

QUESTION 6

- a) Christians know the resurrection power of God in them (see **Gal 2:20**). Paul wanted to know that same power at work in him.
- b) The same resurrection power that saves us is necessary to sustain the believer as we walk in victory over sin. Paul prays for the Ephesians they might know that power and be strengthened by it to live the Christian life (see **Ephesians 1:19-20; 3:16-17**).
- c) *“He wants to know in an experiential way the power of Christ’s resurrection. That is, he wants to experience the same power that raised Christ from the dead surging through his own being, overcoming sin in his life and producing the Christian graces”* (Wuest).
- d) He seeks the power to conquer temptation, the power for service to Christ, the power to overcome trials that makes him strong when he’s weak, the power for witnessing and boldness. We need that too.
- e) While we can never enter into Christ’s sufferings in the same way that He suffered on the cross, there is a sense in which we need through suffering, to learn to entrust our souls to a faithful God.
- f) Paul knew what it was like to suffer for Christ (see **1:29-30**).
- g) Becoming like him in his death means to associate ourselves with him. For some it may mean persecution.
- h) When Paul writes about “any means possible”, he is not doubting his ultimate resurrection. Rather, he is being humble; knowing that he is totally unworthy.
- i) Heaven is his goal. At this point he is still unsure of his immediate future. Will he stay alive or will his forthcoming trial bring to the end, his earthly life?

GROUP LEADER’S NOTES – STUDY 12

QUESTION 1

- a) In our last study we saw those who were trying to take the believers back to the Jewish law.
- b) You can only be accepted by God if you are circumcised.
- c) It was all about what ‘I’ can do to be saved; rather than the gospel message which is about what ‘Jesus’ has done for me, to save me.
- d) ‘Confidence in the flesh’ is confidence in my good works rather than in God’s grace (see **Ephesians 2:8-9**).

QUESTION 2

- a) In verses 5-6 Paul lists seven grounds on which he could boast before God.
- b) The first four are about his family background as a Jew. They were God’s chosen people; and the gospel was firstly for them (**Romans 1:16**). The other three are as a result of his own efforts and achievement.
- c) Paul knew from experience, the futility of trying to attain salvation by good works. He is showing that if he could be saved by works, then he had a CV that would more than fit the bill. He had everything going for him.
- d) He wanted to show that he was a true-blooded Jew. He was not a convert. He had gone through what the law required in terms of **circumcision** at the right time.
- e) He was of the people of **Israel**; the covenant name for God’s chosen people.
- f) He belonged to the tribe of **Benjamin**. Although it was a small tribe, it was important. Benjamin had been the son of Jacob’s favourite wife Rachel. He was the only one of the twelve sons to be born in the promised land. Israel’s first King was from that tribe. The holy city Jerusalem was in the territory of Benjamin.

- g) He was fluent in **Hebrew** (many Jews lived outside Palestine and were only able to speak Greek). He was sent to Jerusalem as a boy and educated at the feet of the revered Rabbi Gamaliel (see **Acts 22:3**).
- h) He was a **Pharisee** and had a promising career as a Jewish religious leader (see **Galatians 1:14**). If anyone was going to heaven it was the Pharisees (meaning 'set apart people').
- i) He had **opposed** the Christian church.
- j) He was completely **committed** to the law.

QUESTION 3

- a) In the end, none of the above mattered. They could not save him.
- b) He counts all these things as loss. This implies the use of his mind. He uses the word three times in verses 7-8. He has calculated them.
- c) He had met Jesus on the Damascus road (**Acts 9**) and put his trust in Him.
- d) It was then he realized how futile his efforts had been.
- e) He thought there had been some gain. But now he was willing to lose it all in order to know Jesus.
- f) It is in Jesus that true salvation comes.

QUESTION 4

- a) Verse 8 in the NIV begins with the words "what is more". What he's said is not enough.
- b) Verse 8 says the same as verse 7 but ramps it up: e.g. "whatever gain" becomes "everything"; "loss" becomes "rubbish"; "Christ" becomes "Christ Jesus my Lord".
- c) Paul had gained much. His old life had been nothing compared to knowing Jesus personally.
- d) Indeed, when we get to verse 10 it is his ongoing goal; to know Jesus more.
- e) Everything else is of no consequence in comparison.

QUESTION 5

- a) Righteousness had been a great goal of Paul's when he was a Pharisee. And according to what he says in verse 6, he thought he had largely attained it.
- b) However, it was self-righteousness. It could never reach the goal set by God.
- c) The righteousness from God is 'imputed' (meaning to put to one's account).
- d) Paul realized that he didn't have anything in his account from his own efforts. The imputed righteousness is that of Jesus.
- e) This is an important statement of faith.
- f) A righteousness of our own comes through our own efforts and achievements. It comes through being obedient to the law of God. We can't do that.
- g) The righteousness of God is nothing about us. It is "through faith in Christ" (see **Rom 3:21-24**).