

INGman 10

Focused Living Ministries

Super Duper Pooper Scooper Phil 3:1-14

The warning signs are everywhere someone is likely to walk their dog.

“If your dog must poop, then you must scoop.” “Kids at play, keep poop away.” “Scoop their poop or we will shoot!” “When you’re looking out for #1, be careful not to step in #2.”

While writing to encourage God’s INGmen (3:1), Paul gave a warning sign to keep them from stepping in the stinkin’ poop of religious “dogs” (3:2). Because of pride, there is in our heart a drive to put our **confidence** in our own efforts/ religious activities in order to feel valuable (important, satisfied, complete, happy) before God and others. Paul literally calls his pride “*dung*” (3:8) in that it often blinded him to the grace and love of Christ. When an INGman tries to find fulfillment by cranking out life in the confidence of his own abilities rather than depending on the power of the Spirit (3:3) and the grace of God in Christ, he is in danger of stepping in the prideful poop of heretical, legalistic, theology. But Jesus has called us to a life of walking humbly with Him moment by moment, depending on His grace. So beware of giving the perception of being holy, righteous, spiritual or growing on the outside when sinful motives, attitudes and thoughts run rampant on the inside! **How does Paul confess that he had stepped in the prideful poop of relying on the pedigree, position, piety, philosophy, performance and prestige of his former life (3:5-6)?**

(3:2-6; Galatians 3:1-3; John 12:42-43) Hey, check the bottom of your shoes. Where might you have stepped in the poop of prideful thinking? What are you are trying to change or accomplish apart from the Spirit’s power, without being motivated by the Father’s love/grace? Is there anything you might be doing to impress others instead of expressing His grace? You can usually identify the poop because it is motivated by a **list** rather than **love**; a **religious duty** rather than a **rich delight**; **impress** others rather than **express** God’s grace. **Why is it easier to live by a set of rules (the Law) rather than to believe God and walk with Him? How does pride steal your joy?** How important is repentance important in dealing with poop? (Mark 1:14-15; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Rev 3:19-20)



(3:7-8; Gal 2:20) What is the key that helps Paul to keep from continually stepping in the poop of his pride? How did he model the formula “**Jesus + Nothing=Everything**”?

(3:7-14) List the phrases/principles that helped the great apostle Paul stay humbly dependent on God’s grace in Christ rather than a life of prideful independence on his own strength. Which phrase inspires you most?

(3:8-9) To Paul, how valuable was the love of God expressed at the Cross? “*What is the present value of the love of Christ in your life?*” (Francis Schaeffer)

(3:10; Rom 8:17; II Tim 1:12; 2:3; I Peter 3:17; 4:19) What reality can you be certain of if you’re serious about letting Jesus transform you into a rightly motivated and growing INGman? Give a recent example.

(3:10-11) The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to you today in order to accomplish all He has asked you to be and do! What are some of the unbelievably encouraging implications this principle might bring to you today?

(3:12-14) “*I press on...*” (*dioko* = to pursue with passion and reckless abandon in athletics or hunting. To sprint to the finish.) Paul was never satisfied with his growth or maturity in Christ. He always wanted more of Christ and the life He offers. What “*one thing*” can you do to pursue Christ with passion without stepping in the poop of pride?

TAG TEAM DISCUSSION What principle, phrase or insight will most help you to scrape the bottom of your shoes so you can walk afresh and anew as and INGman in the grace and power of the Lord Jesus Christ? Why?

THE RACE by D.H. Groberg

Whenever I start to hang my head in front of failure's face,
my downward fall is broken by the memory of a race.
A children's race, young boys, young men; how I remember well,
excitement sure, but also fear, it wasn't hard to tell.
They all lined up so full of hope, each thought to win that race
or tie for first, or if not that, at least take second place.
Their parents watched from off the side, each cheering for their son,
and each boy hoped to show his folks that he would be the one.

The whistle blew and off they flew, like chariots of fire,
to win, to be the hero there, was each young boy's desire.
One boy in particular, whose dad was in the crowd,
was running in the lead and thought "My dad will be so proud."
But as he speeded down the field and crossed a shallow dip,
the little boy who thought he'd win, lost his step and slipped.
Trying hard to catch himself, his arms flew everyplace,
and midst the laughter of the crowd he fell flat on his face.
As he fell, his hope fell too; he couldn't win it now.
Humiliated, he just wished to disappear somehow.

But as he fell his dad stood up and showed his anxious face,
which to the boy so clearly said, "Get up and win that race!"
He quickly rose, no damage done, behind a bit that's all,
and ran with all his mind and might to make up for his fall.
So anxious to restore himself, to catch up and to win,
his mind went faster than his legs. He slipped and fell again.
He wished that he had quit before with only one disgrace.
"I'm hopeless as a runner now, I shouldn't try to race."

But through the laughing crowd he searched and found his father's
face with a steady look that said again, "Get up and win that race!"
So he jumped up to try again, ten yards behind the last.
"If I'm to gain those yards," he thought, "I've got to run real fast!"
Exceeding everything he had, he regained eight, then ten...
but trying hard to catch the lead, he slipped and fell again.
Defeat! He lay there silently. A tear dropped from his eye.
"There's no sense running anymore! Three strikes I'm out! Why try?
I've lost, so what's the use?" he thought. "I'll live with my disgrace."
But then he thought about his dad, who soon he'd have to face.

"Get up," an echo sounded low, "you haven't lost at all,
for all you have to do to win is rise each time you fall.

Get up!" the echo urged him on, "Get up and take your place!
You were not meant for failure here! Get up and win that race!"
So, up he rose to run once more, refusing to forfeit,
and he resolved that win or lose, at least he wouldn't quit.
So far behind the others now, the most he'd ever been,
still he gave it all he had and ran like he could win.
Three times he'd fallen stumbling, three times he rose again.
Too far behind to hope to win, he still ran to the end.

They cheered another boy who crossed the line and won first place,
head high and proud and happy -- no falling, no disgrace.
But, when the fallen youngster crossed the line, in last place,
the crowd gave him a greater cheer for finishing the race.
And even though he came in last with head bowed low, unproud,
you would have thought he'd won the race, to listen to the crowd.
And to his dad he sadly said, "I didn't do so well."
"To me, you won," his father said. "You rose each time you fell."

And now when things seem dark and bleak and difficult to face,
the memory of that little boy helps me in my own race.
For all of life is like that race, with ups and downs and all.
And all you have to do to win is rise each time you fall.
And when depression and despair shout loudly in my face,
another voice within me says, "Get up and win that race!"

