

“When Christ Reviews Our Lives” (Philippians 3:4b–14)**October 4, 2026****Premkumar Immanuel Clement**

A couple of weeks ago, I posed a question at our Casual Café: Why do we have Facebook accounts?

There are, of course, many answers. We use Facebook to stay connected with family and friends, share photographs, express our opinions, comment on politics or movies, share articles we’ve read, or simply see what others are up to.

However, I’ve also noticed something else. Many of our posts—especially those from India—often serve as a sort of advertisement for ourselves. We talk about our degrees, accomplishments, new cars and houses, international travels, awards we’ve received, important people we’ve met, conferences where we’ve presented papers, or the successes we’ve achieved.

There is nothing inherently wrong with any of these things. We should appreciate our accomplishments and celebrate the gifts we have received.

Yet, sometimes, without realizing it, we start to construct a narrative about ourselves: “This is who I am. This is how important I am. This is why I deserve recognition.” We become our own public relations department.

Beneath all this, there may be a deeper human question: Who am I, and what makes my life valuable? Paul offers an extraordinary answer to that question in Philippians 3.

1. We all have our own way of auditing our lives

Paul shares his résumé: he was circumcised according to Jewish law, belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, was a Hebrew, and a Pharisee. He was zealous and considered himself blameless in terms of the law. Rather than being burdened by guilt, Paul took pride in his religious identity and accomplishments. Then, the risen Christ entered his life, prompting him to reevaluate his résumé. What he once saw as gains, he now considered losses. Paul's conversion story is unique. While many find faith through shame or failure, he didn't need Jesus to point out his shortcomings. Instead, Jesus taught Paul to see his successes differently, highlighting that sometimes, salvation involves letting go of our proudest achievements.

2. Christ audits what we have called "gain"

Paul states, "Whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ."

Notice the language here: gain and loss, profit and value, assets and liabilities. It almost sounds like the terminology of an accountant. However, Paul's assessment is based on a review by Jesus.

When Jesus examines Paul's life, the accounting shifts dramatically. What Paul had once categorized as assets now moves into the loss column. This shift doesn't occur because these aspects of his life were inherently bad. His heritage, education, religious commitment, and zeal were not negative in themselves.

The issue arose because Paul had allowed these good things to define his worth. Christ didn't erase Paul's past; instead, He provided Paul with a new perspective on it.

Perhaps this is the question Christ poses to us today: What supports our sense of status? Is it our education? Our professions? Our income or material possessions? Our homes or vehicles? Or perhaps our race, gender, nationality, family background, accomplishments, or even our religious achievements? Once again, none of these things are necessarily wrong. But Christ challenges us with the question: "Have you allowed any of these elements to become the foundation of your identity?"

Paul ultimately realizes that his deepest identity is not based on his achievements, but on his relationship with Christ. That is the essence of Jesus' audit.

3. Christ changes not only our identity, but also how we see others

Paul's transformation is truly remarkable.

Before encountering Christ, he had a defined understanding of himself. After this encounter, his perspective changes. The man who once measured his worth by status now encourages the Philippians to value others above themselves. The one who relied on religious credentials now seeks to know Christ. Rather than proclaiming, "I have everything figured out," Paul acknowledges, "Christ has found me, and I am still becoming."

This highlights that the Christian life is a continuous journey, not a completed résumé. Christ continually reshapes our understanding of ourselves and others, inviting us to rethink success and failure. Often, we later realize that what seemed like a loss was actually a gift, while what we thought was a gain was something we needed to surrender.

4. Let Christ, rather than ourselves, write the final account

I have experienced relationships where friends distanced themselves from me, believing they were somehow above me. That was painful, but over time, I recognized that people often create an image of themselves to protect. We can become so invested in this image that we lose sight of who we truly are.

This realization leads me to Paul's witness. Paul doesn't conduct his final audit alone; he allows Christ to assess him, and this audit is different from our own. While we may ask, "How successful am I?" Christ asks, "Whom are you becoming?" Instead of asking, "How much have I accomplished?" He questions, "Whom have you loved?" Rather than considering our importance, He prompts us to reflect: "Can you see the dignity of the person beside you?"

Most importantly, Christ assures us: “Your worth comes from belonging to me, not from the image you create.” Paul’s story exemplifies not just letting go of the past but gaining a new perspective. The resurrection of Jesus transforms our understanding of success and identity.

Today, let us invite Jesus to audit our lives—not for self-impression or to showcase achievements, but for an honest evaluation. Our greatest asset is not what we possess but our desire to know Christ. Like Paul, may we say: “Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”

This story isn’t finished; Christ is still writing it. Let us allow Him to reshape how we see ourselves, one another, and the world. Amen.