

February 16 / Sunday

Playing Favorites: Garbage and Goals

Read [Philippians 3:1-21](#)



17 / Mon – What are you looking at? | Read [Philippians 3:1](#)

Paul was in prison but he repeatedly told his readers to rejoice. How is that possible? Paul modeled it as he focused on the Lord, instead of his circumstances. Everything you will face is temporary, even if it seems it will last forever. Don't take good things for granted. Also, do not let any difficulty drag you into a pit. When you are at your lowest, look up. Measure your problem against how good and how capable God is. Understand that He will either change the situation or walk you through it. And that is where you find joy. How can you apply this truth right now?

18 / Tue – Qualified | Read [Philippians 3:2-6](#)

What qualifies a person to be considered godly? Some would list such things as right living, good works, faithful church attendance, giving to charity. Those things are important, but you can usually find someone who is doing it 'better' than you are. Take Paul, for example, one of God's original chosen people, a highly-educated important religious leader, faultless in obeying God's laws. Yet he had come to put no confidence in those things. Why?

19 / Wed – Garbage | Read [Philippians 3:7-9](#)

Paul's religious resume was quite impressive and it became a symbol to him of righteousness. Why does he say here it had become as worthless as trash? What changed his thinking? Are there accomplishments in your life that you use to assure yourself of your own worthiness before God? Have they become a source of pride? It can come in so subtly you hardly recognize the danger. What causes some actions to stand the test of time while others crumble into dust?

20 / Thu – Goals | Read [Philippians 3:10-11](#)

Paul's first goal was to become a highly respected religious leader and he achieved it. But after an experience on the way to Damascus in Acts 9, Paul realized that knowing Jesus was the real goal. As a result, he became passionate about knowing Jesus better, becoming like Him and making Him known to others. Have your goals changed over time? Do you have an example of something that was important to you in the past but now you see differently? What changed your perspective?

21 / Fri – Pressing on | Read [Philippians 3:12-14](#)

The past can become baggage you carry into the present. Paul had a bad past; he'd put people in prison, ordered executions and did it in God's name, feeling justified. Once his eyes were opened, can you imagine the pain and guilt he felt? Only God is big enough to heal and wipe away that kind of self-condemnation. Paul gives wise advice in verse 13-14 regarding what to do with your past once you've confessed it and been forgiven. Do you have any baggage to get rid of?

22 / Sat – The end game | Read [Philippians 3:15-21](#) / [2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#)

You won't be surprised to learn there were enemies of Jesus' followers in Paul's time, just as today. Yet Paul was not angry or defensive; he grieved for them because they believed this life is all there is so they lived accordingly. Do you need his reminder that life on earth is temporary, that you are a citizen of heaven and you are only here for a short time? When you see people the way God does, your endgame will become helping others find their meaning and purpose in Him.