

Philippians 3:8–11 (NASB 2020)

⁸ More than that, I count *all things* to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of *all things*, and count them *mere* rubbish, so that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of 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 somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

- 1) Again, Paul is contrasting the loss he suffered and the values of the things against value of gaining a relationship with the Son of God.
- 2) Before Paul met Christ on the road to Damascus, all of the knowledge of and keeping of the Law was the most important thing in his life.
- 3) By persecuting the Church, he was protecting that very way of life that was so important to him.
- 4) Now everything is about Christ and living for Him.
- 5) In verse 9, he makes the point that his righteousness is no longer from keeping the Law but from faith in Christ and that righteousness comes from God alone – not him.
- 6) All of this leads to three vital changes in Paul's life, all at the very core of his thinking.
 - a) That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection
 - b) That I may know the fellowship of His sufferings
 - c) That I may be conformed to His death
- 7) Let's see if we can get on the same page as Paul here.

What do each of these statements mean?

Knowing the power of His resurrection?

- 8) The power of the Holy Spirit which raised Christ.
 - a) This power raises us from a spiritual death now.
 - b) It also raises us to an eternal life with Christ when our life here is done.
 - i) This was an integral part of Christ's high priestly prayer in John 17.

John 17:24 (NASB 2020)

²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

- ii) This refers to everyone who God has called to Christ – from the disciples to everyone setting in this room today who are part of His salvation.
- c) There is a fact in all this that we can't (IMHO) over state – *our eternal life begins when we become a Christian.*
 - i) We only change states at some point on down the road.

Knowing the fellowship of His sufferings?

- 9) As Paul suffers (even now in prison) he feels that closeness to Christ.
 - a) As and when we suffer because of our faith we also should feel that closeness.
 - b) In all likelihood, we will never suffer as much as Paul.
 - i) We simply are not in a position where his kind of suffering is required of us.
 - ii) However, we should be aware of instances where we do suffer in any manner because of our faith and have the proper attitude about that suffering.
 - iii) The degree of suffering should not change the attitude we have about it!

Conformed to His Death?

- 10) One commentator I think really hit this one on the head.

We cannot know the victory of the resurrection without personally applying the crucifixion. We must die to ourselves before we can truly know either the power of His resurrection or the fellowship of His sufferings.

- 11) Paul states this in a slightly different way but with the same meaning in ...

Colossians 2:12 (NASB 2020)

12) having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

- 12) Our baptism is also a burial where we died to our old self and are buried with (or as) Christ was buried.
- 13) We are then raised with Him as we come up from the burial of baptism and, as Paul says in a different place to walk in newness of life.
- 14) And all of that is possible because of faith in the working of God.