

# Above All Else

Philippians 3:1-14

## Pursuits

What do people pursue, even sacrificing time, money, effort, comfort, ...?

Why do we pursue these things?

What should we pursue?

## Philippians

Letter from Paul while he was in prison for living as a Christian

To a 10-year-old church he helped start

Paul said: "Convinced [that I am called to serve you], I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me." Philippians 1:25-26

Paul's goal: **your progress and joy in the faith and your joy and confidence in Christ will abound**



## Philippians 3:1-14

**1-4a: Our greatest treasure and confidence is in Christ Jesus**

**4b-6: Paul had good reasons to have hope in himself, but...**

**7-11: Hope in one thing only: knowing Christ Jesus**

**12-14: Goal: knowing Christ, and being known by Christ**

## The Big Idea

**True joy and confidence only come through a growing relationship with Jesus Christ**

Many in Philippi valued religious activities

**Co-presence** = I'm aware that you're aware of me

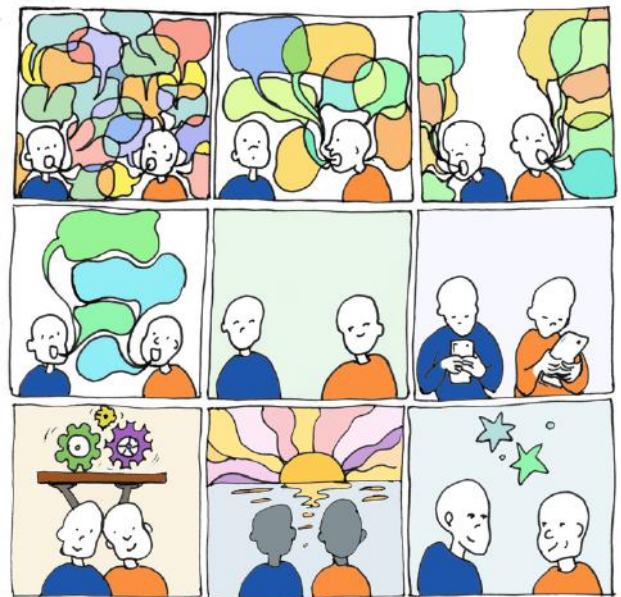
What might 'co-presence' with God look like and feel like?

Which pictures reflect your relationship with God?

**Goal:** A life with growing co-presence with God

I'm aware that He is aware of me

I love Him because of His love for me



## Action Steps

### Find our joy and confidence in the Lord

Value our relationship with God as the most important part of our lives

"I say to the Lord, 'You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing.'" Psalm 16:2

Where do we tend to look for joy or confidence?

**"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." Philippians 3:10-11

Paul: everything else is like garbage compared to the joy and confidence of a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ

Co-presence with the creator of the universe!!

What (hoped for) confidence to lay down...

### Grow our relationship with Christ

What 'a relationship with Christ' means

**To be known by Christ:** "Christ Jesus took hold of me"

Forgiveness and adoption (grace); The life of God in us (new birth)

**To know Christ:** His Word, actions, and character

## God's power in us

the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness... especially in hard times  
transformation in action

## Opening our hearts to Him: us 'speaking'

prayer (broadly understood)

## On the path where He leads

Even participation in his sufferings; With the hope of eternal life with Him

## His Spirit testifying to our spirit: God 'speaking'

Conviction of sin

Assurance of forgiveness and of God's love and relationship

Direction in times of choices

## The relationship is not...

A transaction; A way to get from God what we want

## The relationship is...

Giving of ourselves to God

Receiving the person of God

Longing for God 'calling me heavenward in Christ'

## How to grow our relationship

### Trust Christ, especially His love and grace

And because of this love and grace...

### Speak and listen

Pray (speak and listen)

Be nourished by the Bible (listen)

Worship (listen and speak)

Paying attention to the Spirit's testimony in us

### Obey as an expression of love

By the Spirit's power at work in us

### Together with Christ's people (His body)

Worship services, Life Groups, true friendships, ...

Spurring each other on in Christ

Obeying and serving together

### Daily

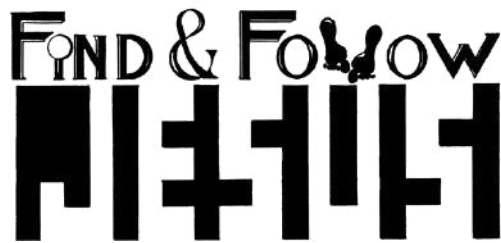
*"Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."* John 14:21

## Find and Follow Jesus

- Having New Life from God
- Growing in relationship with Christ
- Growing into godliness
- Living on Christ's mission

"God rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrews 11:6

Paul's goal: abounding joy and confidence through growing our relationship with Christ



## The invitation: Make Jesus Christ our greatest treasure and confidence

"I will boast ever only in the Lord my God for I know His glory is my good."

## Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. Where are you tempted to look for joy and confidence?
2. What does it look like for you to know Jesus Christ, even in suffering?
3. What steps will you take to grow your relationship with God through Jesus Christ?

## Conversation starter

What might a relationship with God be like?