



Grace Life Church
of Dallas

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God

Philippians 3:1-3

True and False

Teachers, Conversion, Worship

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Philippians 3:1-3

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. 2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh

Verse 1

Finally my brothers-More of transitional statement rather than a concluding statement (Furthermore/ Now then)

Rejoice in the Lord

- Note first-This is a command “*Rejoice in the Lord*”
- To rejoice is to be glad (Joy)
 - We noted at the beginning of our study-“Joy in Jesus”
 - This is different from “worldly happiness” which is circumstantially or emotionally based
 - The rejoicing Paul is calling us to is not void of emotion but it is not based/founded on emotion

Verse 1

Rejoice in the Lord

What is this joy founded or based in?

- Rejoicing “*in the Lord*”
- The framework in which the Christian’s joy is experienced is in our relationship with the Lord
- It isn’t even in what He can/does provide/do but in Him (God is not a means but an end)
- It is a rejoicing in Him for who He is
- This is why our joy is not a circumstantially or emotionally based
- Our joy is rooted in God being God “*in Him*”

Verse 1

Rejoice in the Lord

This is why Paul can say things like:

- **Phil 4:4** *Rejoice in the Lord **always**; again I will say, Rejoice*
- **2 Cor 6:10** *as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing*

Remember too, “Joy” is a fruit of the Spirit

- **Galatians 5:22** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience*
- This joy is supernatural in origin, divine in sphere, yet commanded

The obedience of this joy begins in humility

- It is a matter of Biblical perspective and faith in God & His Word
- What can we do? Pray, Renew our minds, Take thoughts captive, Think on things above
- When our joy rises and falls it is not in Christ

Verse 1

To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you

- Paul has given the church a command “*Rejoice in the Lord*”
- He is about to give them a warning (v2) and he tells them “*to write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you*”
- A few things to note here:
 - Repetition is one of the most effective means of teaching and growing discernment (Scripture is full of repetition)
 - We need to have a deep theology, as well as a broad
 - Repeating a truth/warning is “not trouble” for Paul (Not irksome)
 - He is willing to invest time & explain in detail make sure they get it
 - Because is it safe for them (in their best interest) (Demonstrates patience)
 - A pastor has responsibility to protect the sheep
 - Hebrews 13:17 “*for they are keeping watch over your souls*”

Verse 2

What is Paul warning them about? And what is so concerning/serious that he has no trouble repeating it again?

V2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

- In Paul's warnings two things are going to happen: First, he is going to expose false teachers. Second, he is going to contrast false Christians from true converts to Christ (comparison in v3)
- If we look at the end of v2 & beginning of v3 we will see who he is warning about
 - *Look out for those who mutilate the flesh (NASB false circumcision) contrasted by v3 For we are the real circumcision*
 - Who is he warning about? Jewish false teachers
 - Remember-church of Philippi started in Acts 16 (Lydia, Jailer, Gentiles)
 - **Acts 15:1** *But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."*

V2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

These men (Acts 15) are teaching another gospel

- They are teaching Jesus plus circumcision (Adding to the gospel)
- **Galatians 1:6-8** *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.*
- Adding to the gospel or taking away from the gospel is distorting the gospel
- We need to take this as serious as Paul does (Doesn't get more serious)
- **Galatians 5:6** *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.*
- To preach Christ plus circumcision, baptism, sacraments, good works, speaking in tongues or anything else is another gospel. To preach the gospel or Jesus less than what He or it is, is another gospel.

V2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

What does Paul do with these false teachers?

- 1) Shows the seriousness of their doctrine by calling them “*dogs*”
 - *Look out for the dogs*: Dog is a derogatory term used in Scripture
 - Dogs were dirty, unclean, dangerous and should be avoided
- 2) Helped expose them by their actions “*evildoers*”
 - **Matthew 7:15-16** *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits.*
 - Like the Pharisees, false teachers often have a strict external righteousness they hold to, but because they are not converted, and trust in their own righteousness, they are evildoers
 - **Acts 15:5** “*but some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses”* (Trying to hold on to works)

V2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

What does Paul do with these false teachers?

- 1) Shows the seriousness of their doctrine by calling them “*dogs*”
- 2) Helped expose them by their actions “*evildoers*”
- 3) Names names “*look out for those how mutilate the flesh (False circumcision)*”
 - When someone is habitually teaching false doctrine, and leading others astray it is necessary to name names
 - **2 Timothy 4:14-15** *Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. 15Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message.*
 - **1 Timothy 1:20** *among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme*
 - **Matthew 23:13-15** “*But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. 15Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.*”

V2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

What does Paul do with these false teachers?

- 1) Shows the seriousness of their doctrine by calling them “*dogs*”
- 2) Helped expose them by their actions “*evildoers*”
- 3) Names names “*look out for those how mutilate the flesh (False circumcision)*”
 - These false teachers were trusting in a religious ritual (circumcision) plus Jesus to save them
 - To add anything to the work of Christ is to deny Him, because He said “*It is finished*”

Paul is calling the church to discernment based on truth

- **1 Thessalonians 5:21-22** *test everything; hold fast what is good. 22 Abstain from every form of evil.*
- **1 John 4:1** *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.*
- **Ephesians 4:15** *(Built up in truth)-so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*

Summary

Rejoice in the Lord

- Daily be nurturing your heart in the Word (**Romans 12:2**)
- Be praying (**Ps 119:18**) “*Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.*”
- Seek God as an end, rather than just a means
- You were created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever

Heed Paul’s warnings: *Look out for the dogs, evildoers, those who mutilate the flesh*

- Study & understand the gospel so you can discern true & false prophets (and defend the faith)
- Walk circumspectly, knowing the days are evil (Eph 5:15-16)
- Understand adding to the gospel or taking away makes another gospel