



Title: Experiencing Philippians

Lesson 4

Read the introduction, the text, Reflect on them and take notes: (10) minutes

Read: Rejoice because you are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit. Warnings against false teachers.

Philippians 3:1-3 (NASB) ¹ Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. ² Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; ³ for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

Ask:

1. What is your understanding of Paul's statement, "To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you (verse 1);" and its importance in application to our Christian walk?

Reflection: Paul continues by warning against false teachers, which were preaching mutilation (false circumcision) which he [Paul] compared to a heathen practice (e.g. Leviticus 21:5; 1 Kings 18:28); before stating, "We are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,"...

2. How do you understand/interpret this statement? How does Paul's statement play-out in our day-to-day lives? What areas, in our life, do we need to change to reflect the point Paul is driving at?

Read: Warnings against confidence in the flesh (certifications, qualifications, or natural abilities).

Philippians 3:4-6 (NASB) ⁴ although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

Ask:

1. In verse four, Paul continues his idea from the previous scripture [Put no confidence in the flesh]; before, almost chiding the recipients of the letter for putting confidence in the flesh stating, "If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more." He then lists many qualifications / certifications / check-in-the-boxes. Why, then, do we put confidence in the flesh? And, what is your understanding of its impact to our Christian walk? How about the impact to the Body of Christ?

Read: Working out our Salvation, with great excitement for the Heavenly Prize!!

Philippians 3:7-11 (NASB) ⁷ But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; ¹¹ in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Ask:

1. What is your understanding of why Paul counts all things we look at in the natural as loss for the sake of Christ, so that "I [Paul] may gain Christ (verses 8)? How does that attitude, which was in Paul, impact the way we approach (or should approach) day-to-day life?
2. In verse 9, Paul adds to his desire (Gaining Christ), by informing all he [Paul] desires to be found in Him in His righteousness, which comes through faith. How do you interpret that statement? What things in our life need to be addressed (confronted / dealt-with) in order to be found in His righteousness?

Reflection: Romans 6:5-8 (NASB) ⁵ For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; ⁷ for he who has died is freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

3. What is your understanding of the extent Paul is showing himself, and his walk as an example; imploring us to know Christ and to walk in the same manner, or to be conformed to His [God] image (verses 10 and 11)?