

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

REVIEW...

- **PHILIPPIANS 1:1-30 – REJOICING IN SUFFERING**
- **PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11 – REJOICING IN SERVING**
 - To be a servant we must bring unity to the Church of God...
 - To be a servant we must have humility...
 - The perfect example of a servant is Jesus Christ!
- **PHILIPPIANS 2:12-30 – THE EXAMPLE OF THE CHURCH**
 - The church of Philippi was an example in how they always served others...
 - Timothy was an example in how he was flexible to be used anyway God wanted...
 - Epaphroditus was an example in how he was willing to sacrifice it all to serve!

JOY IN BELIEVING... (3 THINGS)

- **1ST – THE FALSE AND THE TRUE BELIEVER... VS. 1-3 (3 POINTS)**
 - Finally my brothers...
 - Paul had already shown how we can have Joy in suffering / and Joy in serving...
 - But Paul is far from done with his letter to the Philippians – he has 44 more verse to go...
 - Paul says finally here to emphasize the point he is about to make...
 - Now in chapter 3 he will show us how we can have Joy in believing!
 - 1ST – Paul loved the Saints in Philippi... vs. 1
 - He wanted more than anything – for them to rejoice in the Lord...
 - For that reason he was willing to write to them the same things over and over...
 - **You may have noticed that the Bible often repeats itself...**
 - **The same message given in many ways – ‘we cannot earn our way to heaven’...**
 - **The reason is because often we do not hear it – or do not understand – the first time...**
 - **The Bible tells us over and over in the hope we will eventually get it...**
 - **It is too important for us not to get / so we must repeat it as many times as needed!**
 - 2ND – There are fake believers... vs. 2
 - Paul called them dogs – it was not a compliment...
 - In Jewish culture it was common to refer to unbelieving gentiles as dogs...
 - It was not a compliment – the reference was to wild / untamed rabid savages...
 - **Like a rabid dog these men go around trying to bite and infect others with their poison!**
 - Paul called them evil workers...
 - Their poison was - they thought they were good enough to get to heaven...
 - But they were comparing themselves to others – not God’s standard with is perfection!
 - **We need to be careful whom we choose to compare ourselves to...**
 - **We might compare ourselves to the world around us – and think we are ok...**
 - **The problem is the world is getting worse and worse every day...**
 - **Meaning if we are comparing ourselves to them - we are also getting worse!**
 - Paul calls them mutilators...
 - A very similar word to circumcise – the idea being these men were Jews...
 - And they mutilated / circumcised others – teaching you had to be a Jew to be saved...
 - Speaking of the Judaizers - religious teachers who taught you had to keep the Law...

- Paul had an ongoing battle with these false teachers – **II Corinthians 10...**
 - His first encounter with them came after his return from his first missions trip...
 - **Acts 15:1** - “Certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’”
 - I know a lot of Christians that have a lot of rules they try and live their life by...
 - And even though they have been in church for many years - they have not matured...
 - All they have is their unchanging rules - the problem is they do not change either!
- o 3rd – We are the true believers... vs. 3
- We are the ‘true’ circumcision – who worship God in the Spirit...
 - There are two kinds of circumcision – outward and inward...
 - **Romans 2:29** - “A true Jew is one whose heart is right with god. And true circumcision is not a cutting of the body but a change of heart produced by god’s spirit. Whoever has that kind of change seeks praise from god, not from people.”
 - Every Jew was circumcised physically in obedience to the Law...
 - But if they did not keep law – they showed were not circumcised spiritually...
 - It is not about our words – or where we are – it is about the actions from our lives...
 - If you live like the devil - then it is a good bet you are not a child of God...
 - True believers do not put any confidence in themselves...
 - If we are honest - we know what we are supposed to do - we know right from wrong
 - The question is how do we manage to consistently do what is right!
 - **Romans 7:15** - “I don’t understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate.”
 - Circumcision of the heart – is how we are able to obey the Lord...
 - Those who are circumcised in their heart – walk by the Spirit...
 - **Colossians 2:11** – “When you came to Christ, you were ‘circumcised’, not by a physical procedure. It was a spiritual procedure, cutting away your sinful nature.”
 - Before we came to Jesus we did what our sin wanted us to – we were slaves to sin...
 - We were bound/captive to the sinful desires of our heart – we did not know better...
 - We did not think about Jesus – how to live for Jesus – how to live a righteous life...
 - We did not trust in Jesus – we only knew how to trust in ourselves...
 - But when we accepted Jesus Christ – we died to that old sinful nature...
 - The sinful desires of our heart were cut off – so we were free to live for the Lord...
 - **Romans 6:6** – “Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.”
 - That change of heart – circumcision – is how we can be obedient to the Lord!
- **2ND – RIGHTEOUSNESS BY WORKS ... VS. 4-6 (7 THINGS)**
- o 1st - If anyone could have been saved by his works – it would have been Paul... vs. 4
- Paul was circumcised on the 8th day – in accordance with – **Genesis 17**
 - Paul was saying he was a ‘true’ descendant of Abraham – heir to the promise of God...
- o 2nd - Paul was a pure-blooded Jew – both his mother and father were Jews... vs. 5
- o 3rd - Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin – he even knew his heritage...
- It is likely that Paul – whose name was first Saul before God changed it...
 - Was named after the first King of Israel – King Saul of Benjamin!
- o 4th - Paul was the Hebrew of Hebrews...
- When Filipinos move to the States / Europe – the first generation keeps their culture
 - But the second / third generation become part of their new culture language...

- Most of the Jews in Paul's time had lost their Hebrew culture / language...
- Because Israel had been conquered by the Greeks / and then Romans...
- Many of the Jews had taken on the Greek language and culture – but not Paul...
- He was still VERY Jewish in his culture / and still spoke the Hebrew language!
- o 5th - Paul was a Pharisee – he kept the Law... vs. 6
 - 500 years before Jesus the nation of Israel had become very wicked...
 - As a result God punished Israel - allowed the nation of Babylon to conquer them...
 - They spent 70 years in captivity – then God let them return home...
 - In an effort to get right with God there was a 'spiritual revival'...
 - A group was created to ensure Israel never rebelled against God again...
 - The Pharisees were the group that was created to keep all the commands of God!
- o 6th - Paul persecuted the church of Christ...
 - Saul held the coats of those who stoned Steven to death – **Acts 7**...
 - **Acts 9:1** – Paul hunted Christians and put them to death for their faith in Christ...
 - He believed that Christianity was a cult – and he was determined to stamp it out!
 - Paul had everything going for him – if anyone could have been saved it was him...
 - But instead of being a 'man of God' - he was unwittingly at war with God!
 - **We are certainly no better than Paul – and if we think we can be saved by our works...**
 - **We will find like Paul did – that in truth was are the enemies of God!**
- o 7th - Paul was blameless according to the Law...
 - He followed the Law to the letter – never making one mistake outwardly...
 - Where Paul failed is when he realized the Law also looked at the heart...
 - You shall not covet (*speaking of the desires of the heart for something you don't have*)
 - Paul could control what he did / his actions – but he could not stop his desires
 - **I know a lot of people who think they are good Christians because they follow rules**
 - **They show up to church every Sunday – but what is in their heart...**
 - **We might be able to keep ourselves from having an affair with a beautiful woman...**
 - **Matthew 5:28** – **"Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has committed adultery..."**
 - **But how many of us have never looked at a beautiful woman and thought...**
 - Paul realized the Law could not make him righteous...
 - **Because the Law points out to us all our failures – showed us all our flaws...**
 - **The problem is it does nothing / can do nothing – to help us change...**
 - **There is only the ability to show us what we do is wrong – not to make it right...**
 - **Being told what to do and not to do still depends on me to make the right choice...**
 - **But if we want to sin – the Law is powerless to stop us – it just tells us we sinned**
- **3RD – RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH... VS. 7-11**
 - o What Paul thought was important – he now consider worthless... vs. 7-8
 - When Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus – **Acts 9** – his eyes were opened...
 - He realized that for all his efforts – he was still not good enough to earn heaven...
 - The only way for him to be saved – was by faith in Jesus Christ!
 - Paul lost his religion – in order to gain a relationship with Jesus...
 - Everything Paul had done in his past – even everything Paul did today...
 - He considered all his works / his religion – as trash (*literally manure*)...
 - **Get the picture – when we show up in heaven - try and present out works to God...**
 - **It is like handing Him a pile of caribou poop – repulsive / pungent...**
 - **Throw out the trash – forget trying to be good enough to earn heaven...**

- Paul counted it all lost – so he could gain Christ...
 - The only way to get to heaven is to ‘know Jesus Christ’...
 - Being a better Christian is not about what we do – it is all about who we know...
 - The more we get to know Jesus – the more we will be like Jesus!
- o What does it mean to know Jesus... vs. 9-11
 - We know about the gift of His righteousness by faith...
 - Paul did not want to be found standing in his own righteousness...
 - He wanted to be found having the righteousness of Jesus Christ...
 - We may think we look pretty righteous - but to God our goodness is filthy rags!
 - **Isaiah 64:6** – “All our righteousness are like filthy rags [menstrual cloth]...”
 - We are REALLY bad people - we are all – every one of us – TOTAL sinners...
 - Yet God loved us so much that He gave His life for us – **John 3:16**
 - Jesus paid the price for our sin – and gave us His reward of Heaven!
 - We know about the power of the resurrection...
 - If there were no resurrection – if death was the end – then life would not matter...
 - You could do what you wanted whenever you wanted without consequence...
 - But we know death is not the end - we have the hope of eternal life to come...
 - Jesus was the first to be resurrected - but all who believe will follow His example!
 - In fact everyone will live forever - our spirit is eternal...
 - The question we are left to answer - is where will we spend out eternity!
 - We know we must suffer for Jesus...
 - We like the idea of the gift of God – and the power of the resurrection...
 - But we tend not to like the idea that we have to suffer with Jesus...
 - **II Peter 1:22** – Jesus suffered – so we are also called to suffer for Jesus!
 - We know we must share in His death...
 - In order to be resurrected – we first have to die to our self...
 - The idea being our old man – sinful nature – was crucified and buried with Jesus...
 - We were then ‘raised from the dead’ – no longer the old sinful man we once were
 - We were given ‘new life’ – freed from sin to live for God - **II Corinthians 5:17**
 - We are ‘born again’ – not to live in sin / but to live in godliness
 - If I am dead - then there is not point in me trusting in my abilities...
 - I do not even for a moment consider trusting in myself to overcome sin...
 - I have to depend completely and entirely on Jesus Christ!