

WHAT IT COSTS US TO KNOW CHRIST - PHIL. 3:7-11

Introduction

- A. Text: **Phil. 3:7-11**.
- B. In our culture, becoming a Christian rarely involves the change of outward circumstances that Paul underwent — for many of us, the “after” may not seem much different than “before.”
- C. So it might be helpful to ask: does it cost some people more to know Christ than others?

I. WHAT MUST BE GIVEN UP

- A. In **Phil. 3:7,8**, Paul said: “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. But 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.”
- B. Paul is not saying anything more than what *any* of us should be able to say.
- C. The truth is, ALL OF US must give EVERYTHING up if we are to know Christ - **Lk. 14:25-33**.
- D. But someone says, “We don’t *actually* have to give up everything for the Lord; we must only be *willing* to give up anything that needs to be given up.”
 - 1. At the heart of sin is a grasping, possessive attitude which says, “This is mine; I have a right to it.”
 - 2. When we come to Christ, we give up this claim and “turn over” all that we are (and therefore all that we have) back to the Lord - **2 Cor. 8:5**.
 - 3. From that point onward, we view all that we have as being the Lord’s rather than our own. Cf. **1 Chron. 29:14; Ac. 4:32**.
 - 4. This is not just a *potential* giving up but an *actual* giving up.
 - a. There is a mental “boundary” that we cross from saying “This is mine but I would give it up if I had to” to saying “This is no longer mine; I have already given it up.”
 - 1) We must be willing to “pay our vows” - **Eccl. 5:4,5**. Cf. **1 Sam. 1:24-28**.
 - 2) Cf. giving “possession” of a house to someone who has already become the owner of it at “closing.”
 - b. In **Gen. 22:1-14**, did Abraham give up his son, Isaac, to the Lord? Yes, he did.
 - c. When did Jesus give up His life for us? I suggest that it was not on the day of His crucifixion but in Gethsemane the night before.
 - 5. One measure of whether we have actually “counted all things loss” is how readily we *yield* what we have given to Him when a moment of outward sacrifice comes.

II. WHY WE WOULD GIVE UP SUCH THINGS

- A. “But 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*” (**v.8**).
- B. It is for “the *excellence* of the knowledge of Christ” that we count all things loss.
 - 1. The word “excellence” means that the value of one things “excels” the value of something else.
 - 2. In Christ, we give up the lesser for the greater: (1) at conversion, (2) during life, and (3) at death.
- C. But do we really *see* it that way — or do we *reluctantly* give up the things of this world?
- D. “Remember Lot’s wife” (**Lk. 17:32**).

III. WHAT WE HOPE TO GAIN

- A. "That I may *gain Christ* 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" (**vv.8,9**).
1. The "love of Christ constrains us" (**2 Cor. 5:14**).
 2. We are glad to give our all to gain Him who gave His all for us - **2 Cor. 5:15**.
 3. In comparison to knowing Christ, all else is "rubbish" — in Christ, we see as *worthless* all that previously seemed so *precious*.
- B. "That I may *know Him* and the *power of His resurrection*, and the *fellowship of His sufferings*, being conformed to His *death*" (**v.10**).
1. If we wish to share in Jesus' *glory*, we should be willing to share in His *sufferings* also.
 2. Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (**Lk. 9:23**).
- C. "If, by any means, I may attain to the *resurrection from the dead*" (**v.11**).
1. This is what Christianity is about.
 2. Whatever earthly benefits may be involved, these are secondary and non-essential.

Conclusion

- A. Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and in the age to come, eternal life" (**Mk. 10:29,30**).
- B. Many of us fail to find *real* life in Christ because we have given up so little of our *present* lives to Him.
- C. If there is anything (other than God) that we are unwilling to let go of, then that thing *controls* us — it is our *master* - **1 Cor. 6:12**.
- D. Jesus said, "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (**Mt. 16:25**).
- E. There is a tremendous freedom that comes from having given up everything.
1. There is nothing left the devil can take away from us!
 2. He has no loss with which to threaten us!
- F. We need to learn the lesson that Abraham learned in giving up Isaac to the Lord - **Gen. 22:1-14**.
- G. "Nothing that you have not given away will ever really be yours" (C. S. Lewis).