

# SET APART

## Set Apart for the Journey // Philippians 3:12-21

### THE POINT

Growing in Christ is a lifelong journey.

#### › Key Question

**What does it take to be made right with God? Why can we never earn salvation?**

God expects believers to live holy lives. However, we must understand that we could never live in ways good enough to earn salvation. Only God can declare us righteous, and He does so on the basis of what Jesus did for us, not by what we can do for ourselves. Paul understood that he was saved not by works but through his faith in Christ. Then he pursued radical obedience to God's Word—not in order to be saved but because he was saved. Christian perfection is not possible on this side of heaven. Paul admitted this. Still, he worked every day to live like Jesus.

#### › Keep in Mind

**Why might Paul have been prideful? When are you tempted to think a little too highly of yourself?**

By the time he wrote this, Paul had walked with God for several decades, and he took his faith very seriously. In fact, he'd had some incredible experiences with God—Paul came to faith when Jesus spoke personally to him. Paul had healed the sick and cast out demons, and he'd been taken into God's presence. And despite terrible hardships, he'd remained faithfully devoted to God. For some, this would cause them to be prideful. But for Paul, it deepened his faith, moved him to depend more fully on God, and brought genuine humility. If we're not careful, spiritual knowledge and experiences can cause pride. However, true faith moves us to see ourselves more clearly in the light of Christ and always brings humility.

#### › Application

How are you working to change not only your behaviors but also your heart and your desires?

#### › The Win

God has called us not only to do right but to love God with all we are. It's easy to identify wrong behavior and know exactly what to do to change it. However, when it comes to our hearts—our desires, thoughts, and emotions—it's a little more complicated. One thing to understand is that these things are under our control. Plenty of people have said that they simply can't control what they think or feel. However, God wouldn't have called us to be joyful and without fear if these weren't under our control. Understanding this is the first step. We also can't simply get rid of bad thoughts or desires. Instead, we have to fill our hearts with good things, and we do this through studying Scripture, prayer, worship, gratitude, and focusing on the beauty of Jesus. And when our hearts and minds are filled with these, there's no room for bad.

STUDENTS

**BIBLE**  
STUDIES  
FOR LIFE.