

MAIN POINT

Mature Christians recognize that knowing Christ is more valuable than anything else.

INTRODUCTION

Do you tend to dwell more on your past failures or past successes? Why? What's the danger in giving either too much attention?

Name examples of things Christians today need to leave behind from their pasts.

Paul wrote to the Philippians about the need to forget what was behind and push on toward what lay ahead. They needed to persevere no matter what they had come from or what they were headed to. In verse 15 of today's passage, Paul said that mature believers will think this way. Those who are mature in Christ recognize that knowing Him is worth more than anything else.

DISCUSSION

> READ PHILIPPIANS 3:7-15.

What do people mean when they say, "Admitting your need (or problem) is the first step"? How does that thinking relate to this passage?

What do you consider to be one of your best accomplishments or qualifications?

In verse 8, "loss" means "animal excrement." How does it feel to consider the accomplishment or qualification you stated above as "animal excrement" compared to knowing Christ?

In comparison to where Paul came from, what did he want to do? Why was knowing Christ and experiencing the power of His resurrection important for Paul?

Did Paul have this process completely figured out? Did that stop him from trying? Explain.

What was Paul's motivation for pushing forward? How did his comparison of his former life and change play into this?

What was the prize that Paul had in mind when he preached perseverance?

What are the things in life that make it hard to keep this prize in mind?

How were you similar to Paul before you came to Christ? What was your primary goal in life before you came to Christ?

What do you need to press through right now? What is keeping you from giving everything for Christ?

In what ways have you grown and matured in following Christ? What have you learned about pressing forward and persevering?

APPLICATION

What steps is God calling you to take on the path to maturity in Christ? How will you respond?