

The Sufficient Defense of the Gospel Part:1

Philippians 3:4-8

Big Idea: The first step in our defense against self-confidence is the willingness to abandon every source of self-confidence because of the surpassing worth of confidence in Jesus Christ.

The first step in our defense against self-confidence:

1. The _____ to _____ Every Source of Self-Confidence

Philippians 3:4, 7 (ESV) — 4 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... 7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

Paul is laying out his argument by first showing the legitimacy of his claim.

Acts 8:1–3 (ESV) — 1 And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. 3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

All of these things give Paul’s testimony in this passage that much more weight. It is not as if he gave up little to follow Christ, no he left it all behind.

2. The _____ of our Confidence in Christ

8 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

All things = Rubbish < Gaining Christ

Surpassing:

Rubbish:

The Spirit wishes to impress upon our minds and hearts the absolute worth of our Savior, and He does so by labeling all things as excrement ***in contrast*** to Christ.

Trials become the vehicles through which we are granted a glimpse into eternal things.

Romans 8:31–39

“... this knowledge of Christ Jesus [is] a most *happy* one; in fact, so elevating, that sometimes it will completely bear me up above all trials, and doubts, and sorrows; and it will, while I enjoy it, make me something more than “Man that is born of woman, who is of few days, and full of trouble”; for it will fling about me the immortality of the ever living Saviour, and gird me with the golden girdle of his eternal joy. Come, my soul, sit at Jesus’s feet and learn of him all this day.”¹

Questions to Consider

- Why did Paul list all of his accomplishments in this passage?
- What do you seek to find your assurance and hope in? What might you list in your pedigree before a holy and righteous God?
- Why can Paul count all things as rubbish?
- How does the supremacy of Christ sustain us in times of self-doubting or our trials?
- How is the Lord challenging you right now to find your joy in Christ and not in created things?

¹ Spurgeon, C. H. (1896). *Morning and evening: Daily readings*. London: Passmore & Alabaster.

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