

**#5 Having No Confidence in the Flesh
and Counting All Things to Be Loss on Account of Christ
and the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ**

(The Memorial Conference) 2019/7/29-8/4

I. We who believe in Christ should have no confidence in the flesh; our confidence should be wholly in the Lord:

A. The flesh in Philippians 3:3 and 4 comprises all that we are and have in our natural being. [Phil. 3:3](#) For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,

B. In these verses *confidence in the flesh* refers to all the good items or qualities that we have in the flesh; the honorable, lovable, and superior aspects of our natural being are still the flesh.

C. The greatest problems among God's children are that they do not know what the flesh is and that their flesh has not been dealt with: [Rom. 8:8](#) And those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **1.** Self-confidence is the characteristic of the flesh; the most obvious sign of unchecked flesh is self-confidence. **2.** Confidence in the flesh keeps us from Christ.

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D. As believers in Christ, we should be those who have no confidence in the flesh, no trust in our natural ability or heritage: [Phil. 3:3](#) For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

[Col. 2:11](#) In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ.

1. Although we have been regenerated, we may continue to live in our fallen nature, boast in what we do in the flesh, and have confidence in our natural qualifications.

2. Only when we have been enlightened by God will we be able to say truly that we have no trust in our natural qualifications, ability, or intelligence; only then will we be able to testify that we have no confidence in the flesh and that our confidence is wholly in the Lord.

E. If we would experience Christ, we must not trust in the flesh but trust in the flesh but trust only in the Lord; this is the secret to the experience of Christ.

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II. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is derived from the excellency of His person: [Phil. 3:8](#) But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ.

[Matt. 17:5](#) While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!

A. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is not the knowledge that belongs to Christ, the knowledge that Christ Himself has; rather, this knowledge is our subjective knowing of Christ: **1.** In Philippians 3:8 *knowledge* actually means a revelation, a vision, concerning Christ and His excellency.

2. When Christ was revealed to him by God, Paul saw the supereminence, the supreme preciousness, and the surpassing worth of Christ.

B. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is the excellency of Christ realized by us: **1.** We need to have a vision of the preciousness of Christ and the excellency of the

knowledge of the all-inclusive, unlimited Christ. **Wed**

2. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ comes by revelation; without the revelation concerning Christ, we cannot know Christ. [Matt. 16:17](#) And Jesus answered and said... "Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in the heavens." [11:27](#) All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one fully knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone fully know the Father except the Son and him to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

C. If we would experience Christ, we first need to have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ:

1. We cannot experience Christ without knowing Him through a revelation of Him. **2.** If we do not have a higher revelation of Christ, we cannot have a higher experience of Christ. **3.** Our experience of Christ cannot surpass the excellency of our knowledge of Christ.

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III. On account of (or because of) the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Paul counted all things to be loss: [Gal. 1:15-16](#) But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,

A. Paul placed great value on the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; this is indicated by the words *my Lord*, which convey his intimate, tender feelings concerning Christ.

B. Paul's eyes were opened to see the excellency of the wonderful, all-inclusive Christ; on account of this excellency, he counted as loss all things, whether they related to religious gain or natural gain.

C. In verse 8 *all things* indicates that Paul dropped not only religious things but all things on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; thus, to Paul, the loss of all things was the loss of everything.

D. The more we have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, the more we will count as loss everything religious and natural.

IV. On account of Christ, Paul suffered the loss of all things and counted them as refuse in order to gain Christ:

A. *All things* in verse 8 includes the things of religion, philosophy, and culture; Paul suffered the loss of all these things because they were substitutes for Christ, hooks used by Satan to keep people from Christ and the experience of Christ.

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B. We gain Christ by suffering the loss of all things that were once a gain for us and by counting them as refuse:

1. The Greek word for gain in verse 8 means "to secure, to obtain, to lay hold of." [Phil. 3:8](#) Of [Christ Jesus] my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ. **2.** To gain Christ is to gain His person, to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches.

3. Like Paul, we should not only count all things as loss as on account of Christ but also suffer the loss of all things and count all things as refuse.

[3:7](#) But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

4. The more we suffer the loss of all things and count them as refuse on account of Christ, the more we will gain Christ for our experience and enjoyment.

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Crucial Point (1): Serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3)

OL1: Self-confidence is the characteristic of the flesh; the most obvious sign of unchecked flesh is self-confidence. Confidence in the flesh keeps us from Christ.

OL2: The greatest problems among God's children are that they do not know what the flesh is and that their flesh has not been dealt with:

OL3: Only when we have been enlightened by God will we be able to say truly that we have no trust in our natural qualifications, ability, or intelligence; only then will we be able to testify that we have no confidence in the flesh and that our confidence is wholly in the Lord.

OL4: If we would experience Christ, we must not trust in the flesh but trust in the flesh but trust only in the Lord; this is the secret to the experience of Christ.

Many Christians think that having confidence in the flesh means having confidence in the sinful elements of our human nature, but this is not the meaning of flesh in **Philippians 3:3**.... After Paul says that he had no confidence in the flesh, he goes on to say that **he was circumcised the eighth day, that he was of the race of Israel, that he was of the tribe of Benjamin, that he was a Hebrew born of the Hebrews, that as to the law he was a Pharisee, that as to zeal he persecuted the church, and that as to the righteousness which is in the law he had become blameless.** All these things were aspects of Paul's flesh. However, probably you have never regarded such things as the flesh. We think that the flesh includes only evil things but not good things. Nevertheless, the honorable, lovable, and superior aspects of our natural being are still the flesh. All that Paul did as to the law and as to zeal was flesh and of the flesh. His righteousness as to the law was also flesh. All the seven characteristics listed by Paul in these verses are aspects of the flesh because they all are natural and are neither of Christ nor of the Spirit of God. Anything natural, whether it is good or evil, is the flesh. The Jews had confidence in their flesh, having confidence in what they were by their natural birth. But we Christians should not have confidence in anything we have by our natural birth, for anything of our natural birth is part of the flesh.

The most obvious sign of unchecked flesh is self-confidence. Self-confidence is the characteristic of the flesh. **Philippians 3:3** says, **"We are the circumcision, the ones who...have no confidence in the flesh."** To put no trust in the flesh is to have no confidence in the flesh. All those who have been smitten by the cross are broken. Although their person may remain, they have learned to fear God and no longer put their trust and confidence in themselves. Before a person is dealt with by the Lord, he quickly judges anything that comes his way. He opens his mouth and makes judgments quickly. But after a person has been dealt with by the Lord, he does not judge lightly; he no longer has any confidence. No one who makes quick proposals and believes in his own strength knows the cross. Such a person has never experienced the work of the cross. Once our flesh is circumcised, we will not believe in ourselves any longer. We will not be that full of confidence, and we will not express our opinions easily. Before the Lord, we must see that we are weak, powerless, helpless, and faltering.

Application to the serving ones:

All of you who got saved are the new testament priests of the gospel. Please go out every week to practice gospel and shepherding. If you practice these faithfully every week, your district would surely increase. On 13th of July,

the perfecting training for the responsible ones was held in Tokyo and had fellowship concerning "the practice of gospel and shepherding every week". We have decided to make this 1st year of Reiwa "the first year of Increase" of the churches in Japan, encouraging one another to practice positively. Please dive into the flow of the Spirit and serve in the flow faithfully.

As you serve in gospel and shepherding, please learn to **"serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, (Phil. 3:3)"**. The flesh here is not only something evil as in **"the works of the flesh are manifest, which are such things as fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, divisions, sects, envyings, bouts of drunkenness, carousings, and things like these, of which I tell you beforehand, even as I have said before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21)"**, but also the trust of good things such as "good birth", "excellent education" and "excellent performance". You should not serve with your jealousy or rivalry. But not only so, please recognize that trusting your own ability or wonderful past experiences is also to have confidence in flesh. "Confidence in flesh" means man would trust himself/herself and not trusting God. Flesh includes things of evil and of good. If you only rely on the successful experience of the gospel in the past and not trusting God nor serve by the Spirit of God, God can not bless your gospel activity. It doesn't mean that your experiences in the past are wrong, but it is wrong to trust the past experiences and not trusting God. Also the flesh boast in itself and does not boast in Christ Jesus.

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, I will learn to serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in flesh" in my service of gospel and shepherding. Together with the serving brothers and sisters in the churches whole Japan, let me get into the flow of the Holy Spirit and serve by the Spirit of God, putting my confidence on the cross, boasting in Christ Jesus, not relying on myself, but relying on God and learn to serve. Bless **"the first year of Increase"** in Japan! Amen!

Crucial Point (2): On account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, we need to learn the truth concerning Christ every week

OL1: The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is not the knowledge that belongs to Christ, the knowledge that Christ Himself has; rather, this knowledge is our subjective knowing of Christ:

OL2: In **Philippians 3:8** knowledge actually means a revelation, a vision, concerning Christ and His excellency. When Christ was revealed to him by God, Paul saw the supereminence, the supreme preciousness, and the surpassing worth of Christ.

OL3: If we would experience Christ, we first need to have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is derived from the excellency of His person. The Jews consider the law of God given through Moses the most excellent thing in history. Hence, they are zealous for the law. Paul participated in that zeal. But when Christ was revealed to him by God, he saw that the excellency, the supereminence, the supreme preciousness, the surpassing worth, of Christ far exceeded the excellency of the law. His knowledge of Christ issued in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. On account of this, not only did he count

the law and the religion founded on the law to be loss, but he counted all things loss.

The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is derived from the excellency of His person. There can be no doubt that in Himself Christ is excellent. But if...we lack the knowledge of Christ's excellency, His excellency will not mean anything to us.

Philippians 3:8 speaks of **the excellency of the knowledge of Christ**....To experience Christ we first need the knowledge of Christ. We must know Him. This chapter stresses very much the knowledge of Christ. Verse 10 says, "To know Him and the power of His resurrection." Therefore, to know Him is crucial to our experience of Him. We cannot experience Him without knowing Him. The knowledge of Christ is excellent, and this knowledge is even an excellency.... We must stress here the knowing of Christ. Christ Himself stressed that He would build His church not upon Himself as the rock but upon the revelation concerning Him. The revelation is for knowing. Without the revelation concerning Christ surely we could not know Him. We need this revelation to know Christ.

Application to the new ones and young people, college students:

New ones and young student brothers and sisters, please learn the truth gradually. Your experience and enjoyment of Christ depend on your knowledge of Christ. Your experience of Christ can not go beyond your knowledge of Christ.

Please read the basic truth such as "Recovery version Bible", "Life lessons", "Nourishment for new believers", "High gospel", "Crucial points: for new ones and young people, college students on the morning revival material" with brothers and sisters every week in the home meeting, using 10-15 minutes. May the Lord grant you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation and bless the pursuit in your home meetings. By the revelation to know Christ, your experience can be lifted up. **Eph. 1:17** That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, **18** The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

For example, Christ became the life-giving Spirit in resurrection. This is for God to dispense Himself into man and build up the church, the Body of Christ. Through this dispensing, the believers are regenerated, renewed, transformed and built up.

To believe into the name of the Lord occurs in a second. For example, among the two robbers who got crucified together with Lord Jesus, one has repented immediately before his death and received salvation. He was judicially redeemed and saved before God. In fact this robber also reproached the Lord on the cross in the beginning, but he repented at the end. Praise the Lord.

Matt. 27:44 And in the same way the robbers who were crucified with Him also reproached Him.

Luke 23:39 And one of the criminals who were hanged there blasphemed Him, saying, Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us! **40** But the other, answering, rebuked him and said, Do you not even fear God, since you are in the same judgment? **41** And we justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we did, but this Man has done nothing amiss. **42** And he said, Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. **43** And He said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.

But the salvation has not only judicial aspect but also the

organic aspect of growth of life and building. This aspect doesn't occur in a second, but takes long time. God is dispensing for the organic salvation based on the judicial redemption. And this dispensing is completely by Christ becoming the "life giving Spirit" in resurrection. Please make sure to understand that Christ is the life giving Spirit and He exists here now as air. From the moment you called the name of the Lord, the Lord is in you. The more you call on the name of the Lord in the spirit and the more you pray, then the more you would be filled up with Christ as the life giving Spirit. If you do not know the truth that Christ is the life giving Spirit, you can not experience the organic salvation. **I Cor. 15 : 45**...the last Adam (Christ who became flesh) became a life-giving Spirit.

II Cor. 3:15 Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart; **16** But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. **18** But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, I want to know Christ more. So that I would experience Christ more. My Christ is all inclusive and expanding unlimitedly. I can not confine Him in my limited concept nor religious concept. Grant me the Spirit of wisdom and revelation and take away the veils of my concept. I will learn the truth gradually every week. To know Christ is surpassing. The knowledge leads me to experience. Please renew my revelation and knowledge concerning Christ every week. Amen!

Crucial Point (3): Counting all things as loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord

Phil. 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

OL1: "All things" in verse 8 includes the things of religion, philosophy, and culture; Paul suffered the loss of all these things because they were substitutes for Christ, hooks used by Satan to keep people from Christ and the experience of Christ.

OL2: We gain Christ by suffering the loss of all things that were once a gain for us and by counting them as refuse.

We still hold on to our national philosophy and domestic logic. ...Holding to our domestic logic and national philosophy deprives us of Christ. In a sense, this drives Christ away from us in our experience. In a subtle, secret, and hidden way, the religious, philosophical, and cultural things occupy the believers, even the best of Christians, and keep them from the experience of Christ. Wherever you may go in the world today, you will find that Christ simply does not have a way with any nationality or group of people. In every part of the world, the national philosophy and the domestic logic are so strong that there is little ground in the believers for Christ.

Oh, the subtlety of the enemy needs to be exposed! To some extent at least, we still have within us certain things which are a substitute for Christ in a subtle, secret way. These substitutes mainly involve religion, philosophy, and culture. As a result, we still are not fully and thoroughly occupied by Christ. We have not yet counted all things loss on account of Christ.

We cannot experience Christ if we only drop the worldly,

material things. If this is our understanding of “all things” in [Philippians 3:8](#), we are far from the experience of Christ revealed here. These verses are not shallow. According to the context, Paul is not speaking of superficial, outward things. He is not concerned mainly with material things. His concept is much deeper and is related to religious, philosophical, and cultural things, even to our domestic logic and national philosophy, things hidden deep within us.... It is very difficult for us to set aside these things in order to give ground to Christ and experience Him. During my lifetime I have met many Christians. But I do not know many who have been able to drop their national philosophy and domestic logic in favor of the experience of Christ.

Application to the young working saints and graduate students

In order to experience the all-inclusive and unlimitedly expanding Christ, you should know Christ and reach to the extent of counting what things were gains to you as loss on account of Christ.

As an example, you have received the exceptional education. Such educational background will be a great help to you to get a good job. However, the education can help you until only age of around 35, and at the later 30's, your job career will be focused to see instead of your educational background. But many of the people who got the exceptional education, stay at his past success and because of that, they are not able to grow up. Such kind of people cannot grow up unless they put away their own high and exceptional educational background.

As a Christian, you should not rely on your education, licenses you have, or high position at your company that were gains to you on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. If you do so, you lose Christ. If you do not count these exceptional things as loss, simultaneously you will rely on the good aspects in these fleshs, but not on Christ.

How much you need a spirit of wisdom and revelation! Christ is surpassing national identities of every nations, is surpassing the world's best education, and is surpassing the strategy of the world's best company, so if you keep staying at your natural mind, it is not possible for you to experience the all-inclusive, unlimitedly expanding Christ. In order to experience Christ, the best treasure in the universe, you must count all things as loss. “All things” that Paul is telling in [Philippians 3:8](#) are not only good things in flesh but also including your past good experience of Christ.

[Phil. 3:12](#) Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

[13](#) Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,

[14](#) I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.

Prayer: “O Lord Jesus. May I be able to know Christ to the extent that I can count what were gains to me as loss on account of Christ. I forget even my past experiences of Christ, but stretch forward to the things which are before and pursue toward the goal. Please do not allow me to stop halfway through and stay in the middle of my Christian race. Let me rely on the grace of the Lord, and keep renewing the knowledge of knowing Christ so that I can continue to go forward in experiencing Christ.”

The High Gospel Topic 15: Baptism

[Matt. 28:19](#) Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA SIGNIFYING BAPTISM

God's complete salvation for His chosen people includes the Passover, the exodus from Egypt, and the crossing of the Red Sea. The Passover signifies redemption; the exodus signifies the going out from the world; and the crossing of the Red Sea signifies baptism. By crossing the Red Sea, the children of Israel were saved from Egypt and also brought into a realm of freedom. What a salvation! In principle, baptism is the same for us today. It saves us from bondage and brings us into absolute freedom in Christ.

BELIEVING AND BAPTISM MAKE ONE COMPLETE STEP

Before we believed in the Lord and were baptized, we were sinners. But when we were enlightened through the preaching of the gospel, we came to realize that we are very sinful. Both before God and toward man we have had many transgressions, trespasses, and offenses, and we had a great deal of guilt. Then we repented, believed in the Lord, received His forgiveness, and were saved. But our repentance and believing need an outward expression. This expression is baptism. Therefore, baptism and our believing, our faith, are two aspects of one thing. For this reason, the New Testament speaks of believing and being baptized ([Mark 16:16](#)). Believing and being baptized can be compared to using our two feet to take a single step. First, we believe, and our believing can be compared to the half-step forward of one foot. Then we are baptized. Our baptism can be compared to the completion of the step with the other foot. Together, believing and baptism make one complete step.

Hymn935 Baptism — Around the Lord's Grave

- 1 Around Thy grave, Lord Jesus,
 In spirit here we stand,
 With hearts all full of praises,
 To keep Thy blest command:
 Our souls by faith rejoicing,
 To trace Thy path of love,
 Down through death's angry billows,
 Up to the throne above.
- 2 Lord Jesus! we remember
 The travail of Thy soul,
 When through Thy love's deep pity,
 The waves did o'er Thee roll;
 Baptized in death's dark waters,
 For us Thy blood was shed;
 For us Thou, Lord of Glory,
 Wast numbered with the dead.
- 3 O Lord! Thou now art risen,
 Thy travail all is o'er;
 For sin Thou once hast suffered,
 Thou liv'st to die no more;
 Sin, death and hell are vanquished
 By Thee, the Church's Head;
 And lo! we share Thy triumphs,
 Thou first-born from the dead.
- 4 Unto Thy death baptized,
 We own with Thee we died;
 With Thee, our Life, we're risen,
 And shall be glorified.
 From sin, the world, and Satan,
 We're ransomed by Thy blood,
 And here would walk as strangers,
 Alive with Thee to God.