

## **The Joy of Getting Past Your Past Discussion Guide**

### **-Read Philippians 3:2-9**

1. After reading the whole passage, why do you think Paul could say, “whatever gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ?”
2. What do we tend to value over Christ?
3. How can the joy that comes from accepting Christ by faith cause you to get past the other things you have valued in your past?

### **-Read Philippians 3:1**

4. What does it mean to “rejoice in the Lord?” Why do you think Paul wants to “write about the same things” to the church again?
5. What does repetitive rejoicing look like in day to day life? What is the importance of repetitive rejoicing in your life?

### **-Read Philippians 3:10-14**

6. When thinking of Paul’s past as a persecutor of Christians, how hard do you think it was for him to “forget what was behind?” Why do you think it is so hard for us to forget what is behind in our lives?
7. What is something in your past that is presently hurting you? How could you begin to honestly give it to God so that you can, “strain toward what is ahead” by focusing on the future Christ has called you to?
8. According to verse 14, what is the future ahead for all Christians? How could a focus on heaven keep empower you to live differently here on earth?

## The Joy of Getting Past Your Past

### 1. Realize the infinite value of Christ

“Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers of the flesh. 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, though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 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, as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 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 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.” -Philippians 3:2-9

“It would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”  
-C.S. Lewis

### 2. Repetitive rejoicing in the Lord

“Further, my brother 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.” -Philippians 2:1

### 3. Focus on the future Christ has called you to

“I want to know Christ, yes to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow, attaining the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained 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. 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, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” -Philippians 3:10-14

“For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.” -Philippians 3:18-20

