

Garbage

Scripture Reading — Philippians 3:1-11

*I consider them garbage that I may gain Christ ...
Philippians 3:8 —*

On our roadways we find lots of garbage—empty and broken bottles, plastic bags, wrappers, broken pieces of stuff we can barely identify. All of it was once useful but is no longer needed or is just broken or lost. Though it ought to be cleaned up, it's clear that no one really needs it.

Paul writes about many things that he once thought he needed—for example, his flawless Jewish heritage. According to the law of God, this Pharisee was about as righteous as anyone could be. But Paul now considers all this “a loss.” This is the same word used in Acts 27:21 for a ship's cargo that is tossed into the sea in a vicious storm. It has value, but compared to saving a person's life, it is, as Paul bluntly calls it, “garbage.” Far more valuable, he says, is “to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings.”

Often we also place too much value on the wrappings of our faith and miss the real gift. Maybe it's our status as a church leader, or our membership in a popular church. Or maybe we think our own gifts and talents are better than others'. In comparison to really knowing Jesus, these other things are merely garbage. Of course, we shouldn't toss them out, but we must place them at the foot of the cross, asking Jesus to infuse our church, our lives, and our ministry with his love, purpose, and power.

Prayer

Forgive us, Lord, if we have placed too much importance on the wrappings of our faith. Please animate our lives with your love and power. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Seeking God](#)

Written by Gerrit Bomhof — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/gerrit-bomhof>

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