

Life Group Lesson 7

Where Real Confidence Comes From
Philippians 3:1-10

PRESS ON

together

Big Idea:

From Sunday: Real confidence is more than what you think. Real confidence is in who you know.

For Today: Real confidence comes from what Jesus has done for you!

Icebreaker question: Besides confidence, name 3 qualities you see at work in confident people. Why did you pick those three?

Video

Today's 12-minute video features Pastor Burkey teaching on Paul's source for real confidence. Turns out, Paul's source can be our source. False confidence-builders are not only prevalent, but dangerous. Even better when you know where real confidence comes from and follow that source, you build your life on a solid foundation.

Read Philippians 3:1-10

When Paul writes **finally** in Philippians 3:1, he's just hit the halfway point of this short letter. When he uses **finally**, he simply means *furthermore*. Everything he has said up to this point has been building to where real confidence comes from, for us to press on together. What are some of the life lessons you have been putting into practice from Philippians 1-2?

Paul begins chapter 3 to make sure **our confidence, our with faith approach, is lined up with Jesus**. That leads to his mantra for pressing on together in verse 1, **rejoice in the Lord**.

In verse 2, he warns: **"Watch out"**. He has 1 group in mind but 3 ways to describe them as **dogs** (think Cujo, not Lassie). Dogs weren't pets in Paul's day; they were wild scavengers. **"Do evil"** gets to their misguided motive and **"mutilators of the flesh"** focuses the point of contention to circumcision part of the Old Testament covenant with Abraham, but not a required way to follow Jesus today. In today's language we might think of the challenge of when traditions of our faith turn into laws that block people from knowing Christ. Can you think of any past traditions that later became stumbling blocks to people's faith growth?

In verse 3, Paul names the source of real confidence as being Jesus and what He has done. Christianity says the way to God is based on what Jesus has done, not what we do. Other world religions say the path to God is based on what you do. Realizing your relationship with God is based on what Jesus has done on the cross, how does that give you confidence to approach God? To live a Christian life?

In verses 4-6, Paul facetiously plays the who's more religious game. He checks off every box that matters in his day. Which of those qualities stick out for you? What are some ways you hear people

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brag about their faith which focuses more on the person than on our Savior? Why is that dangerous from Paul's point of view?

In verse 7, Paul the "accountant" does a profit/loss statement. Everything he ticked off in the previous verses, he now defines as a total loss. The great gain is Christ, even more **"knowing Christ"**. Though knowing the facts of the Christian faith are important, Paul describes *knowing* as relationship, intimacy, as in getting to know a person's heart, life, what makes a relationship together strong. As you think about your relationship with Jesus, what do you know about Him that makes your relationship strong? What would you like to know to know Him better?

In verse 8, Paul the "accountant" has become Paul the "garbage man". **"Rubbish"** is the cleaner translation NIV 1984 uses for the Greek word *skubbalon*. A nicer way of saying it would be "poop". Paul wants the Philippians and us to realize how false our confidence in our life with God is when we add or subtract anything away from being saved by Jesus.

In verse 9, Paul the "theologian" returns, reminding us our **"righteousness"** (being made right with God) comes from Christ's work, not our own.

Then Paul speaks one of my own heart's desires in verse 10, **"I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection."** Who wouldn't want that? Take a moment in your group to share whom you know who needs to know Jesus, and pray for them by name.

I love the first half of verse 10, the second half is a bit more challenging, **"the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like Him in His death"**. Paul is not looking to hang on a cross. Paul looks to be dead to what the world values and alive to what Jesus values. What are some pressure points in your life about following what the world values and what Jesus values? What keeps you strongly connected to Jesus in times of suffering?

Paul's last phrase there in verse 11, **"to attain to the resurrection from the dead"**. That happens with faith in Jesus Who already rose from the dead and shares life abundantly!

Action Steps

Pick one of the four Gospel accounts of Jesus' life, and read about His death and resurrection for *you*. Remember (and share) how Jesus gives you life with God, and how that gives you a confident "with faith" approach in living every day!

Press On Together Prayer

As you close in prayer, I invite you to share with your group, and then take turns praying 2 prayers.

1. A Prayer of Gratitude: Thank you God for ...
2. A Prayer of Grace: Grace: God, I (or ?) need Your grace (help) to ...