

Trash or Treasure? (Philippians 3:1-11)

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[0 : 0 0] so Philippians chapter 3 further my brothers and sisters rejoice in the Lord it is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again and it is a safeguard for you watch out for those dogs those evil doers those mutilators of the flesh for it is we who are the circumcision we who serve God by his spirit who boasts in Christ Jesus and who put no confidence in the flesh though I myself have reasons for such confidence if someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh I have more circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel oh sorry of the people of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin a Hebrew of Hebrews in regard to the law a Pharisee as for zeal persecuting the church as for righteousness based on the law faultless but whatever were gains to me and I'll consider loss for the sake of Christ what is more I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord for whose sake I have lost all things I consider them garbage that I may gain Christ and be found in him not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but that which is through faith in Christ the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith I want to know Christ yes to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings becoming like him in his death and so somehow attaining to the resurrection from the dead and that is the word of God

God of God good morning good morning good afternoon right um can I go through the next slide yep oops right um one of our earliest mission trip this um it was in one of the Asian country and went to this place this city and I was um the missionary there took us to this rubbish dump it was huge and you know we hear New Zealand we hear something like someone's trash becomes others treasures right and I but I was in this dump there's no treasure in there in this trash right and imagine you know you live around there just smell and and and and it's just environment right trash what do you do with them and recently our family we have a new member in our family uh very cute right she eats a lot but she produces quite a lot too and uh you know people saying you know babies poo doesn't smell that's a joke and you know when it's come when it's come right and suddenly when she kind of

I know something's coming I know something's coming and uh when when Carol was changing the nappy and she said dad you want it you know even though I love my granddaughter but not this stuff right but the interesting thing is in in our spiritual life often we hold on these trash this garbage these pools and we allow them to pollute our lives our spiritual lives and and we don't even know we think those were treasures but for Paul watch out for these garbage get rid of them he's not he was not saying thanks um Venus for reading that passage for us he was not even saying oh these are inferior stuff he wasn't saying that are these are not so nice but he actually described that word it really mean disgusting right what do you want to do with those pools and garbage and you know trash what do you do with them they smell they they they they actually do they and they're not going to be healthy for you uh eventually they actually cause harm but often we neglect that especially with our spiritual lives

Paul was saying in uh Philippians 3 which is uh Venus just read for us doesn't work can you push that for us the next slide i don't know why it doesn't work okay please help me julianne uh the first 11 verses of chapter 3 for paul he was saying in the this uh 11 verses he was saying that none of his past achievements no matter how how great how spectacular it was they were or his even his prestigious status he was jews a proper jews pharisees all these everyone was looked up on for him there is nothing in comparing to the knowledge and the relationship with his lord jesus absolutely nothing in comparison let us examine ourselves when we look at these um verses today i believe that um the god is going to challenge us all including myself today would we put christ as the first thing in my life or do we just add something add some christian flavors in my life and i do church and i come and even lead worship sorry pastor william i preach as a pastor you know i think

god's word is fair to us all no matter what status i i am in no matter what kind of experiences i had it's always christ challenging me who who is christ to me today please let no garbage no trash no trivial things hinder us from knowing christ as my lord and savior let nothing to hinder us from this noble goal in my in our lives interesting he was saying something like now now philippians one of the one of the prison epistles letters one of the prison letters paul was had wrote okay he wrote four letters from from prison one is ephesians colossians philemon philemon was a person ephesians was a church in ephesus colossians was a church there as well but he didn't establish colossian church it was someone else but he he sent a letter anyway but philippians was one of the church that really he was dearly it was in his heart so he wrote to them and that you know that actually the book of philippians had as a great impact to my life i believe uh even you have studied that too as well right that would have impacted you a lot too and and and it actually it impacted my life to actually went to for full-time ministry so and i was i was so so fascinated about this book for someone who was in prison writing something that was so powerful so joyful and and so much you know be joyful be joyful you know it's it's natural for us to be outside to to to encourage someone in prison hey hang on there hang in there one day you get out you know but it was that guy in prison encouraging me out here be joyful love one another let's be united for god's word you know wow that was so i was i was so i admired paul so much i preached a lot when i was in bible college when i was reading this and we were going through this um philippians in in the first in the first semester of my last year wow i love i just enjoyed it so much i preached every time i let bible studies and i even preached the chapel at school at later college and and i thought paul was such a hero but god used this book to challenge me you know don't just admire others if i want to send you to seminary to full-time and then you go to be a pastor will you do that and i backed off you know i backed off and i i truly pray and hope the lord will challenge us today no matter what kind of experiences we had no matter who we are god's word is going to speak to our hearts today now when he first started the book the the chapter three he he used this word watch out for those dogs and he didn't mean peanuts right and he didn't mean nimby right now what were those dogs right he explained it in the in the second and third sentence those men who do evil those mutilators of the flesh so who were they now interestingly the jews called gentiles dogs and paul reversed it here those jews judaizers those who really pressed on these jewish laws you want to become christian become a jew first observe all those jewish customs and the book and the regulations of the laws then you'll be you'll be saved and paul said no no no no no no don't listen to those dogs they they were the evil men they were the mutilators of the flesh now mutilators of the flesh is some you know the jews had the circumcisions and he used these words to mock them these guys just like cutting people you know and in the in the message bible put it very plain in it in the present day english he said stay clear of those barking dogs those those dogs they just barked they couldn't do anything right those religious busy bodies all bark and no bite i like that and they are interested in in appearances knife happy circumcises i call them so paul was um yeah paul's warning the philippians saying those people those judaizers the early early jewish christians who really want to push people to become jews observing all the laws all the regulations all the all the days and you know and and and and and months and and all these things in order to be saved and and paul said no no no no no the gospel is not like that so watch out philippians watch out for those dogs those evil people and then he gave his testimony when he said that this is when we receive the grace from the lord so it's nothing to do with the law the law is good but you would you you do not add law to the grace it's adverse to one another although if you

[13 : 11] hold on to what you hold on to what you need to do this do this observe that why why would jesus need to die on the cross right so paul was rejecting these dogs and warning the philippians stay away from them those were trash but in christ that's treasure in cantonese i really like um the cantonese translation that the chinese union version of the cantonese word it pronounces if you know cantonese you know and for christ is the the tone is very very uh how do you say it yeah it's very similar and in mandarin it may not exactly sound alike but in cantonese funto they use funto they use jibo of course i like jibo i like treasure you know but often we we surround ourselves we pollute ourselves with funto with trash how would you like you know if you like if somehow you go to isaac's place and and peanut just poop somewhere and and you just accidentally stood on them all right so what do you do oh look isaac see wow nice and fresh i'm not going to take my shoes off i'm going to go back home and get onto my carpet and even onto my bed of course you won't all right you want to get rid of it you want to wash it if if the shoes not it's about time to get rid of you want to get rid of the shoes too but the thing is we intentionally or

unintentionally often we keep up trash for our spiritual lives and christ really really treasure really yes of course we say it but just have a smell of our our lives is it is it full of trash or it's filled with treasure now paul he he gave his testimony in verses 47 about trash he said if he's talking about flesh these confidence i had plenty you know i was circumcised on the eighth day you talking about circumcision i was circumcised that is the proper day for circumcised people for jewish custom and i was the tribe belonged to the tribe of benjamin there and and that was a tribe that they considered was pure one of the prestigious tribes a hebrew of hebrews a typical hebrew jewish godly uh chosen raised by god in regard to the law a pharisee a very reputed status during those times as for zeal persecuting the church i was i was heading i was a the guy who had the persecution even up onto the to the road to damascus getting the papers from the priests and the authority to arrest the christians further up north and for legalistic righteousness i was faultless people can could not find fault in me

but now whatever to my prophet i consider lost for the sake of christ wow if you look at this guy from a human perspective i mean you want to girls you want to look for someone like that if like today you know he would be um third second third generation of pastors christian leaders or deacons right good education whether he's good looking or not doesn't matter i mean girls don't don't bother with looks right true but he's good education good status he's a good community community leaders um he loves the lord he does all the right things good prospect for marriage but for paul these are nothing compared to knowing and living for christ believe me living out my life for 65 years now 64 and a bit i used to pursue some of these things even though when i was a christian even though i i was a pastor yeah oh we all face different temptations fame there's not much money in ministry but power pride you know we all have these kind of temptations often we can gather these trash before we know anything but but praise god that he was able to help me to see looking back i think i never regretted offering my life to god as as a pastor i never regretted all these years how god would let let me in hong kong back here in new zealand to pcbc believe me believe me these years i'm actually preparing myself to meet the lord you sound so negative no you don't know i mean i'm only 20s in my 20s 30s i'm still far far away but we don't know i was telling billy the other uh just just as he came in i was reading this new zealand hero news it was this guy 29 years old father who was taking his little daughter for a walk at carpety beach all right you anyone read that story while he was walking enjoying with his daughter suddenly he fell he just dropped died he was walking in the woods after almost a year later the coroner found out the cause sand again sand you don't know so don't be too confident people i don't know what will happen tomorrow i plan i have my retirement plan

but will i live long enough for that young people you have your plans but if the lord doesn't allow us we can't do anything what is what is my life full of these trash they were actually only those dogs would want to go and and spend time and dig into them and those were wild dogs we are god's people god has saved me we're saved by grace and i'm sure and i'm sure the lord want us to grow now we used to hear this phrase jesus takes me as i am right surely broken lonely hurt grief yes we can come to the lord just the way we are we don't have to to get to a certain quality before he accepts us he as accepts me just the way i am but people please he won't just allow us to be like this 20 years down the road 30 years down the road he wants to take us further from the day i received jesus to to a to a much christ-like adventure quality character personality we need to grow but if we if we all these time like these wild dogs just hanging around those trash rubbish dumps how are we going to grow just have a think of my life am i am i am i seeking christ or am i just content with now these not these are not bad things you know education um what we have here in new zealand things we enjoy vacation these are not bad nothing bad it's all given by god good praise the lord and receive with thankfulness yes but but according to paul paul if these things become if these things become hindrances for my growth and my knowledge of a of my lord jesus then they are garbage right so paul he carried on he carried on treasure now there was nothing nothing legalistic about oh you must you must do this and you must not have that now paul was saying that you know watch out for those dogs those those those those legalistic people those evil doers so he doesn't pluck you from one camp of legalism and put you into another one no no for him him he was sharing his testimony he was sharing his journey and he encouraged the philippians brothers and sisters wow you know christ is so precious having him knowing him journeying in him is such a treasure in my life hey let's let's let's do it so it was not legalistic in a sense he's encouraging us god through this this passage encouraging us all you know this

surpassing greatness of knowing christ nothing in comparison to the christ
this is greatness is is wonderful his superiority his glory nothing can replace jesus in my life if we if
we just want to spend time to know to explore to experience wow he would never disappoint us but
if i all the time just spending all my efforts and attention to this trash i have no time for treasure
that's not christ god's problem it's my problem so he was saying i consider everything rubbish that i
may gain christ the choice is us i want to know christ the knowledge you see in verse 8 knowing
christ verse 10 know christ now knowing in in the bible is never just a knowledge thing or i know
somebody i know she's a woman i know friend she works in a in a cafe she makes good coffee
there's more than it's more than just knowledge right right and knowing in the in the bible is as a
developing a deep deep relationship with that person knowing god is a process of of deep
interaction relationship that's why um in verse 10 i want to know that i want you know christ and the
power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing his sufferings yes christians can suffer can
suffer and at times will suffer i don't know how it's going to come but that is the sharing the
fellowship fellowship koinonia you can only have koinonia with someone who you have deep
relationship with that's the word fellowship all right fellowship is not just gathering of you know food
or or or prayers fellowship is some getting to know alongside someone a deep deep relationship
that's what i'm saying that's what i'm saying so paul was trying all express explain whatever he
could you know christ is the most treasure the best treasure in life let's let's start this journey let's
spend effort to know him and don't just just you know be among the trash let's let's let's let's focus
on the treasure one commentator says because christ is so glorious he says that it's like it's like the
rising sun and during at night times you know you can bring out the most powerful torch and and
and and and each one competes our mind is more powerful brighter and and and and last longer
you know but when the sun comes out all these things just become useless what would be some of
the thing we hold on to and we think it will last for a long time but when the sun comes out but when
the sun comes out s-o-n when the sun comes out all these things will be useless and and also like if
if if you if you're going to get some of you going to go back to asia hong kong you know i'm sure
you're going to get to these buffet dinner you know

much more extravagant than the one here in new zealand right and cost less yeah yeah i would
love to love to to be one of those when i get to hong kong okay but if you all these things you know
in front of you okay you won't go to a scrap bin for food but the problem is we still do spiritual that's
why we're in pro in privilege and i have that we're mal nutrition nutritious right yeah in privilege
there's so much god has laid before us what do we do now it was this guy if uh i'm not sure if you
know him or not he's dead honey look at look look at look at his he's only 43 years old john song
pretty trendy haircut for early 20th century he was one of the early faith heroes of the early chinese
church when the western missionaries brought the gospel to china he was bright guys he went to
study abroad at college in wesleyan college and then eventually finished a phd in a state university
in america it was a journey he had it didn't it was bright but it doesn't it was hard earning okay he he
was he got sick and he and he kind of dropped out and then he went back and he and he yeah i
mean he eventually cut the story short he eventually got his phd and on his way home but god
challenged him he knew that god was going to use him in in some ways but as he as he was
traveling from america back onto into china on a boat he saw his chinese people fellow chinese
people they were gambling on the ship they were smoking pot opium at that at the time and the
westerners on the boat was just just jeering at them oh these sick men of east asia and he got so in
him deep in his heart is so hurt and then he knelt and he prayed to god god if you want to use me
i'm willing to offer my life to you so that was his that verse was one of his favorite that's the verse we
have read today what what is more i consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing
greatness of knowing christ jesus my lord for whose sake i've lost everything i consider them
rubbish that i may gain christ and and he has this famous um um he he asked god for 10 a hundred
thousand souls chinese people so he went back to china god was able to use him he was he held
many crusades meetings it was tens of thousands of people came to the lord made decisions for
christ maybe even indirectly

[33 : 21] affected your fathers or grandparents in china hearing the gospel and as i said the book
of philippians actually did um god did um challenge me in the last in the last year of my bible college
year uh our principal took this book of philippians i i really i really admired paul as i said and and i i
just just regarded him as a hero so i preached so i helped bible studies but when the challenge
came i was to go back to hong kong to to prepare to be trained as a as a pastor i backed off and
and i backed off and i used various reasons right but believe me when god want to find you he will

find you and eventually and eventually i was i i knelt before god i said lord if you really want to use me okay i i'm well i'm willing to give him so we did and he just led me back to hong kong and after three two and a half years of studies and further more studies and then i started pastoring it was 1989 i graduated even though i can't compare with this this great hero here but whether we're great or small god is still able to use us and whatever whatever calling to you i believe it's not it's not so much of of how what we can do but how we're going to respond and pastor william has shared some of this uh one an article he wrote and i read through that and i was very much challenged this with this word for nao and and ten times this word in it was in in the book of philippines and then verse 15 after he said all these things the the trash that he did not want to hold on to and the treasure that he want to really spend time and and become the focus of his life and then after after after after all that in 315 he says that all of us all of us not just me and it's not legalistic but all of us who are mature should take such a view that the word for nao really means to think to judge to be wise people let's let's let's judge for ourselves let's be wise are we focusing on the trash are we focusing on the treasure jesus i want to know christ and him crucified all these things nothing can compare to the surpassing greatness of knowing him as my lord and savior let's pray father i just pray that you'll use these words father i just pray that you will continue to lead us and i just pray that you will continue to lead us often i yeah i fall back onto these rubbish and i find them attractive but lord help me help us here to know christ and this and his and your surpassing greatness thank you lord in your name we pray amen