

Philippians 3:1-11
Joy in Salvation

Intro: Father's day - no hoopla - Mother's day (Hannah, great mom) - Paul perhaps no kids - get to work

Vs. 1 - Great theme of Joy

- Joy in gospel community, suffering, humility, service
- Rejoice in the Lord - one cannot rejoice in the Lord and in the flesh at the same time - mutually exclusive

Vs. 2-3 - Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is for you

- Context: Christianity started w/ Jews (sect)
 - o Kept Jewish rites/rituals
 - o As Christianity spread to Gentiles, great debate btw Jews and Gentiles
 - o To be Christian, do you first have to be Jewish? Keep law and circumcised

Where does your righteousness come from?

- Judaizers: law and Christ, circumcision and Christ
- Paul calls them dogs (not endearing)
- Paul is honest - doesn't sugar coat
 - o Dog= garbage disposal, roam streets, dirty, chase you around
 - o Judaizers referred to Gentiles as dogs
- Paul uses this term for the Judaizers in irony
- False teachers: books, music, preacher (elder charge)

Vs. 4-6 - Gives a personal example

- 8th day - IAW the law
- Ethnic Israelite, knew his tribe/pedigree
- Hebrew of Hebrews - likely descended from Jewish ancestors
- Pharisee - strictest religious sect
- Zeal - such that he even persecuted the church

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- Thought he was following in the footsteps of Elijah
- Blameless - if anyone was, it was Paul
- Few Judaizers could match his record - none could surpass it (varsity)

Vs. 7 - BUT

- If we are not careful, we can easily fall into the same trap as Judaizers with our own version of the law
 - Homeschool, speech, leadership in church/GC, books, movies, dress
- These things are not necessarily bad - can be if we use as justification for righteousness
 - “Look how good of a Christian I am...”
 - “God must be so pleased with me...”
 - “I’ve earned it...”
- Most would disagree with righteousness from this, but practically that’s what it is.
 - Look down on other Christians who are a little different
 - “A real Christian wouldn’t...” (comparison)
- Paul’s accounting changed completely
 - Whatever gain he thought he had (power, prestige) he now counts it as loss

Vs. 8 - Jesus is the ultimate gain (better than power and prestige)

- Deep theological truths in paradox (first/last, whoever loses his life/gains)

Vs. 9 - Found in him-being spiritually united w/Christ and found not guilty by God

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- Previously, Paul trusted in his own works/actions to make right before God
 - o How much pressure does that put on a person? Ever enough?
- Paul traded it for Christ's work on the Cross (came out ahead)
- Paul recognized that while he kept the law outwardly, he failed to keep every little part (word, thought, action, motivation)
- Romans 7:7-11 - as hard as Paul tried, he still came up short
 - o Have you ever felt like that? As hard as you try to be right before God you still come up short?

Bob Newhart (best counseling training) - STOP IT!

- Paul recognized that law-righteousness was so thorough - not just actions
- Externally he did everything right, but internally he fell short of the perfection God demanded

Something better - Christ (gospel) only one who lived in perfect obedience

- Righteousness is only possible because of Jesus - imputed perfection

From God - Father & Son in agreement

Through faith - Jesus did all the work - nothing we can do to add to it

- "The only thing we contribute to salvation is our sin."
- Eph. 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through Faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." Greek "it" refers to faith
- So glad it is not dependent on me - not even faith

Vs. 10-11 - The goal of trusting Christ (faith) is to know him. Not do whatever

Relationship - (not individual) - GC

Power - made known through same sufferings Jesus experience/faced

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Paul wants to know Jesus to such a great extent that he wants to experience suffering like Jesus - Jesus never promised us an easy life - promised us his righteousness

Goal of Christian life is not to be comfortable - not to accept faith/righteousness...

- Christian leaders: God wants you to be comfortable...easy life... healthy...

That's how Paul finds joy in salvation - entirely dependent on Christ

- Focused on how it's Christ's work, not his own - will fail
- Jesus plus anything ruins everything
- Some of us work way too hard to make God pleased with us - STOP IT!