Well, let's turn again to the scriptures. I want us to read this evening in the new Testament again and I ask you to turn to Philippians chapter three. And we're going to read there from Philippians chapter three and verse 3 through to the end of verse 16. Philippians chapter three, and from verse three*: "For we are the real circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh, though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law blameless. But whatever gain I had I count it as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss, because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ---the righteousness from God, that depends on faith. And that time may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings becoming like him in his death. That by any means possible, I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this, or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers. I do not consider that I have made it my own; but, one thing I do forgetting what lies behind, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature, think this way. And if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you; only let us hold true to what we have. "*

([03:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=PdF0FFrW37bLvK_IkRi4vw9FYISYv59V2SWPV5tsrDeJPYYYqhCVoPG8ZYycPDQkIrMXTRzL_oqGzl9TRqFnxSo7By8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=181.02)):

Last night when we were driving into Mobile and to the Lawson's, Dr. Lawson reminded me that in a moment of weakness (in a semipublic occasion) I had said that I find Americans exhausting people. There are many reasons for that---probably largely I am the reason for that---but there is also, as I imagine, most of you understand, there are also cultural differences even among those of us who speak (at least roughly) the same language. And one of those differences is the difference of what we call private space. Scottish people need more private space than either Americans need, or usually, Americans are prepared to give them. And so over the many years I've lived in the United States, which I have loved doing (do not misunderstand me), I've had to build up certain emotional armor to protect myself from the space invaders.

([04:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=GByUxu0RWVPR5nXsZqbgqJkyL9VyPIPMQ0FquxCaeogRPqIC7nWMq9h8v_ltrBJ1dS1bH3i0dtWJ6wsNBD68PlS_umI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=261.96)):

My first experience of this was the number of people who would come to me and ask me---complete strangers---ask me, "Do you have a life verse?" To tell the truth, the concept seemed a little strange. I thought I had a 'life Bible' and not just a 'life verse'. And the sinister part of me was quietly saying, "Even if I had a life verse, I'm not sure I would tell you (a total stranger) what that life verse was." And then as my mind would begin to race a little, in different directions. I would wonder about these people, if they would similarly bounce up to the apostle Paul and say, "Do you have a life verse?"

**Paul’s *ONE* Ambition in Life**

And you would understand, I say this in the context of Philippians chapter three, because I think the apostle Paul might have raised one of his Jewish eyebrows and said, "Have you never read the third chapter of my letter to the Philippians, where I make it so clear that my life verse, expressing my life ambition, is that ***“I want to know Christ---***as he says here in verse 10***---and the power of his resurrection; and share in his sufferings; and become like him in his death. And so, attain to the resurrection from the dead."*** Very evident, I think, when you read Paul's letters, as he describes himself before he became a Christian, and after he became a Christian, that he was a powerfully driven individual, a tremendously ambitious individual. In his Christian grace, He is gentle about his past when he says that he had outstripped many of his generation in zeal--especially as he persecuted the church. And by that, I take him to mean he had actually outstripped everybody in zeal, in his determination to destroy the church of Jesus Christ. And when the Lord Jesus took hold of him and humbled him in the dust on the Damascus road, that ambition---that drive---that he had was gloriously transformed. He didn't become a shrinking violet by any stretch of the imagination. In many respects, he remained the same human Saul of Tarsus; but now his whole life and his demeanor, and especially his ambition, had been brought back to this glorious center; that if you'd asked him what he wanted every single day in life, he wanted that day to be a day in which he would grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**1.** **The *FOCUS* of Paul’s Ambition: To Know Christ**

**And it's this in the *first place* that was clearly the focus of his ambition in everything.** You ask him about anything he was doing...why was he doing it?? In order that he might know Christ better. Paul understands that the knowledge of Christ lies at the heart of our salvation. The knowledge of the Bible is important. But the knowledge of the Bible, without the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, to whom the Bible points, and of whom the Bible speaks, is simply factual knowledge. The apostle Paul is wanting us to understand---as someone who has been set apart by the Lord to give us the scriptures---that the scriptures are a divine instrument to point us to this living, glorious relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what lies (as Jeremiah says) at the heart of the New Covenant. In the New Covenant, in distinction from the Old Covenant, when it was necessary for a prophet or a priest to come to you and say to you, "The Lord has shown us his secrets. Let me share those secrets with you." By contrast with that says Jeremiah, in the new day, when the New Covenant is forged in Jesus Christ: he will be the prophet, he will be the priest; and all of us will have immediate access to him. And this will become the epicenter of the life of this glorious new community of the Christian Church---a community of people who know the Lord; a community of people who do not need mediators other than Christ in order to discover the secrets of the Lord, because he is the supreme secret of the Lord made known to us in the gospel.

([09:54](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=YeQryOMTapoEdflJqpqOiNhYMdhzM_w6nsvAfbYpyoNa6iklT0EIeNLG4cWK38glDsCFF9w8sUZYlb4XyUB61PFBSsw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=594.06)):

And so, as Paul catches this teaching of the Old Testament scriptures. And perhaps in his encounters with the other apostles had heard, for example, the apostle John say, "When we heard our Lord Jesus pray in those last hours of his life, he prayed, ***'Father, this is eternal life to know you and to know Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*'"** It was in Paul's case, a very dramatic reversal of his whole being. And earlier on in this letter, in chapter one and verse 21, he had said that this was true of all of his life. It was clearly true of his preaching. He wanted to preach nothing except Jesus Christ and him crucified. But that was because it was supremely true of his life. That to him, to live was Christ. And the reason to die would begin would be because it was closer access to Christ---full-on knowledge of Christ---the possibility of seeing him face to face and being made like him, and embracing him in all his fullness.

**Paul’s Deep Meditation Upon Christ**

**This passage is particularly impressive about this ambition of Paul's to know Christ as the way in which he expresses the depth of his meditation on the Lord Jesus.** You notice the words that he uses. It's almost as though the love for the Lord Jesus, that lingers in his heart and lingers on his tongue, in the lavishness--the luxuriousness ---of the vocabulary that he uses**. *"I count everything as loss, because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus as my Lord."*** And you can tell the man has *long* meditated---*lovingly* meditated---on the Lord Jesus Christ; and that this meditation has driven his ambition; that **it is the *meditation* that has brought him the sense of the sheer majesty and glory of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.** And the more he has known of Christ, the more his soul has expanded in love for Christ, devotion to Christ, and ambition to know Christ better.

([12:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xY5hxIgApBAfl4fkHRMTBStWkm4owNopd3AS5w834Gu9jiox9zr4fhBc1aul0xK6kcIVWtN62MnEk4oqNZw6qZ47UCQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=762.55)):

And it's such a telling thing, isn't it? In a world---in a Christian world---where we've almost lost the power of meditation on the Lord Jesus Christ. I don't think it would be unkind to say that many Christians would find it difficult to meditate on the Lord Jesus; to sit and think lovingly of him for any length of time. We are surrounded by influences that destroy our powers of meditation. We live in a world where everything is required to happen at enormous speed. And one of the things that we need to learn from the apostle Paul is to keep that world at bay, lest we imagined that simply by momentary thoughts about the Lord Jesus, we will be able to feed and fuel passionate love for him and passionate love for the gospel.

([13:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=cSWuEoKamo1Hd7WFTDQ3JtKkYGsBMOh4GCgtghrLT-FXVZcTZeyOKFfvNqwf-eSTp4QiP8xX20v6gz9OV4eHTawMoaI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=832.12)):

**And so you see, he has looked on the Lord Jesus and gazed on him, lingered long on all that he has heard from others about him, and all that he has come to know about him.** And he has sought to see Jesus (his letters are full of this!!)...he has sought to see Jesus from every angle. He has just said in Philippians chapter two, "I have been meditating on the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ." And he says to these Philippians, "Let me take you inside the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ." He has thought so much, so deeply, about the Lord Jesus, that he believes he is in a position to say, "Here are the thought processes of the Lord Jesus: ***that though he was in the form of God, he didn't count equality with God a thing to be grasped; but he humbled himself. He made himself of no reputation. He took a servant form."*** He'd presumably heard the story of the foot washing in the upper room, and how Jesus had done precisely this, as in a dramatic parable of all that he had done in coming from heaven to earth, and had taken off his outer garment, and wrapped on himself the servant's towel, and washed the disciples feet, and humbled himself, even to death. And the sense that among those feet where the feet of Judas Iscariot, who would betray him, and humanly speaking, become the instrument of his dreadful affliction. And he lingered on Jesus.

([15:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=m1O7GjeCnO13VxGXF8XLVOwvFIen4ujnSAFsj9dCpHgWGSdus7me_sYRTLh5i5AjuJ6C6hX7RE_3wdlTxhDLP7YhsTU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=951.5)):

In our work, in our church, in Columbia, SC, it was part of my responsibility to be a final interviewing panel for people we were bringing on staff. And I had learned from my children the kind of questions you should ask people when they're being interviewed: "Where do you think you are going to be in the next five years? What is your plan for the next 10 years? Great ambitions for your life." But I developed a different question for myself. It was one I'd thought about for myself, rather than anybody else. It was this. **"What do you tend to think about when you have nothing else to think about? What do you tend to think about when you have nothing else to think about?"**

([16:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=3ri2EZeoB_q-FYD75hz89viEargbCxm9p4XJrYvIUq58whbRpYv3RxOrkllSFbmqXCjui0Tz4lNgbOpayUptSJ7-eAU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1008.65)):

**It's not very difficult to answer that question on Paul's part, is it? When I've nothing else to think about, I think about what I'm thinking about when i have plenty to think about... I think about my Lord Jesus Christ!!!"** And you see the intensity of this meditation gives rise to extraordinary devotion. You'll notice the way he puts it here. He speaks about, *"The surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord."* Now, you know that when Paul speaks about Jesus as Lord (Kurios), he characteristically is not saying something about himself. A contemporary evangelical Christian, when he says, "Jesus is my Lord," is usually saying something about himself or herself...about my devotion, about the fact that he is my master. But when Paul calls, Jesus 'Kurios', he means Jesus as Jehovah, Jesus as Lord, Jesus Yahweh. Jesus is the Lord of all things. But it's interesting here that, knowing that he is the Lord of all things, as he had said again in chapter two, *"That God had highly exalted him, and given him the name above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* And he's saying, "I've been there and I've seen that. And my whole being is yielded to him. And that's my burning ambition."

([18:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=j5gggLIlg8rBWU-L4CcNlYmql9GrgXufhcQVame1OXS7pORDb-2k6Lyyq2XmaHs4WGD_Q_WBrqhi3NqGooiEDh-qGVo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1118.91)):

On one occasion in my life, I had to write to the Queen (Elizabeth). And I was given very clear instructions about the language I should use in writing to her... To follow the etiquette. I don't know what the etiquette is when you write to the President of the United States. But when you write to the Queen, you are supposed to conclude your letter, "I am your Majesty's most humble and most obedient servant." **Now, can you say that about the Lord Jesus, "I am your Majesty's most humble and most obedient, servant."**

**2. Paul’s Ambition to Know Christ…Its *OUTWORKING***

So Paul's ambition here---this glorious ambition---is focused on the knowledge of Christ. But in the context here, **Paul also tells us something, not only about the focus of his ambition, but the *outworking* of his ambition in his union and communion with Christ.** You notice in verse nine, he says, ***"I am found in Christ, not having a righteousness of my own that comes some the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ: the righteousness from God that depends on faith."*** So, he wants to be found in Christ for justification; but he also wants to have ongoing communion with Christ that will lead to his transformation. And do you notice how he puts it? He says, ***"I want to be found in Christ, that I may know him (verse 10) and the power of his resurrection, sharing his sufferings, becoming like him in his death; so that I may attain the resurrection from the dead."*** I want you to notice something very striking about this. He says, "I want to know Christ, ***first*** in the power of his ***resurrection***. In other words, he reverses the order of death and resurrection. ***"I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, in order that I may share in the fellowship of his sufferings."*** And ***then*** he stays there with the fellowship of his ***sufferings***, ***"In order that I may be made like him in his death so that, at the last, I may attain to the resurrection."***

([21:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=u5Oeh-td7XM9hK_StaP669UVap2cqfA--0pGkyAptPe6FTRLqaTLuPCwJ0qOVyrHyPAZpefeKDdWwAPwF6R-M2GR36I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1272.94)):

Now, of course, he's speaking about the way in which we do come to know Christ. We come to know Christ because he is risen, and he comes to us in the word of the gospel; and he steps off the page of scripture. And we thought he was a figure in a history book. And we discover he is real, and living, and resurrected Savior. And he comes to us and he addresses us. And, and we understand what the scripture means when it says, *"He calls his sheep by name."* And we may find ourselves in a congregation like this, or in a huge congregation. And we feel we're the only person in the room; and he's speaking to us. And we've lost sight of the human voice. We can hardly hear it; because it's the voice of Christ that's speaking to us. That's what he's talking about here.

**The Outworking: *UNION* and *COMMUNION* with Christ**

He wants to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection. But then he says, once we come to know Christ and are brought into union and fellowship and communion with him, the one we know as the risen Christ is the one in whose sufferings we share as the dying Christ. ***"I want to know him in the power of his resurrection, and share in the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made like him in his death, so that I may attain to the resurrection."* And this lies, my dear friends, at the very core and heart of the Christian life.** There is a sense in which this is the very thing of which Joseph (of whom we were speaking this morning) had a preview in his experience. **Sharing in the sufferings of the one who is risen; becoming conformed to his death, in order that we may share in the power of his resurrection.** So that as we are United to Christ, something begins to happen in our lives, as though we were being squeezed into the mold of Christ's death and resurrection.

**The Outworking: Conformed to Christ’s *DEATH* and *RESURRECTION***

And for Paul, this ongoing ministry of the Spirit that transforms us to make us like the crucified and risen Christ, becomes the mold---the lenses----through which he sees the whole of his Christian life, and all of his Christian service. Indeed, he seems to see this as the very epicenter of his fruitfulness. **That, if what made his savior fruitful was his *dying* followed by his *rising*, what will make Paul fruitful, will be *sharing* in His dying, and sharing and His rising.** Perhaps the place where he illustrates this best as in second Corinthians, where he does it in several different places. He begins by saying to the Corinthians, *"We wanted to share the comfort of God with you."* This was his great ministry to them: *"To share the comfort of God with you."* But do you remember how he says it was possible for him to share the comfort of God with them. Because the afflictions of Christ, that had poured over him like an anointing oil, had flowed down onto the members of his body and onto the apostle Paul. And he had found himself, in his affliction, needing to taste the comfort of God. And so he says, *"We want to comfort you with the comfort which we received in our affliction."* It was through affliction that God put comforting into his soul...so much so that later on in second Corinthians 4:10 -12, he speaks about the character of his own life. He says, ***"We are afflicted in every way (verse 8), but not crushed; perplexed; persecuted; we are struck down. We are always carrying in the body, the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live, are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So,*" he says, *"Here is the principle. Death is at work in us."***

([26:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=c3k0QDwxRbLOMqUHAMlgd4hCrId7WViV3cNRR1Bo6Knmdk7HMvzGRL_1k_cOHbVfchCtrF_joTIcabifJguF9LyQWPc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1563.38)):

**And he's speaking about these trials, these afflictions, these things that knock him down; the pains he experiences in his body; the struggles that he has.** And you see, he's seeing them through gospel lenses. He doesn't see them apart from his union and communion with Christ. And then he understands what's happening to him. You see His death is at work in us. Our union and communion with the death of the Lord Jesus---it's almost as though it's being poured out into our lives too, in order that life may be brought forth in others. It's the very principle Jesus enunciated, isn't it: "Unless a seed falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit." And so here is a gospel principle that arises out of his knowledge of Christ, and his union and communion with Christ; and it makes him see his life in a very different way. So that by the end of second Corinthians, he says to them, in a very striking statement, he says, *"If I need to come again, I will not be sparing (2 Corinthians 13:2), since you seek proof that Christ is dealing in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. For, he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God."* And notice these words in second Corinthians 13:4b, *"For, we also are weak in him; but in dealing with you, we will live with him by the power of God."* Now we often say, *"We are weak in ourselves, but we are strong in Christ."* And that's true; but my friends, that's not the truth of this verse. **The truth of this verse is that we are weak in communion with Christ.**

([28:23](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=c6_d3UcChIufxpa1_HBUwz3UjAZkD3NUU7r2APhOzx6m9AdsT7aAUfw9xI-r6RyMzMT1SSqujc939jAXuko63UKzDmw&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1703.611)):

Do you see how radically different this is from so much of our Christianity---that what we need to be as strong and all together, and impressive in the world. And you see how, in our subculture, we are driven by that---by the strong and the impressive; the models that are held out, for example, to young ministers, and not the pastors who have settled in congregations for 25 years, serving 250 people. The models that are held out are the men who minister to their multi-thousands, and are treated as so successful, and have these great and glorious strategies. But not the kind of model that the apostle Paul holds out here---the model of the man, or the woman who is weak because he or she is united to Jesus Christ. And out of that weakness, God brings forth strength. ***"We are clay pots,"* says Paul in second Corinthians. It's only when we're broken that the light shines through**. I think he may be thinking of Gideon, don't you? And his little band of men, and their little pots and their little lights. And the pots being smashed, and the light shining through, and the Midianites being overwhelmed by this tiny minority.

**Communion with Christ *Transforms* Us Into His Image**

So this is a great principle of the Christian life; but Paul has this great ambition to have his focus on the knowledge of Christ; but in the outworking of that ambition, to know what it is to have communion with Christ, in order that (can I put, can I put it this way?) he says*, "I want to be morphed. I want to be reshaped into the likeness of Jesus Christ."* My dear friends, if you didn't know that, much of the Christian life would become a sheer mystery to you; because that's what the Holy Spirit is doing. That's what he's about. He's shaping us into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. He's pouring us into that mold. And the mold is the mold of the crucified and risen one. And so, our Christian lives will have this rhythm built into them, of sharing in his death and sharing in his resurrection. There will be pain and there will be triumph. There will be struggle. And there will be glorious gain. There will be agony. And there will be ecstasy. And there will always be both until, as Paul says here, *"By some means,"*... he has no doubt that he will attain it. He doesn't know exactly by what means it will happen; but the day will come when that pattern will cease to be. And as he says, at the end of this chapter, *"This mortal, humble body will be transformed into the likeness of his body of glory."* But until that day comes, it is death and resurrection, and death and resurrection, in union with Jesus Christ all the way home.

**Sprinkled with Christ’s *Atoning* Blood AND *Suffering* Blood**

But when the lenses through which we see everything that happens in our lives are crafted in that gospel truth, things become far clearer to us than they would ever be. From one point of view, it's almost terrifying, isn't it? **That in coming to Jesus Christ and embracing Jesus Christ, not only his *atoning blood*, but his *suffering blood* will be marked on my clothing too: that I will share in the outworking of all that he has done by experiencing suffering, by experiencing persecution, by experiencing pain.** I think I know where Paul learned this. I think he learned it right at the very beginning of his Christian life: death worked in Stephen and life worked in Saul. So, there is a focus to his ambition in Christ. And there is a outworking of his ambition; because, as we were reading tonight in Romans chapter eight, *"He has predestined us to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."* Now, perhaps you, like me, would very much like to limit that to final glory, but Paul doesn't limit it to final glory.

**3. The *EFFECTS* of Paul’s Ambition to Know Christ**

**And then there's a third thing here that we should notice: the focus of his ambition, the outworking of his ambition; and *thirdly*, the *effect* of his ambition in his daily life in communion with Christ.** This is... there's wonderful theology, this, isn't it. But does it really make any difference to your life? Did it really make any difference to Paul's life? Well, it does so in some very obvious ways, doesn't it!

**The *First* Effect: A Holy Dissatisfaction**

**First of all this. You see it in verses 12 -14. *It created in him a Holy (H-O-L-Y)... a holy dissatisfaction,* didn't it?** Of course, there is a satisfaction in Christ. But what this created in Paul was a dissatisfaction until he knew Jesus Christ better. And this is the dissatisfaction, my dear friends, that cures every other dissatisfaction in our lives. When we find there is a glorious satisfaction in Christ, we can never be fully satisfied until we are fully satisfied with him in glory. And it's that dissatisfaction in our satisfaction in Jesus, that produces in us a dissatisfaction for all that the world can offer as its substitute. You watch the young people as they fall in love and that opening up of the soul and the satisfaction: that there's somebody out there who seems to love me! But it produces a deep dissatisfaction, doesn't it? You can't wait until, you know, more of them, spend more time with them, have or more of their love, know more of their soul. And it's this way in the Christian life. It produces a holy dissatisfaction.

**The *Second* Effect: Singlemindedness**

**The second thing it produces is a *single minded simplicity***. You see the way Paul puts it here in verse 13, very remarkably. He says**, *"One thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead."*** Now you'll notice, if you just look at chapter one, verse one, that Timothy was with Paul when he wrote this---maybe just looking over his shoulder. If I'd been Timothy, I would have said, "Stop there, Paul. You've never told a lie since you became a Christian. You're not doing just one thing. Didn't you write to the Corinthians about all the different things you were doing? You're always writing letters. You're always in trouble. You're always preaching. You're always praying. You're always on the move. You don't do one thing. You do a thousand things!" And, of course, Paul would have said, **"No, no, Timothy. I don't do a thousand things. I do *one thing* in a thousand different ways."** **That's what it means to be centered on Christ!!!!!** That's what produces order in the chaos of our existence: that in everything we're doing; whatever our calling; wherever we are living; with whomsoever we are speaking; at the end of the day, we are doing only ONE thing. We're getting to know Christ. We're watching for what Christ is doing. We're wanting to share Christ's grace. We're wanting to understand Christ word. We're wanting to try and find out ways in which we can serve Christ in serving others. And it is a gloriously liberating principle, isn't it?? Would that our young people would be able to grasp this principle in what is becoming an increasingly confusing world, where there seem to be thousands of things to which they could give their lives. **But dear ones, when you have given your life to Jesus Christ, there is, actually, only *one thing* you do...even if you find yourself in a destabilized world, apparently doing a thousand different things.**

([38:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=hvDDxQGsBerrovlixl7MridRlNC9huHWBm8X7WLeuC-qZsD4vvgHROggC6mYDoVk3vODGqSSGNEBJHjhTY_5U8atolg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2305.59)):

That's one of the things that gives the Christian believer poise in the midst of the chaos, isn't it? And makes people take notice. What's so different about them, that in the midst of this, they do not seem to be driven around by the same things I am driven around by? They don't seem to be in a panic. Why is this? **Because there is no situation in the whole of life upon this earth, in which it's impossible for the Christian to know and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.** And all of this, of course, Paul did, because by God's grace, he had learned a genuine Spiritual accountancy. You would have noticed as we read these verses---as you've read them before---how frequently he uses the word 'loss'. It comes from the world of accounting. He says, ***"I count it as loss, whatever gain I had. For the sake of Christ, I count everything as loss, because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish."*** Everything that he had formerly counted gain: it's all in the loss column, comparatively speaking. Everything he had accomplished, it's all in the last column, comparatively speaking. Indeed, he has this very dramatic way of putting it.

([40:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=0MTfvnzAytQZbHOsh_ofFQNFpDQ9PDtZZLo66gZivY-xx9bcKMl3K-TPoopgPs_jz5rFclaCQOeN6ltRJQ8rnU3M1pQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2400.011)):

It so happens, when I was a theological student, Philippians was one of the prescribed texts in the university faculty where I studied. And I can still feel my vibrations as I sat working my way through the Greek text of Philippians, and came to this word that's used here, *'skybala'*, in the Greek text. And as a diligent little fellow, I reached out for my Greek lexicon to find out the range of possibilities in the way this could be translated. And there, in the ancient library, I had a moment of intense joy, as I read this very proper scholar, giving various indications of how the word could be translated and then ending his note, "Usually translated *'dung'*."

**The *Third* Effect: Counting Everything Else as Dung/Rubbish**

***"I count everything as refuse."*** He's not saying the world is worthless. He's saying Christ is so glorious and precious that, by comparison**, everything else seems as though the only place it would really belong is in the trash container...because Christ is so great.** Oh, my dear friends would that our churches understood this. What a blessing it is to have a Lord's Day evening service---precisely because we regard what others regard as (actually, the most important thing that happens on Sunday)...as, comparatively speaking, *trash*. And how sad that Christians would give themselves to watching comparative trash, rather than being taken up with the exalted glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

([42:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Xi6YYRt0aVMsypA6y3P2T-4q8_WfTzN1K1-AqnxalgWVJhzc3apjDlET-dWh-N5XxbYZ8rOBNQa2KZaBFnmkC1Xm3DU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2530.63)):

One of the things that humanly speaking strengthens my friendship with your minister is that we both have an interest in a very strange game, invented in Scotland many years ago, where grown men do unnatural things and follow a white ball round several miles of green grass. And, we enjoy playing golf. They say it's a game invented by Scottish Calvinists, so that they could have a good time without actually enjoying themselves.

([42:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=j7Ddqe4hjvdM2TdlCyWVM75RO6gICm-KFy_luCCfJ4Fp9c-BYAqoJhI-Y5XyY1EllJafTUsS7Da4hSA_Oil9FYleZlM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2576.39)):

Many years ago, when our children were young, I took our second son to see the British Open championship. It was many years ago because Jack Nicholas was playing in it. And, he wasn't doing too well. And so it was only the faithful who were continuing to follow him around. And so we were able to get relatively near to him. He came down from one green to another tee at Royal Troon. And, we were only yards away from him. And as he came down, he turned and looked at us, as I was holding my little boy's hand. And he lingered; and he looked at me. And he looked at me the way you would look at somebody as if, "I've seen you somewhere before, who are you?" And then he went just like that and played his shot. And my little boy looked up to me and said, "Do you know Jack Nicholas, dad?" "Of course," I said, "I taught him everything he knows!" But, no, what I really thought was this, "No, Peter, I don't. And he doesn't know me. But I know one who is infinitely greater. And he knows me. And by God's grace, you will know him too."

**Knowing Christ: OUR Great Privilege and *Motivation* to Persevere**

This is our ***privilege***, my dear friends to ***know him***; and then to ***make him known***! May God deepen our fellowship with him? May God give us insight into the patterns that he works into our lives to conform us to himself and to make us fruitful like himself. And by God's grace, may we have the Spiritual accountancy in which the things of earth grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

([44:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=J-0vRGXDP7G1AUoFiT1MaJZqa2IaW3q2W2-VM4O3SjCoLGvKrT1Qykvz9_QnHxYv9batQNSqBfgyfi8GTzEIPjv-6C8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2698.11)):

"Out heavenly Father, we thank you for this day you have given to us for a day of rest, and joy, and fellowship; for being able to contemplate in song, and express in love the glories of your creating and redeeming work; to have the privilege of loving one another earnestly from the heart; and for being able to feel, and have a sense of the sheer grace of Christ speaking to us through his word. Oh... speak on, Lord Jesus, through the scriptures! Show us yourself, and show us more of our need, that we may seek more of yourself; and then, knowing you better, may we love you more and serve you more obediently; and truly be your humble servants. Lord, for some in whom these great gospel principles are written large, we pray that you would continue to work and bear much wonderful fruit. And where we see these principles, but written small, we pray yet that we too may be seeds that fall into the ground and die, and bear much fruit. Oh make us, we pray, more and more like our Lord Jesus, that others may see his beauty in us and his grace; and be drawn to him. We pray this in his name. Amen."