



Season 8 Podcasts

The 'Gain and Loss' of the Gospel

**By
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So far in my 8th Season Podcast series I've shared thoughts with you about:

- 8 Rules for Bible Study
- 40 Rules for Ministry
- The Heart of the Gospel
- Defending and Confirming the Gospel
- Your Fellowship in the Gospel
- The Completion of the Gospel
- The Affection of the Gospel
- The Discernment of the Gospel
- The Excellence of the Gospel
- The Sincerity of the Gospel
- The Fruit of the Gospel
- The Advancement of the Gospel
- The Preaching of the Gospel
- Living for the Gospel
- Conduct Worthy of the Gospel

- Suffering for the Gospel
- The Joy of the Gospel
- The Humility of the Gospel
- The Sacrificial Mind of the Gospel
- The Gospel's Name Above Every Name
- The Glory and Honor of the Gospel
- The Power of the Gospel
- The Obedience of the Gospel
- The Gift of the Gospel
- The Light of the Gospel
- The Servants of the Gospel
- The Enemies of the Gospel
- The Confidence of the Gospel

The next aspect I'd like to share with you is the 'Gain and Loss' of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.”

Philippians 3:7-9

The context of these verses proceed directly from Philippians 3:1-6:

“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of

Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”

There was a time in Paul's life where he saw his legal prowess as 'gain' (κέρδος – profit). However, he counted everything from his previous life as a Pharisee and legal scholar as 'loss' (ζημία – damage, detriment) 'for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.' Paul had spent much of his teenage and young adult life working to 'gain' a high position within the ranks of the Pharisees with an eye possibly toward becoming a member of the Sanhedrin one day (remember that his teacher was the famous Gamaliel who was a member of the Sanhedrin – Acts 5:33-34; 22:3). It was Paul (Saul of Tarsus) who 'consented' to the death of Stephen which began a severe persecution of the early followers of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem.

“As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.” Acts 8:3

Paul later regretted what he had done and called himself the 'chief of sinners' because of his persecution of the Lord's followers. The reason he changed his mind was because the resurrected Christ met Paul on the road to Damascus and called him to become the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul became the chief voice of Christ to the Roman Empire after having been the chief persecutor of Christ's followers. That's how 'gain' became 'loss' in Paul's life, and he was glad for it!

What Paul had once believed to be 'profitable' to his life and plans for a great future became a 'detriment' to those plans. He counted them as 'rubbish' (σκύβαλον – refuse, what is thrown to the dogs, garbage, dung, good for nothing). Why?

“that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.”

The words 'I may gain' come from the same Greek root word Paul used earlier. This time the word is κερδαίνω and means 'win, profit, gain.' Paul understood that his hope in life was being found in Christ, not having his own 'righteousness' (δικαιοσύνη – equity of character), which is from the Law, 'but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.' Paul understood that nothing about his past life – even his highest and most cherished achievements as a Pharisee and scholar – could compare with what he had in Jesus Christ. In fact, they so paled in comparison that he called his former achievements 'rubbish, garbage, dung, good for nothing.'

If we look at ourselves and believe that who we are and what we've done in this life will be good enough for God to accept us into His Home (Heaven), we are sadly mistaken. None of us are worthy of that. Look at Romans 3:

“As it is written: ‘There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.’ Romans 3:10-12

“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:20

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the

justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” Romans
3:21-26

Gain and Loss. Your choice. My choice. What will we choose? To hang on to a delusion that if we do enough good in the world God will accept us? Or to look at all our earthly achievements, as Paul did, as garbage, worth nothing – and lose all dependence on them to ‘believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved?’ Gain and loss.

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In Christ's Love and Grace,

Mark McGee

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