

# **OPEN IT**

1. What is your most prized possession? What makes it so valuable to you?

# DAILY DEVOTIONS

Day 1

TODAY'S THEME: EXPLORE IT

Read Philippians 3:1-11

- 2. Who does Paul warn the Philippians to look out for? What do you think he means by this?
- 3. What are some of the reasons Paul says he could put confidence in the flesh?
- 4. How does Paul view the works of his flesh? What value does Paul give his relationship with Jesus versus his works in the flesh?
- 5. Where does Paul say his righteousness really comes from?

# Day 2

## TODAY'S THEME: FOOL'S GOLD

#### Read Philippians 3:1-8

Have you ever heard the phrase, "Going through the motions"? The phrase means that essentially you're just going through the motions of something but not truly engaged with it or doing it for the right reasons. It's easy for us as Christians to go through the motions of being a Christian and lose sight of why we are doing it! See, it's easy for us to just look at all the Christian things we do and say, "Well, see? I'm a Christian!" when our hearts have not trusted in Christ. I've heard a lot of young people who when asked if the person they just started dating is a Christian or not say, "Yeah, they go to church." Hmmm... so since when did "going to church" automatically make you a Christian? It never has. And that's what Paul is talking about in this passage in some sense, though "going to church" maybe looked a little different back then than it does now.

Paul says that if there is anyone who should have any confidence in the flesh it was him because he was your poster church kid! Basically, he was as legit as it got when it came to being a Jew. He hit all the marks on what people would look at to see if you were "serious about your faith" in his youth group and he listed them all out in the verses you just read. If we were reading a modern day version of Paul he might have written down things like: "I go to church every Sunday, I've been baptized, I do my devotions at least five times a week, I pray every day, I serve in the nursery at my church, I don't drink, cheat, or steal, I never swear..." and the list could go on. Now, are those things bad? Totally not! They're great! But by themselves they are empty, like having a car without an engine—totally useless and they get you nowhere. As a matter of fact, Paul describes all these "empty good deeds" as rubbish—or literally as a giant pile of poop.

6.	How can v	ou tell if v	ou're going	through the	motions of	f heing a	Christian?
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7. How would you describe "putting confidence in the flesh" to someone? What are different ways you struggle with putting your confidence in the flesh today?

# Day 3

### TODAY'S THEME: KNOWING CHRIST

### Read Philippians 3:8-11

Paul says that there is nothing better in life than knowing Christ! Would you honestly say the same thing? Everything in life pales in comparison to knowing Jesus! All the accomplishments you have achieved, all the possessions you have, or anything else in life is rubbish compared to knowing Jesus!

There are two words for "know" in the original language. One word means to just to know something or someone intellectually. The other word for "know," which we find in our Philippians passage, is to know someone or something experientially. To help distinguish between these two words, you can know "intellectually" that there is electricity in the wall, but you can "experientially" know electricity if you stick a metal fork in a socket. (Please don't do this!) Or you can "intellectually" know that Michael Jordan was the best basketball player to ever play for the Chicago Bulls, but most likely you have never "experientially" known Michael Jordan face to face! The "experiential" know is found in Philippians 3:8 & 10. God wants us to know Him "experientially."

Paul wants to experientially know Jesus in the highs of life through the power of the resurrection of Jesus. Paul says that he wants to know Jesus in the difficult times of life by participating in the sufferings of Jesus. You could say that Philippians 3:10 is Paul's life verse, "I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death." This "knowing Jesus" is what lies at the heart of being able to rejoice in the Lord in both the good and the difficult times in life.

Is this the desire of your life: to know Christ above all else? Make this the prayer and desire of your heart, because nothing else in life matters besides Jesus!

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8.	Who do you know the most about in life? How did you get to know this person so well? Share something unique that you know about this person.
9.	On a scale of 1–10, how well would you say that you know Jesus? Why did you give that number?
10.	What do you think it would take for you to know Jesus better?