

## MESSAGE NOTES

### Shine Like Stars That I May Know Him

#### Philippians 3:1–14 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. <sup>2</sup> Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. <sup>3</sup> For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

<sup>7</sup> But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

<sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. <sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup>

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

<sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

## NOTES:

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

May 17, 2026

Shine Like Stars / That I May Know Him

Philippians 3:1-14

*As needed, refer to the Order of Worship and Resources at [solanabeach.church](http://solanabeach.church) for sermon video, message notes, resources and small group questions print version.*

### CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

Enter into your small group time with an ice breaker question: What are some things you have treasured in your life? (relationships, things, experiences, identities, accomplishments, etc.)

**CONNECT WITH GOD** (Select a practice from below or return to the 'beholding' practice from a few weeks ago.)

- **Clenched Fist, Open Hand** *The one thing a clenched fist can't do is to accept the helping hand.* — Frederick Buechner in *Credo* by William Sloane Coffin  
Begin by closing your eyes and taking a few deep breaths. Spend a few minutes to think of the things you like to hold tightly to and control: responsibilities, how we look to others, self-sufficiency, relationships, belongings, the past, present or future, etc. As you ponder these things, clench your hands into tight fists and confess in prayer your desire to hold tightly to these things and control them in ways that might exclude God. With these things in mind, perhaps thinking of them one at a time, repeating the exercise for each, slowly unclench your hands, praying for the ability to release these things to God's care and to trust God's presence in and with you as you hold these things more loosely with greater faith.
- **Breath Prayer - Confession** (From Pray Like a Gourmet, David Brazzeal)  
During a time of quiet stillness, allow your natural breathing to symbolize confession. As you exhale, think of one thing at a time that you wish to confess and release from your life. As you inhale, think of those things you long to breathe in and restore in your life. Exhale frustration—inhalation peace. Exhale doubt—inhalation assurance. Reactivity—Love. Selfishness—Giving

### CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

- Begin with **prayer** before reading the passage this week.
- **Together:** Read Philippians 3:1-14 a couple of times. Read once as a group and once individually.
- **Alone:** Reflect/Journal on the prompt below:
  - What does *knowing Christ* mean to you?
- **All together** or in **smaller pairs:** Share with one another.

### CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE

If needed, read the passage again. Then select the best questions or customize the questions for your group.

- Review the sermon notes. Reflect on the key themes of the message and passage.
- What does Paul mean that his words are a "safeguard" to the Philippians?
- What do you already know or want to know about Paul's background and conversion story?
- What are things that we might put our confidence in today?
- From where does Paul draw his confidence?
- Considering verses 7-11, what were Paul's "gains" and "losses"?
- How do you understand verse 8?
- What relationship does Paul draw between resurrection and suffering in verses 10-11?
- What is the goal that Paul writes about in verses 12-14?
- Consider together these words of Paul in verse 12: "*Christ Jesus took hold of me.*" What implications or impact does that have in your own life?

### ENGAGE AND EXPLORE

Together: explore the quote and prompt below, in connection with the theme of joy throughout Philippians and the message series. *How does our modern culture misapply or misunderstand the meaning of "joy"?*

*"Unfortunately we have diluted the term 'joy' so that it often means 'to be happy' or 'have fun'. ...Nothing is further from Paul's definition. His joy is one of eschatological content, not fleeting emotion. The Philippian believers have almost no say in the course of their lives: they don't have political power... They live hand-to-mouth under imperial rule, with famine and war looking over their shoulders. Strength is found in the surety of God's provision, with Christ's resurrection as the assurance of their own life after death. This truth is what safeguards them and brings deep and lasting joy unaffected by their dismal circumstances."*

*The Story of God Commentary, Philippians*

### PRAYER

Leave room for one another to prayerfully consider what it means to follow Christ. What are the gains you might count as losses? Allow for silent reflection before sharing prayer requests with one another.