



Church of Christ

May 18, 2003

204 Dix Road Jefferson City, MO 65109

Heart to Heart...

He was highly educated. The rules and regulations that he was instructed in, he followed with his whole heart and great zeal. His heritage was kept pure, making sure nothing of the pagan ideas entered his life. He was a teacher and instructor of others. His birth was of the royal tribe. All in all, he was blameless in following through with every thing taught and commanded. The things pursued in his life were very commendable.

When we read or hear of someone like this, we are amazed at their life. Their successes are unbelievable and they have every thing going their way. We would call someone like this highly successful. Many would long to walk in his shoes. Suddenly, every thing in this man's world changed. He met Jesus. His name was Saul (later changed to Paul). When he encountered the Lord, his values completely changed. He re-evaluated his life and came to the following conclusion: **"But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ."** (Phil. 3:7-8) His life of obedience and success he counted as rubbish! Why? *"That I may gain Christ."* The gaining of Christ was far more important than any accomplishment on earth.

There are three things that come from gaining Christ: (1) *Forgiveness of our past.* Every sin, every act of wrong is removed from us and placed on Him. Success cannot eliminate the consequences of sin. (2) *We have a purpose for the present.* **"I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."** (Phil. 3:14) To press toward the things of Christ takes a seriousness and fervency. There is a "prize" awaiting those who press toward the goal. (3) *We have hope for the future.* **"...but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead."** (Phil. 3:13) Living our lives "reaching forward" each day, because of the hope Christ brought to us, brings us security for the future. Those who do not have Christ are always controlled by their past, but those who have gained Christ reaches and looks to the future. They have hope!

Once Paul understood the value of this relationship with Christ, he willingly let go of the things that he could not keep in order to gain what he could never lose. The result? His life was filled with joy! The externals no longer mattered in view of the eternal possession Christ brought him. What are we seeking for? What do we see as a "gain" in our lives? Think about it!!!

Brent