

Galatians 6:13-15: For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. 14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

- have no confidence in the flesh (external privileges) – *1 Peter 1:22-25*

1 Peter 1:22-25: Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, 25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you.

Philippians 3:4-8: although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 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 but rubbish so that I may gain Christ NASU

Paul knows that as he points out the heresy of the false teachers, they attack him in an attempt to validate their teachings. Therefore, Paul proceeds to lay out his background to show that even according to their standards, he had more reason and hope than anyone else to be able to obtain salvation through his life. He had superior grounds for confidence, having inherited privileges as well as earned them through his choices. *2 Corinthians 11:23-29*

2 Corinthians 11:23-30: Are they servants of Christ? -- I speak as if insane -- I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. 28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

Paul had inherited privileges:

- being born a Jew, he was not a postulate
- circumcised on the eighth day (a true Israelite from birth) – *John 7:21-24*

John 7:21-23: Jesus answered them, "I did one deed, and you all marvel. 22 "For this reason Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. 23 "If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?"

- his family had retained the Hebrew language and customs.

Paul also had the privileges of his choices:

- in relationship to the Law, he was a Pharisee – *Acts 23:6; 26:4-5*

Acts 23:6: But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!"

Acts 26:4-5: "So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem; 5 since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.

- as to zeal, he was a fanatic – *Acts 8:3; 22:3-4*

Acts 7:59-8:3: They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" 60 Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep. 8:1 Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 Some devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him. 3 But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.

Acts 22:3-4: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today. 4 "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons,

- according to the righteous in the Law he was blameless; he offered the sacrifice for sin

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Whatever gains (note the plural) Paul may have obtained from his lineage and actions, he counted as loss (singular). In fact, many of these 'gains' were worse than useless; they were actually a hindrance, as Paul had to unlearn teachings, attitudes, and actions. The loss of these gains was a singular event or experience. In coming to Christ, he gained new life, but in that one event, he gave up (lost) all of his previous gains, which he considered worthless and of no value to him once he was in Christ as they were irrelevant to him in his coming to Christ. *Matthew 13:44-46, 16:26-27, 19:27-29; Romans 8:18*

Matthew 13:44-46: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, 46 and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 16:26-27: "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

Matthew 19:27-29: Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" 28 And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

Romans 8:18: For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Exhortation To Know Christ

Philippians 3:9-14: 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 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. NASU

Paul abandoned all hope, trust, and faith in himself for righteousness and salvation, which he previously sought through fulfilling the Law of God. He learned through Christ that righteousness comes only through faith in the work of Christ on the cross, and not through having a righteousness of his own derived from the Law (*not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law*). *John 3:30; Galatians 2:15-16, 5:2-6; Colossians 2:2-4; 2 Peter 1:3-4*

Galatians 2:15-16: "We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; 16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

Galatians 5:2-6: Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 3 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

Colossians 2:2-4: that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.

2 Peter 1:3-4: seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

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10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Paul now knew that it is only through faith in Christ that he could ever know God, obtain eternal life, and realize the power of God (*the power of His resurrection*) in his life. He gave up all claims to his own righteousness to receive the righteousness of Christ, by grace. Paul acknowledged the cost of obtaining that which he could not perform or provide for himself, which included knowing God, eternal life, and the power of God. He had to give up all that he had held as sacred and relied upon, including his very identity (*the fellowship of Christ's sufferings*). Paul had to die to himself to attain the resurrection from the dead. **John 11:25-26; Romans 1:3-4, 6:4-11; Philippians 2:5-7**

John 11:25-26: Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Romans 1:3-4: concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

Romans 6:4-11: Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:5-7: Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

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12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus

In verse 12, Paul refutes the false teacher's claim that the Gospel he preached gave people a license to sin. Paul neither promoted sinfulness nor legalism. He acknowledged his state and hope, stating that his *righteousness* was not his own derived from the Law, but that which is through *faith in Christ*. While his *righteousness* was positional as he was in Christ, he acknowledged that in the flesh, he was not yet perfected, as stated in Romans 7 (*Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect*). However, he did not allow this to deter him from pursuing Christlikeness, as he states in verse 13, "*one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead.*" He left behind any and all hope of attaining salvation through his own righteousness. In verse 14, Paul declares that he did not let his "momentary" struggles and failures dissuade him from pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ***Luke 22:31-32; Romans 6:12-15, 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Hebrews 11:1; 1 Peter 5:8-9***

Luke 22:31-32: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; 32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

Romans 6:12-15: Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!

Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18: For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Hebrews 11:1: Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

1 Peter 5:8-9: Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.