verse 8 *all things* indicates that Paul dropped not only religious things but all things on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; thus, to Paul, the loss of all things was the loss of everything.
 - D. The more we have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, the more we will count as loss everything religious and natural—vv. 4-8a.
- III. On account of Christ, Paul suffered the loss of all things and counted them as refuse in order to gain Christ—vv. 7, 8b:**
- A. *All things* in verse 8 includes the things of religion, philosophy, and culture; Paul suffered the loss of all these things because they were substitutes for Christ, hooks used by Satan to keep people from Christ and the experience of Christ.
 - B. We gain Christ by suffering the loss of all things that were once a gain for us and by counting them as refuse—vv. 4, 8:
 - 1. The Greek word for *gain* in verse 8 means “to secure, to obtain, to lay hold of.”
 - 2. Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead (Col. 2:9) and the reality of the shadows of all positive things (vv. 16-17).
 - 3. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches—Eph. 3:8.
 - 4. Like Paul, we should not only count all things as loss on account of Christ (Phil. 3:7) but also suffer the loss of all things and count all things as refuse (v. 8).
 - 5. The more we suffer the loss of all things and count them as refuse on account of Christ, the more we will gain Christ for our experience and enjoyment—vv. 7-8.