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Philippians 29 Profit and Loss account of Salvation Achievement of Paul- Effort!

Philippians 3:4-11, *though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*

⁷ *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ 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 Christ⁹ 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; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

This is one of the greatest testimonies of how salvation has happened to Apostle Paul. Very powerful statement. In Acts 9 we see what happened to Paul on his way to Damascus but here he gives us the details of what was happening to him inside. It gives us the details of where was he in attaining favour with God internally. It also exposes us to see how things happen in the life of a sinner.

Now Paul is going to list us **four things which he earned them.**

1. Salvation not by Tradition

Salvation is not by tradition.

V5, a Hebrew of the Hebrews

Possible ways to interpret:

I am a Hebrew child of Hebrew parents.

I have maintained my tradition.

The dispersed Jews who had been scattered all around, including perhaps these in Philippi. Having been scattered around they were greatly impacted by Greek culture. Many of them lost the Hebrew language, culture, and tradition.

We have a lot of Jews today who are trying to get their tradition back, but they will never really get it back without the language. Those of us of Tamils who stay away from Tamil Nadu can understand very well.

They had become Hellenized from the Greek word '*hellen*' which means Gentile. They had become victims of Greek culture, so they lost their language, and tradition.

Paul is saying that Not me! I had Hebrew parents; I am a Hebrew child. I maintained my tradition.

Paul was raised in a pagan city.

Paul was raised in Greek culture in Tarsus, in Cilicia which is near Galatia on the north-eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea, not in the land of Israel.

Paul was raised in Gentile territory under Greek culture and Roman rule. But he says, "I was faithful and personally committed to the tradition of Judaism and the language of my parents."

Acts 22:3, *"I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today."*

Paul left his country and he went to Jerusalem to study under Gamaliel who was the chief teacher among the Jews.

Paul could speak Hebrew fluently.

Acts 21:40, *So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying,*

Paul was a Jew.

- He was a Hebrew son of Hebrew parents.
- He followed the language.
- He followed the traditions.
- He followed the customs and never deviated.

Acts 26:4-5, *“My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. ⁵ They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.*

Everyone knew that Paul was an unwavering Hebrew. He was a well-known young man because he had eminent gifts. He was known widely even as a young Jew.

Was God impressed?

No!

This is rubbish, manure, and garbage.

Just because you are loyal to your parents

- Catholicism,

- Judaism,
- Pentecostalism,
- Lutheran,
- Methodist,
- Baptist,
- Whatever it may be,

Loyalty to a tradition is worthless as far as a means of salvation. It is worthless. Salvation doesn't come in those terms.

2. Salvation is NOT by Religion

V 5, "As to the law, a Pharisee."

Acts 26:5, *They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.*

When it comes to the view of God's Word Paul took the Pharisaic perspective.

What?

That is the highest level of religious achievement in Judaism.

You can't get any higher than being a Pharisee.

The Pharisee was the religious radical fundamentalist, the narrow-minded legalistic literalist fundamentalist who interpreted the Word of God specifically, directly to life.

Where they came from?

They came into existence between the Old and New Testament period of 400 years.

During this time the Jews began to drift into liberalism, they began to question the authority of Scripture, and began to compromise. During this time this group called Pharisees which comes to mean separatists.

Pharisee's were affirming that there must be an adherence to Scripture, and no deviation.

- They felt they had to guard the Scripture,
- They had to study the Scripture,
- They had to interpret the Scripture,
- They had to proclaim the Scripture,
- They had to apply the Scripture,
- They had to rebuke the people who didn't apply it.

The Pharisees started out with a noble cause. Obviously over a period they degenerated, and the point of their degeneration was when they came to believe that their strict adherence to the law was what saved them.

That was the fatal flaw.

They were a very elite group.

During the time of Christ, the best estimate is that there were about 6,000 of them. Because it was such a strict demanding

circumscribed legalistic lifestyle that very few people desired to live according to that standard.

What does Paul say?

- I know the law,
- I can interpret the law,
- I have guarded the law, and
- I have lived by its strictest interpretation.

Not all the Pharisees were snakes, vipers, hypocrites, blind leaders, envious, jealous, and proud fakers.

Some of them were serious minded. They were trying their best to achieve status with God through religion.

So, this little small group of elite people included in their number Paul.

Paul says not only he was a Pharisee, but he come from a line of Pharisees. We don't know whether he is talking about other Pharisees in the line of Pharisees or the fact that his father may have been a Pharisee as well.

Acts 22:3, Acts 23:6, Acts 26:5, and Galatians 1:14, he often refers to his Pharisaic background.

Do you ever see people like this?

You can see them all over the world, wearing robes and doing all their religious activities. Many of them functioning as priests, sacrificing, taking on themselves unbearable burdens, living in poverty and loneliness.

Many of them in pain and deprivation, functioning to fulfil a religious pattern that they believe will please God.

Does God impress with them?

No

Whether it's a religion of

- Judaism,
- Buddhism,
- Islam,
- Roman Catholicism,
- Protestantism,
- Pentecostalism,

The religious form does not impress God.

Religious devotion can't save you.

3. Salvation is Not by Sincerity

V 6, concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

How zealous?

So zealous that Paul killed Christians.

That is zealous!

For the Jew zeal, zelos, zeal was the single highest virtue of religion.

What is zeal?

It's two sides of a coin.

Zeal is the coin.

One side is love, and the other side is hate.

What does it mean?

Zeal says I love God so much I hate whatever offends Him!

Paul loved God, he loved the law of God, he loved the community of God, that's the Jewish people, he loved all that God had revealed to such a degree that he hated anything he thought offended God and he thought Christians offended God.

Why did he kill Christians?

Because of zeal.

He loved Judaism so much that he hated anything that threatened it and Christianity threatened it.

So, Paul persecuted Christians.

To what degree?

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

- He breathed out threatening and slaughter on them.
- He created havoc in the church.
- He killed Christians.
- He pursued them.
- He chased them.
- He wanted to take their life.

All the Judaizers did was proselyte. He persecuted.

Apostle Paul asking the questions to these Judaizers, do you think you guys have got zeal?

I have got more. I went after them to kill them.

Paul was sincere!

Mental attitude has nothing to do with it, it's a matter of truth.

Paul was sincere, he was zealous for God. He was so zealous for Judaism that there was nothing he wouldn't do and relentlessly unsparingly untiringly and mercilessly he tried to stamp out Christianity because of his zeal for God.

The world is filled with the religiously sincere people, make great effort, personal sacrifice, high cost, pay the price and wanting to please God. Very sincere.

Go to church, some people, every day.

People in religions pray certain prayers every day.

Protestants go to church every week.

Very sincere in their heart, wanting to do what is right.
God is not impressed.

4. Salvation is Not by Law

V 6, concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Anyone who watched the life of Paul couldn't find anything to hold against him as a transgression. Outwardly he lived according to the law.

Paul is not saying I was sinless.

He was not advocating sinless perfection.

When we read Romans 7:5-11, when he is giving his pre-conversion definition of himself.

if anyone could be saved by works then Paul would have been saved as the first person.

We have done many studies on righteousness can never be achieved by Law.

Conclusion:

Paul got the profit column filled.

He had filled up his profit column with all the things he received as well as he earned.

Until Paul met Christ and found out that the righteousness of his own wasn't adequate but there was a righteousness in Christ by grace given to him.

By faith Paul received the pearl of great price and that was the true treasure and so he counted all this other stuff as manure, and he came to Christ.

V 7, But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

Why?

They damn you.

They send you to hell under deception, under an illusion.

Contrast:

Two men came to the same crossroads.

Paul and the rich young ruler in Matthew 19 and Luke 20.

Jesus said to the young rich ruler, "You must obey the law."

He responded, "Which part of the law?"

Jesus gave him some commandments, he said, "All those things have I kept."

Here was a man who had his profit column all filled up. He too was likely a Jew. He too perhaps faithful to the tradition. Certainly, he was a young ruler which means he was probably a ruler in the synagogue which mean that he was a very honoured, ranking, traditional, faithful Jew or he wouldn't have ascended to that level. He was extremely religious, and he was very sincere, or he never would have come to Jesus and asked how to get eternal life.

So, we had a sincere, religious, traditional, loyal Jew called the rich young ruler in Matthew 19. He comes to Jesus and Jesus asks him about his life and he says I have always kept the law, just like Paul. And then Jesus shows him a better way. He says, "Give up everything you have and follow Me."
The young man said no, walked away.

Paul said just the opposite. Paul said I have got all these credentials, I have got race, rank, ritual, tradition, religion, sincerity, works-righteousness.

I have got my profit column filled up.
Jesus said, "Drop it all and follow Me."
Paul said YES LORD!

Paul counted it all but loss to gain Christ.

The rich young ruler counted it all gain and forsook Christ.

Every person in the world is in one of those two categories.

When you meet Christ you either drop all the stuff that you have been counting on for your salvation and take Christ alone, or you hold to all the stuff you have been holding on to for your salvation and turn your back on Christ.

Those two categories:

You are in one of them!

So, who are you?