



No Confidence
Pastor Joseph Zwanziger 03.08.2026

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures references in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to discuss the weekend message.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session. Give priority to the needs and pace of your group members.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships. Use the discussion questions as you see fit but emphasize the relationships.

[Genesis 17:10-11]

This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you. Every male among you shall be marked. You shall be marked in your flesh..., and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.

[Romans 4:9-12] (ESV)

Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

[Romans 2:29]

But a Jew is one inwardly, and the marking is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter.

[Deuteronomy 10:16] (ESV)

Mark therefore... your heart and be no longer stubborn.

[Philippians 3:1–10] (ESV)

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order 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 comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: marked on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order 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 comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith that I may know him and the power of his resurrection.

“Know” = *ginosko*

-To be familiar with

-To learn to know through personal experience

1) *Worship by the Spirit*

[Romans 8:5–6] (ESV)

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

[John 10:27] (ESV)

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

[John 4:23–24] (ESV)

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

2) *Glory in Christ Jesus*

[Galatians 6:13–14] (ESV)

For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Revelation 4:9–11] (ESV)

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

3) Put no confidence in the flesh

[Zechariah 4:6] (ESV)

“It’s not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord”

[Romans 8:3–4] (ESV)

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

[Philippians 3:10] (ESV)

“...know him and the power of his resurrection...”

Key Points:

- 1. Worship by the spirit**
- 2. Glory in Christ Jesus**
- 3. Put no confidence in the flesh**

Applications for the Week:

Where in your life have you noticed a tendency to rely on external religious routines (like church attendance, Bible reading, or serving) rather than cultivating a heart posture of dependence on the Spirit? What would it look like to approach one of those areas differently this week?

Discussion Questions:

- 1.** According to Philippians 3:2–3, what three groups does Paul warn believers to look out for, and what does he say characterizes true worshipers?
- 2.** In Philippians 3: 4–6, what specific credentials does Paul list that could have been grounds for confidence in his own flesh?
- 3.** What does Paul say he did with all his former gains and credentials in Philippians 3:8?
- 4.** In Pastor Joseph’s sermon, what does the Greek word ‘ginosko’ imply about the kind of knowledge Paul is pursuing in Philippians 3:10?
- 5.** Why do you think Paul uses such strong language like “dogs” and “mutilators of the flesh” to describe those insisting on external religious markers?
- 6.** Paul says true worshipers “glory in Christ Jesus”. What does it look like to truly glory in Christ rather than in personal achievements or religious performance?
- 7.** How does putting “no confidence in the flesh” (v. 3) free a person to pursue knowing Christ rather than just performing religious duties?

- 8.** In what ways can an overemphasis on external righteousness actually hinder a person from experiencing intimate relationship with Christ?
- 9.** What achievements, credentials, or areas of moral accomplishment do you find yourself subtly leaning on for spiritual confidence? How can you intentionally “count them as loss” and instead boast only in what Christ has done?
- 10.** Describe a recent moment where you sensed the Holy Spirit’s nudge or presence in an ordinary situation. How did you respond, and what would it look like to cultivate greater awareness of His leading in your daily life?