Bible Study

Philippians: Living with Joy

Chapter 3

OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS

(Warren Wiersbe)

**DISCUSSION**

Chapter 3:1-11 Recap (1-3)

III. THE SPIRITUAL MIND—chapter 3

A. **Paul’s past—3:1–11**

**1. (the accountant—“I count”)**

B. Paul’s present—3:12–16

1.(the athlete—“I press”)

C. Paul’s future—3:17–21

1. (the alien—“I look”)–30

Vv. 1–11 Paul’s past

* “the accountant”
  + “I count” new values

Vv. 12–16 Paul’s present

* “the athlete”
  + “I press” new vigor

Vv. 17–21 Paul’s future

* “the alien”
  + “I look” new vision

Paul gives three exhortations (*an address or communication emphatically urging someone to do something*):

* Exhortation #1 – Rejoice
  + The cure for discouragement is to fiercely focus my attention on the Lord and rejoice in Him.
* Exhortation #2 – Be on the alert
  + be on the lookout for three types of people:
    - Dogs
    - Evil workers
    - Mutilator of the flesh
* Exhortation #3 - We are the circumcision
  + Those who have “the circumcision of the heart” will possess three qualities:
    - Worship God in the Spirit
    - Boast in Christ Jesus
    - Has no confidence in the flesh

**DISCOVERY**

III. THE SPIRITUAL MIND—chapter 3

A. **Paul’s past—3:1–11**

**1. (the accountant—“I count”)**

B. Paul’s present—3:12–16

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C. Paul’s future—3:17–21

1. (the alien—“I look”)

Paul’s Past cont. (vv 1-11)

The Christ follower with the Spiritual Mind will have their focus on “heavenly things”.

**ch. 3:20; Colossians 3:1**

Thus, human accomplishment must take second place to the things of God.

It is easy for us to get wrapped up in “things,” not only the tangible things that we can see, but also the intangibles such as reputation, fame, achievement.

Look at what Paul “boasts” about in verses 4-6 (4 by birth/3 by choice):

* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** (Genesis 17:7, 10, 25-26; 21:4)
  + Paul is a Jew by birth. He is not a proselyte.
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** (2 Corinthians 11:22)
  + Hebrew of Hebrews
  + Tribe of Benjamin (1 Samuel 9:1-2)
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
  + In addition to the Law of Moses the Pharisees added their own regulations which in time were interpreted as equal to the Law.
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** (persecuting the church)
  + Acts 9:1-2
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** regarding the Jewish Law

On the human side these were reasons to have religious self-confidence.

\*Why do you feel these things were of importance to Paul and his readers?

Paul is refuting the Judaizers. Anyone remember what they taught? Tried to force believers with non-Jewish backgrounds to adopt Jewish customs as a condition of salvation.

They taught:

Jesus + The Law = Salvation

In verse 7, however, Paul says that what was “gain to him, he counted as loss for the sake of Christ.”

Verse 7 from The Message: “The very credentials these people are waving around as something special, I’m tearing up and throwing out with the trash—along with everything else I used to take credit for. And why? Because of Christ.”

How does he come to this determining assessment of his past human accomplishments?

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** “…I have considered…” (7-9)

Consider means to “think through or reflect on.” After reflection he considered them loss.

Paul considered as loss not only the things already listed (vv. 5–6), but everything (v. 8).

He says I would rather forfeit all that I am and all that I have, *to gain the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus personally*.

In comparison to Christ, he considers his accomplishments to be “rubbish” or “dung”.

**Isaiah 64:6**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** “My goal is to know him…”

Paul wants more than a superficial, intellectual knowledge of Christ. He wants to have an intimate, personal connection with Christ.

Paul wants to:

* Experience Christ’s resurrection power
  + “Power” (dynamis, also used in Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16) means ability to overcome resistance.
* Be a partner in Christ’s suffering
  + He desired to participate with Christ, since he was one of His, in suffering for the sake of righteousness.

**Acts 9:16**

* Go all the way with Christ to death itself
  + The words “being conformed to his death” mean “being conformed inwardly in one’s experience to something”, in this case, to Christ’s death. As Christ died for sin, so a believer has died to sin.

**Romans 6:2, 6-7; Colossians 3:3**

**DIRECTION**

Read Philippians 3

Take some time for personal reflection.

What can I count as loss to gain the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ personally?

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