

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-21

REVIEW...

- **PHILIPPIANS 1:1-30 – REJOICING IN SUFFERING**
- **PHILIPPIANS 2:1-30 – REJOICING IN SERVING**
- **PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11 – REJOICING IN BELIEVING**
 - o Paul had taught the church about salvation – but it was important to teach them again...
 - Because there were false believers – dogs / evil workers / mutilators...
 - Who believed they were good enough to get to heaven by their own works...
 - But those who are the ‘true circumcision’ – have no confidence in themselves...
 - They know that the only way to be saved is by faith in Jesus Christ!
 - o If anyone could have been good enough – it was Paul...
 - He was a Hebrew of Hebrews – a Pharisee – a lived a perfect life by the Law...
 - Paul realized it was not just about actions – it was about the heart – and all are guilty!
 - o Paul abandoned his religion – for a relationship with Jesus Christ...
 - He counted his works as poop – compared the righteousness that comes from Jesus...
 - So was determined to know Jesus – share in His resurrection / suffering / and death!

HOW WE ARE TO LIVE... (2 THINGS)

- **1ST – WE ARE NOT PERFECT YET... VS. 12-14 (2 THINGS)**
 - o Paul made it clear our good works cannot save us...
 - There is nothing we can do to earn our way into heaven – it is a gift of grace...
 - But if our salvation is a gift – how are we to live our lives until we get to heaven...
 - o 1ST - Paul understood that he was not perfect... vs. 12
 - Paul was a man chosen by Jesus Christ Himself to share the Gospel with the world...
 - He wrote 1/3 of the New Testament – perhaps the most influential man in history...
 - Yet Paul realized there was still a lot of work God had to do in his life...
 - If Paul had not arrived / perfect – we can be sure we have a long way to go...
 - We have been saved – but we are still sinners – and we still sin...
 - If you think you have matured to a point where you no longer sin / are perfect...
 - **I John 1:8 - “If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves...”**
 - We are perfect in God’s eyes...
 - How amazing that when God looks at us He does not see sinners...
 - He sees the saints that we will one day be – by the Grace of God!
 - The next time you look in the mirror and ask – why me God...
 - Remember God looks at a very different mirror – He see us who we will one day be!
 - But practically – God is still working to make us like Jesus...
 - And God’s timing is not our timing - He does not change us in a day - **II Peter 3:8-9...**
 - We think that waiting on the Lord means a couple of hours – maybe weeks...
 - Following Jesus means being patient – willing to wait on the Lord - wait on Grace!

- o 2nd - Paul kept pressing on towards Jesus... vs. 13-14
 - Paul wanted to grow and become all God wanted him to be...
 - He did not grow by trying harder to live a good life – making a lot of rules...
 - When we fill our lives with rules – they only point out to us all our flaws...
 - Because the rules do nothing / can do nothing – to help us change...
 - We can tell ourselves all day long to read our Bible - go to church - be 'good'...
 - But no matter how many 'rules' we have - we cannot make change our heart...
 - It all comes down to the heart - you are going to do what you want to!
 - Instead of rules Paul did one thing – he forgot his past...
 - To often in our Christian walk we hold onto our past - our mistakes and failures...
 - We depend on our past mistakes and successes – for how to live in the present...
 - We certainly can learn from our mistakes – better rather than repeating them...
 - But our past does not hold the key to being all God wants us to be...
 - If we are focused on our past - then we are not looking to Jesus...
 - Paul set his sights permanently on Jesus...
 - **II Corinthians 3:5** – “We [cannot] do anything of lasting value by ourselves. Our only power and success come from God.”
 - Only through the power of the Jesus – can we have a change our heart!
 - Jesus changes our desires, so we do not want to do the things that are wrong...
 - Instead, we want to do those things that please the Lord – live for God!
 - Only Jesus can bring lasting change - a transformed heart and new life...
 - As we look to Jesus - we are changed from the inside out!
 - Looking towards the goal – the prize – Jesus Christ – **I Corinthians 9:24**...
 - The Christian life is like a race - with a beginning and end...
 - We began the race the day we believed in Jesus - it ends the day we die...
 - So often as believers we start off well in our race - but we do not finish well...
 - We treat it like a sprint - but after a while we get tired - distracted - and give up...
 - The Christian life is a not a sprint - it is a marathon...
 - If we want to make it to the goal – if we want to cross that finish line...
 - And like any good Marathon runner – we need to get rid of the extra weight...
 - **Hebrews 12:1** - “Let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us.”
 - Jesus alone could make Paul all God wanted him to be...
 - **Romans 8:30** – “God also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”
 - God does it all - the same one who ‘called us’ / ‘justified’ us - took away our sin...
 - He is also the one who ‘glorified’ us - made and is making us into the image of Jesus!
 - God Choose us! God forgave us! And He will also conform us - to be like Jesus!
 - The one who began a good work in our lives - will finish what He started!
 - **Hebrews 12:2** - “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...”

● 2ND –WE ARE TO GROW IN JESUS... VS. 15-19 (2 THINGS)

- o 1st – Paul wanted the believers to be mature... vs. 15-16
 - Immaturity is focusing on yourself...
 - There are so many Christians who are immature – because they focus on themselves
 - Thinking the more they do for God - the more they will grow in God...
 - The more they read their Bible / go to church / pray / give...
 - The more God will accept them / bless them / love them!
 - Maturity is focusing on Jesus...
 - Maturity in Jesus is not what we do – it is all about who we know!
 - So many people think that if they are good enough God will accept them...
 - But it is when God gets a hold of your life - changes your heart - you become good!
 - The cart does not push the caribou - the caribou pushes the cart...
 - The rules do not make the difference - it is the relationship that changes the heart...
 - It is not that we have to read our Bible / go to church / pray...
 - It is that God changes our hearts to we want to!
 - We cannot teach maturity to others – God has to show it to them...
 - When we see people who are immature – we want to try and help...
 - But if we go around telling everyone how ridiculous their 'self-righteous' rules are...
 - How they set standards they are not even able to keep themselves...
 - At best we will get ignored - more likely we will end up in a fight...
 - People will not listen to us – God has to be the one to show the truth to them...
 - If I point out your immaturity – even in love – you likely will not listen...
 - I cannot change your heart – you are still going to do what you want...
 - If instead point you to Jesus – a relationship that changes the heart!
 - God will tell you – He will change your heart, so you realize it is all about Jesus!
- o 2nd – Paul wanted the church to follow a good example... vs. 17-19
 - Paul – and those who were like Paul – were a good example...
 - Paul was moving towards Christ - if they followed him - they'd also follow Jesus!
 - We need to be careful whom we spend time with – who we are influenced by...
 - We all follow someone's example – they lead us either towards or away from God...
 - Surround yourself with godly men - those who encourage your walk in the Lord...
 - There are many out there who are a bad example...
 - Paul told the church about them before – in tears – the enemies of the cross...
 - Their future is hell – they only live for the pleasures of this world...
 - We are to avoid those who say they are Christians - but live like the world...
 - Because we know not to follow the example of the world - they are lost...
 - But we might be tempted to follow the bad example of a 'brother' in the Lord...
 - **II Thessalonians 3:6** - "We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us."
- 3rd – WE ARE TO WAIT PATIENTLY... vs. 20-21
 - o We are the citizens of heaven... vs. 20

- The world citizens is literally the world politics – our politics are heaven...
 - People spend a lot of time talking about / arguing over politics...
 - But for all of our arguing – things never really seem to change...
 - One mayor might be voted out – and another comes into office – but it is still the same!
 - We should be those who talk about – tell others about heaven...
 - Because Jesus is the one who can really change things for the better!
- o We are waiting for the return of Jesus...
- The ‘trumpet of God sounds’ – the call for the church to go home...
 - It will happen in a moment (*atom*) - in the blink of an eye...
 - When you least expect it - like a thief in the night - **I Thessalonians 5:2**
 - Jesus will come for His church - it will be so fast you can’t even blink...
 - If you are not ready - if you miss it - then you will be left behind...
 - The knowledge of Jesus eminent return keeping us pure - **I John 3:3**
 - We have everything to gain by Being Ready for Jesus SOON return!
 - So are we ready – no man knows the day and the hour...
 - But we know we are the last generation – Jesus is coming in our lifetime...
 - Let us live every day – knowing today could well be the day we see Jesus!
 - **Luke 21:28** - “Stand straight and look up, for your salvation is near!”
- o Who will give us a new body... vs. 21
- Our bodies were not designed to live forever - they were not meant to go to heaven...
 - Like the caterpillar who cannot fly - but one day will become a butterfly...
 - **II Corinthians 5:1** - “For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”
 - I like the idea of a tent - tents are never permanent - our bodies are only temporary
 - One day the Holy Spirit will give us new bodies - meant and designed for eternity!
 - When we are resurrected, we will be just like Jesus - when He was resurrected...
 - **I John 3:2** - “Dear friends, we are already God’s children, and we can’t even imagine what we will be like when Christ returns. But we do know that when he comes, we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.”
 - Jesus who could walk right through walls - **John 20:19** / who could fly - **Acts 1:9**
 - No need to own a motor / no need to take a boat or plane - we will be just fly!
 - No need to knock on the door - who cares if it is locked - we can walk right in!
 - There will be no more pain / no more sickness / no more tears - **Revelation 21:4**
 - And this is just the LITTLE we know about our resurrected bodies...
 - FAR GREATER than anything we have now – talk about a reason to have Joy!