

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. 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.

[Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Php 3:2–11.

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Let's draw a picture of a super successful middle school student, according to a typical middle schooler. We'll assume they are not a follower of Jesus. What would that be?

Now let's say that someone came along and said, "I was that middle schooler. I achieved all of those things. And you know what? My life has changed so dramatically, I am so in love with Jesus, that all of those accomplishments, all of those achievements, basically have the same worth to me as poop." And then let's say he held up a dirty diaper filled with poop as an illustration?

Lift it up, spill it all over myself. Just kidding, this is chocolate pudding.

This is basically what Paul, an early Christian leader, told his followers. Paul was super successful as a Jew. He had done all the right things. He had been born into the right family. He had checked all the boxes of being a successful Jew. But then he realized it was worthless compared to knowing Jesus.

Let's check out what he says.

## Philippians 3:3-11

For we are...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.

He had done it all!

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.

He had let go of finding his significance, his worth, in those other things, so he could hold on to Jesus.

Those things aren't bad. What he's trying to say is compared to knowing Jesus, they are nothing. Those things are fine but they are nothing compared to knowing Jesus.

Jesus is better than \_\_\_\_\_

This section concludes with: 10 My goal is to know Jesus 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.

Is it your main goal to know Jesus? When you know Jesus, you experience the power of his resurrection and also what it's like to suffer. This is what he wanted. This is what was worth so much more than his earlier accomplishments. He knew it involved suffering and he wanted it anyway, because nothing is greater than knowing Jesus, following Jesus, and becoming like Jesus, no matter what that path looks like for you.

End by sharing my own story of crying at the end of high school. There were times when I knew Jesus was most important but I didn't know how to apply it to my life.

Pray, "God, help me to know, in my mind and in my heart, how incredible and how valuable Jesus truly is!" May you know Jesus and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. It is the greatest life you could ever live.