

“Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord.”

These words are coming from a guy who is writing from a jail cell to his people at the church in Philippi. When I first read Philippians chapter 3 as a Christian, I literally asked myself, how could a guy like Paul “rejoice” in the Lord when he’s suffered so much for Jesus. With everything going on with the Coronavirus, it seems like our worst day of quarantine doesn’t even compare to how Paul was living in jail.

Paul, like you and I, had a choice to make when it came to his own walk with Jesus during hard times. *Paul chose to put his belief in facts about Jesus rather than his own feelings during his imprisonment.*

He writes, **“⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of 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 ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,” – (Phil. 3:7-10)**

Paul’s life was drastically changed from sharing Jesus openly to writing about Jesus in a prison cell. His circumstance did not have the final word on how he would live his life, his Jesus did.

Student, Parent, or Leader: I want to remind you that Jesus has the final word during a circumstance that brings about doubt, fear, and anxiety. Jesus has the final word on your situation, your thoughts, and your fear.

Well, Isaac, how do I know if I believe that Jesus has the final word?

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are you spending more time dwelling on people’s opinions over God’s presence?
2. Are your decisions being fueled from a state of fear or wisdom?
3. Am I living like I trust Jesus with everything that’s going on?

Paul states that his only goal throughout the course of his life was to know Jesus and gain Jesus. **“For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ,” (Phil. 3:8)** Knowing God and watching God is the difference between a faith filled life and a faithless life. God’s word is full of phrases like Come to Me, Be courageous, Fear not, Do not be deceived, etc. **Knowing Jesus is a lifelong process where you involve yourself in his Word and among a community of Jesus followers who also follow him faithfully.**

So, what do you do next?

I want to encourage you, wherever you are, to stop reading this.

Go pray and ask the Lord how he wants you to know him despite everything going on. My prayer is that God would reveal the ways that he wants to challenge you in your walk with him.

Questions to ask during your prayer:

1. God, what are you saying to me through this post?
2. Jesus, how can I deal with some of my hidden emotions during this time so I can better know you?
3. Lord, what are you asking me to do in response to what I just read? (write out 1-3 things and share with someone)