



SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”

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Friday, June 4, 2021

Scripture: Philippians 3:8-9a

TITLE: The Law of the Trade-Off

The Law of the Trade-off is one of the most valuable concepts I’ve learned and taught in personal development. John Maxwell taught this concept in *The 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth* (Center Street – 2012). The Law of the Trade-off says that in order to go up, you need to give up. In other words, in order to grow or achieve, you’ll need to sacrifice something else. This can be a short-term or long-term loss, but it is worth it in the end. Paul believed and taught this concept nearly 2000 years ago. Don’t believe me? Listen to Paul’s words in Philippians 3:8-9a (ESV):

“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 Christ⁹ and be found in him...”

Paul has been pressing the importance of Salvation by grace alone. He said in the previous verses, if anyone had a reason to get into Heaven based on resumé, it was him. But Christ helped him realize he was actually wasting his time. His spiritual bank account was in the red, with no way to black, that is, with the exception of Christ.

That’s where we pick it up in verse 8. He says, “I count everything as a loss in comparison to knowing Christ.” I want us to camp here for a moment. Paul says, “My prestige, my influence, my reputation, my money, my power, my relational capital - it was actually worth nothing compared to knowing Christ.” “Knowing Christ” doesn’t mean “knowing of” but rather intimately and personally “knowing”, through a relationship. It’s deeply personal and committed. Nothing compares to knowing Christ.

Then Paul drives it home by saying, I gave it all up for Christ. Why? Because compared to Jesus and being in a relationship with Him, it’s “rubbish”. The word here is the equivalent of a curse word. But since this is a Bible-teaching podcast, we’ll translate it as *rubbish* or *poop*. Paul says, “All the good things I had and did, it’s just a big poop-stained underwear. I throw it away and burn it. Christ is worth it all.”

What about you, Friend? Is Christ that precious to you?

If God called you to give up your golf for Christ, would you? Is He worth it?

If God called you away from your family, would you? Is Christ worth it?

If God called you away from your Netflix or Prime shows, would you? Is Christ worth it?

If God called you away from your ministry, would you? Is Christ worth it?

Deeply convicting thoughts. So here's my challenge for you today:

Practice the Law of the Trade-off. What is it in your life you need to give up to grow closer to Jesus? It may be a short-term trade-off to get back on track, but it may be a long-term commitment for many reasons.

Remember, Jesus is worth it all. When we give up the things of this world for knowing Christ, we don't just win the day. We conquer it!