

Week Five: *The Path of Accomplishment*
Philippians 3:3-9

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. As we begin to dig deeper this week, think about the most accomplished people you know. Do you admire them? Is it a good thing to be accomplished?
2. Do you consider *yourself* accomplished? Why or why not?
3. What determines whether you consider yourself accomplished? Is it dependent on what you do and how well you do it?
4. Read Philippians 3:3-9. What do you think it means to “put confidence in the flesh”?
5. “Putting confidence in the flesh” can include a lot, but it often refers to valuing yourself based on what you do and how well you do it. How does this mindset play a part in how you value yourself?
6. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, think about who our culture values most. Is it those who have the most to offer? What about God? How does he judge value? Spend some time praying that God would help you to better value what he does.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

7. To start off your FIFTEEN for today, read Philippians 3:3-9 again. Notice what Paul says in verses 3 and 4: “For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by His Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh – though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more.” What is your first reaction to this statement?
8. Do you find this humorous? Paul is basically saying, “We should be proud based on our own accomplishments, we should be proud of what Jesus has done for us. But if we *could* take pride in ourselves, I should be the proudest.” Doesn’t that sound *so* much like our human nature?
9. Think of a time when you were overly prideful in yourself and what you accomplished. Looking back, how long did it last? How long were you able to keep it up?
10. We all fail or don’t meet expectations eventually. What happens then? How do you feel?
11. When you do fail, does it feel like *others* find you less valuable?

12. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, spend some time in prayer. Pray you would always remember that all the accomplishments in the world mean nothing compared to what Jesus already did for you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

13. Do you ever feel the need to pretend or play a role just to be valued and admired? If so, is that something you've realized before?

14. Do you think God wants you to feel the need to live that way? Why or why not?

15. Read Philippians 3:3-9 once again. Does anything new stick out to you today?

16. What do you think Paul means in verse 8? Is he saying everything other than Jesus is worthless?

17. Paul doesn't mean that everything other than Jesus is worthless. What he's trying to communicate is that *compared* to what Jesus Christ did for us, nothing else matters. How does this truth affect your need for affirmation?

18. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, ask God to help you prioritize as he does. Ask him to help you see where you need to rearrange your priorities in order to live in the freedom and honesty that he desires for you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

19. To begin your FIFTEEN for today, read Philippians 3:3-9 again.

20. Read verses 8 and 9 again: "I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith." What would it look like to live your life in this way?

21. Living your life this way likely looks a lot like finding your identity, value and accomplishment in what Jesus has *already* accomplished for you. It's not dependent on anything you can or cannot do. Imagine how freeing it would be to live that way.

22. In another of his letters, to the Ephesian church, Paul shares similar words. Read Ephesians 2:4-9.

23. Paul says twice, in verse 4 and again in verse 8, "It is by grace you have been saved." Is this encouraging or discouraging to you? Why?

24. You probably already know that you are saved by God's grace, but it can be hard to really understand that and live according to it. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, spend some time being honest with God about times when you have judged or evaluated others based on what they have to offer instead of what Jesus has already done for them. Ask for forgiveness for those times and for more of a Christ-like mindset when interacting with others.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

25. Spend some time considering what most motivates you. Is it a desire to benefit others? Is it a need to be seen as successful? Something else?

26. Oftentimes accomplished people operate out of a fear of failure. Does that describe you? Why or why not?

27. Read Ephesians 2:4-9 again. Verse 9 says, "Not by works, so that no one can boast." How does that make you feel?

28. If you're anything like me, it can still be challenging to set aside the desire to accomplish in your own power and ability. Why do you think it can be such a challenge?

29. No one can boast, at least not in ourselves. Rather than finding our identity in the roles we play or what we have to offer, we find it from being found in Christ. And, if you can find your value in the accomplishments of Jesus on your behalf, then you can finally be authentic, both with yourself and with others. You are loved just for who you are, not for what you achieve. Spend the rest of your FIFTEEN thanking God for this truth.

30. Throughout the rest of the day, consider what it really means that God loves you just for you who are. Does that really change your life the way it should? Why or why not?