



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

PHILIPPIANS REVIEW CHAPTERS 3

WYOMING

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Paul wants us to see Jesus Christ as our supreme example. Paul wants to make sure that what we say we possess is true and genuine. Let's look at chapter 3 to answer some of these questions.

PHILIPPIANS 3

A. WHO IS A TRUE BELIEVER— PHILIPPIANS 3:1-2

Here in Philippians 3, Paul directs his attention to a contrast between those who say they are believers but aren't and those who truly are. God is concerned that the lost become saved and He is equally concerned that no one is deceived about the reality of their true spiritual condition. Paul preached the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was salvation by grace through faith plus nothing. In Philippians 3, Paul discusses a common problem; putting confidence in the flesh (in ourselves) for salvation and not God. Having a righteousness apart from Christ will never work. Placing confidence in what we can do rather than what God has done is dangerous ground. Later Paul will show that if anyone could put confidence in his own ability to gain salvation, it would be him. All that we are and all we can do will never be good enough to gain a relationship with Jesus Christ. This is so important to understand and that's why Paul begins the chapter with three warnings to beware. It has eternal significance and consequence for your life. Romans 2:28-29 makes it clear that God is not impressed with an outward mark or outward actions, but rather is concerned with the condition of our heart. Having confidence in anything or anyone other than Jesus Christ for salvation results in eternal condemnation. Does an event, a date, a walk down the aisle show that you are a believer? What about if you go to church, say all the right things, teach Sunday School and give generously to God's work? That still isn't enough to merit your salvation. Even the greatest humanitarian works will never provide a relationship with God. It is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone! (Ephesians 2:8-9) There is nothing you can do for salvation except depend wholly and only on Jesus Christ. Is your salvation based on what you have done? Are you secure because of an event, position or service? If so, receive Jesus Christ today knowing you are in need of a Savior

B. MARKS OF A TRUE BELIEVER— PHILIPPIANS 3:3

Because it is important to God for us not to be fooled by the counterfeit, His Word clearly lays out objective criteria which becomes evident of His regenerative work in our hearts. These marks will characterize the life of a true believer. They are not outward, but reveal the inward cleansing of a heart from sin by God. What are the marks of a true believer? Look for one whose life is one of worship from the heart that's prompted by the Spirit,

one whose glory, joy and boasting is found only in Christ and for one who when viewing himself is humble knowing that without Christ he would be nothing. True worship is a response from the depth of my heart to the truth of Who God is. It is honor, adoration and glory given to a holy God. It involves all that I am devoted to loving God and being committed to His purpose. It is a way of life, not an activity in my schedule. It is a life-long pursuit. Paul calls the mark of a true Christian as one who is a true worshipper of God, glories in Christ Jesus and puts no confidence in the flesh. Is that the mark of your life? Is that what others would say? It has been said that the life that honors God is the only life God honors!

C. THE GREAT EXCHANGE— PHILIPPIANS 3:4-8

Paul gives us his list of impressive credentials. If there was anyone who could be saved by his own doing, Paul would be that one. And yet, Paul, when he encounters Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, instantly realizes that all he had in the profit column was loss. Even more than that, Paul counted his profit column as manure or worthless garbage to be thrown away. Paul gives it all up in order to gain Christ, exchanging a righteousness which he thought he could earn, but couldn't, for a righteousness only God gives through faith in Jesus Christ. Martin Luther called this the great exchange...all that I am which amounts to nothing...for Christ! Jesus says that He will save your eternal soul if you willingly give up everything else you are putting your trust in. Acts 4:12 says, *"for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."* Paul saw Jesus Christ finally as the true treasure. He saw what he had and counted it as rubbish. It could never save him and yet he was almost deceived into thinking it could. What about you? Will you exchange all that you are for all that Christ is? *He is the pearl of great price...the true treasure!! (Matthew 13:45-46)*

D. GAIN FOR LOSS— PHILIPPIANS 3:8-11

All things were loss to Paul compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Jesus Christ as his Lord. Now, Paul was found in Christ having a righteousness provided through His atoning work on the cross not by his own works. Paul gained not only a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through this righteous provision, but also the power of His resurrection working in him. Christ's resurrection would be the most complete and graphic demonstration of God's absolute and infinite power. That is the kind of power we have as believers operating in us. Because of Christ, there is power in my otherwise impotent life to conquer sin and live a victorious life. Paul gained a deep communion and fellowship with Christ. The deepest moments of fellowship with Jesus Christ comes in times of trials and

BIBLE STUDIES

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hardship. There, we find a companion Who walks with us, cares, and understands like no other and His gracious provision of mercy is new every morning. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Jesus Christ offers a relationship, a righteousness found only in Christ, the power to live the life He has called us to, a fellowship even in the hardest of times and our future glorification where we spend eternity with our Lord in heaven. What can you hold on to that is equal to that???

E. THIS ONE THING I DO— PHILIPPIANS 3:12-16

Salvation was not the end for Paul but only the beginning of a life lived to honor and glorify God. The start of the race is not the finish even though it had been probably thirty years since his conversion. Paul saw his life as *“laying hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 3:12) Paul presses on, giving maximum effort and the use of every muscle to *“become conformed to the image of His Son.”* (Romans 8:28-29) Christ’s purpose in saving me becomes my purpose for living. So Paul, *“reaching forward to what lies ahead”* (Philippians 3:13), emphasizes the double stretching every muscle to the goal or finish line ahead. Paul had one driving compulsion to *“press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 3:14) The Greek word for *“press”* means to run after, to press hard with energetic endeavor and pursue with all our might. It is a present tense verb, which means that Paul is putting *continuous* effort to pursue with all his might the prize. Is that the kind of effort we give?? The final prize, the reward of his race was to be like Christ and near the end of his life he was able to write, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.”* (2 Timothy 4:7-8) The purpose for which I live is no less. At the end of our lives may we be able to say with Paul these same words.

F. DO NOT BE DECEIVED— PHILIPPIANS 3:17-19

When we become a Christian, we are a new creation with a new heart. We have a new standing with God and are accepted by God because we have the righteousness of Christ covering us. We have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit Who is the power of God at work in us and yet...we have not arrived. We still have an unredeemed flesh to struggle with and we can still be tempted and sin. We must follow the examples of the faithful before us to pursue the prize of the upward call of God with all diligence till we stand before the Lord one day. But we must be careful to avoid the many ungodly examples and so Paul warns believers again to not be deceived. How are we to be kept from falling and being deceived?? We must *“grow in the grace and*

knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:17) We must study Scripture to learn truth, growing deeper in our walk with the Lord will result in greater discernment. We must **pursue** Jesus Christ. It is crucial that we know what we believe and live it. Only then can we keep from being deceived. The church is in danger today because many have a shallow faith and don’t know what Scripture teaches. Only a faith that is rooted deep in the truths of Jesus Christ will discern the false. The enemies of the cross think the same things as the world does. They set their mind on the world and not God and His Word. They say they love God but will not submit to Him or His Word. They serve God on their own terms and are not followers of Christ but followers of themselves. What about you? *What do you seek after? What is the habit of your life? What do you submit your life to? Who do you follow and pursue? Christ or yourself? How will you keep from being deceived?*

G. THE BELIEVER’S HOPE— PHILIPPIANS 3:20-21

And as a result of knowing Jesus Christ, we look forward to His eminent return!! If our lives as believers are now dedicated towards pursuing Jesus Christ, then what a certain hope and joy to know that He will return for us and we shall see Him face to face. We shall live with the One we have pursued eternally in heaven! Therefore, the believer has a heavenly focus. Paul encourages us not to be so imbedded in this present world with what it has to offer because it is temporary and passing away. Our focus is to be on Christ eagerly looking and waiting for His return! With that perspective, we will desire to be found faithful when He returns, living a life that is pleasing to Him. And remember, we are not anxiously looking forward to an event, but rather a *Person*; our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Paul counted all things as loss compared to the surpassing value of knowing Jesus Christ. It showed in his life as he changed his direction and goals. The pattern he walked was now different. The goal he pressed on for was clear. Indeed, to Paul, there was nothing compared to the surpassing value of knowing Jesus Christ! *Psalms 116:12 says, “What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?”* Each of us must answer that question for ourselves. What will you render to the Lord for all He has done for you? As believers, we have been given so much through our relationship with Christ. While Christ has no price on His free mercy and grace, the only acceptable gift to the Lord is our lives lived in obedience and thankfulness to Him. Will you?