

REDEEMING THE DISRUPTION

How's your résumé doing? Is it strong? Are there a few gaps you'd like to fill—maybe a few weak spots you've had to explain? A résumé is our chance to stand out, get noticed, and impress. It's not unusual for us to spend our lives "building" it. We attend the right schools, earn the right degrees, gain the right experience, garner the right attention...all, to achieve the right success. This is the way much of life works. We *achieve* our way.

It's surprising, then, when someone who has a résumé-to-envy slams it into the trash! What could possibly incite someone to label something so impressive as mere "rubbish"? It turns out there's at least one aspect of life where a résumé simply cannot impress.

Main Text: Philippians 3:1-11

CONNECT

1. How has this past week gone for you? Are there any new struggles or needs that you're experiencing?
2. What did you take away from last Sunday's sermon? Was something especially significant, inspiring, confusing, or helpful?

LEARN & OBSERVE

1. Read the passage. From the sermon, who are the "dogs" of verse 2 and what hints can we discover from verse 3 about what they must have claimed?
2. What reasons does Paul have for "confidence in the flesh" in verses 4-6? How would you summarize them?
3. From verses 7-11, what motivates Paul to count "whatever gain [he] had...as loss"? How many times do you see the words "Christ," "him," or "his" in these verses?
4. Why is Paul so staunchly opposed to relying on his pedigree and accomplishments? Can't he hold on to these and still please God?

APPLY

1. We should be careful to note what this passage is and is not stating; namely, not every accomplishment or achievement is "rubbish"! What are one or two achievements in your life that are most significant? Why?
2. Paul is specifically highlighting achievements or qualities we might rely on to earn God's favor. Literally, it's a quest for *self-righteousness*. Not many of us would include items from his list, but what are some modern-day practices or actions that might be a threat to us?

3. Paul set aside (“suffered the loss of” v. 8) attributes or achievements that held great value in his day. What things are valuable in our day that might obstruct us from relying fully on the righteousness (i.e., right standing) from God that comes by faith in Christ?

4. If you haven’t addressed this earlier, why is the righteousness that comes from God so opposed to a human-centered righteousness?

5. It has been said about Paul that, “although having everything, learned he had nothing when he did not have Christ.”¹ How do you relate to this kind of posture or belief? Take time to pray for each other, that this would be the attitude of your group and our church community as a whole.

¹ Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians*, vol. 43 of Word Biblical Commentary. Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 182.