

Personal/Small Group Study

Week of January 7, 2024 A.D.

The Surpassing Greatness of Knowing Christ as Your Lord

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Read Philippians 3:1

1. In your opinion, what does it mean for a person to "rejoice in the Lord"? How is rejoicing in the Lord "a safeguard" for: (a) all believers and (b) you personally? How often, why, and how do you personally rejoice in the Lord?

Read Philippians 3:2-4

2. Please state how, when, and why you: (a) worship by the Spirit of God, (b) glory in Christ Jesus, and (c) put no confidence in the flesh.

Read Philippians 3:4-6

3. As a first century Jew, why would the experiences and distinctions which are mentioned in these verses give to Paul a reason "to put confidence in the flesh"?
4. One definition of **confidence** is: "a faith or belief that you will act in a right, proper, or effective way". Are followers of Christ expected by God to be (a) self-confident or (b) God-confident? What is the difference between the two?
5. How does a person become self-confident? How does a person become God-confident?

Read Philippians 3:7-9

6. Common definitions of **profit** include: "a valuable return (on an investment) and/or a gain and/or a benefit". What in your life do you consider to be your greatest profit and why?

7. Common definitions of **loss** include: "failure to gain, win, or obtain; a decrease in amount, magnitude, or value; destruction or ruin". What in your life do you consider to be your greatest loss and why?
8. Please explain the meaning of verse 7. Specifically, how could Paul consider "whatever was previously thought to be a profit" to "now consider loss"?
9. Common definitions of **sake** include: "end, purpose; the good, advantage, or enhancement of some person or thing; personal welfare, safety, or benefit". How could Paul possibly consider his personal losses to be for the sake and/or benefit of Christ?

Read John 12:23-26

10. Are all humans subject to physical death? Will every human experience eternal life after the physical death of his or her body? What is the meaning of verse 25?
11. Can a person serve Jesus without following Jesus? Did Jesus "hate his life in this world"? Must a person lose his life for the sake of Christ in order to keep his life for eternity?

Read Mark 8:34-38

12. In your opinion, does the typical American church member: (a) deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Christ? and/or (b) lose his life for Jesus and for the gospel? According to verse 38, what is the evidence which confirms that a person has received eternal life?

Consider: Read and ponder the meaning of John 14:23-24 and John 3:16. What does it mean for a person to "believe in" Jesus? Are love for Christ and obedience to the teachings of Christ the only behavior patterns which confirm the reality of a person's belief in Christ? "You think about that." Amen.