

Doing it all for... Nothing
12/31/23

Day 1

Are you “all in”?

Welcome to another Bible study. Today we’re going to talk about “how much you value your relationship with Jesus?” and the meaning of Philippians 3:7-8

There’s a dangerous line of thought that has infiltrated the church. It’s what I like to call buffet Christianity. We build our lives by adding in all the things that we like. Put a little success and a little notoriety on our plate. Add in some wealth or material goods and then top it all off with a heaping helping of social acceptance and relationships.

When it comes to our relationship with Jesus, we treat it just like another item on the buffet. We just add a little bit to our already overcrowded plate and He becomes just a small part of what we have going on in our lives. The God of the universe treated like a side dish.

1. Have there been times in your life that you treated God like just another dish at the buffet?
2. When?
3. What do you do to recenter your life around Jesus

Day 2

Paul has a vastly different perspective. In Philippians 3:7-8, he says this:

But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

Paul has an all-in viewpoint. Jesus wasn't just a small part of his life. He wasn't a secondary consideration and he definitely wasn't a side dish. To Paul, Jesus was everything. His relationship with Jesus was the central pillar on which his entire life was built and supported.

1. What are some pillars we build our lives on instead of our relationship with Jesus?

He put so much value on this relationship that he counted everything else as vastly inferior. Paul gives us a very practical measurement of this focus. He puts it in terms of what he had accomplished and what he had obtained. In the verses just prior to these, Paul gives a condensed version of his resume.

2. What things on your resume are you tempted to highlight?

If anyone had a right to brag about the things he accomplished, it would have been Paul. He was incredibly intelligent. He was ambitious and he had gained a lot of success in his early years. He was on track to be one of the most influential young men within the context of the status quo.

Day 3

But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

Paul says none of his accomplishments can compare with the incredible value of Jesus Christ and the opportunity to know Him. In addition to that, Paul says that anything else he may have obtained along the way – all the stuff, the material goods – none of it has any value in comparison to Christ.

To him, Jesus was worth following no matter what the cost. And as Paul writes this letter to the Philippians, these are more than just words to him. Paul had to give up everything to follow Christ. His blossoming career was over. His influence in politics and society disappeared overnight. He traded the nice comfortable life of a statesman for the outcast often difficult life of a missionary.

1. Do you find it difficult to follow Jesus no matter what the cost?
2. What are things that you have given up in your pursuit of following Jesus
3. What are things that you would struggle with giving up if you needed to?

Day 4

But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

It's easy to express devotion to God. It is much harder to follow through. When Paul talks about how much he values Jesus, these words have authority. If he could just have Christ, nothing else mattered.

This is the challenge for us today. I believe that God wants to be the central part of our life. With him in the center, all of our thoughts and actions flow from the context of our relationship. So, we need to stop and honestly evaluate the priority and the value we place on Jesus. My hope and prayer for us is this – that we are consumed by the presence of God in us. That He infiltrates every part of our beings and that we give Him full control of our future. That we count everything else to be inferior to Jesus and that he takes his rightful place on the throne of our lives.

Joy is not found by holding on tight to the things that don't matter.

Joy is found when we let go and give God the priority. His plans are so much better than our plans and He is always good.

1. Thoughts?

Day 5

Day off! See you Sunday!