

Series: Philippines 2024  
Title: Beware for We Are  
Text: Php 3: 1-3  
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**Philippians 3: 1:...To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe. 2: Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. 3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**

When you study Paul's epistles, you find Paul writing the same gospel of Christ over and over. Remember, Paul did so by the Spirit of God giving him what to write. So it is the Lord's will that we repeat the gospel over and over. Paul says to REPEAT the same things to you is not grievous but for you it is safe.

God's preacher is not looking for something new to preach. We have one message. It is that salvation is of the Lord. We preach Christ's person and works. Each time we preach we declare the three R's: ruined by the fall, redeemed by Christ Jesus, regenerated and kept by the Holy Spirit. Christ is the gospel!

Over the years, here and other places, many times someone will come up after the message and say, "*That is the first time I ever saw that in scripture.*" It is something I have preached a hundred times before. It is not that they did not hear it and were blessed with it before. But our flesh causes us to forget, while the Spirit of God is continually renewing the word in our hearts.

Philippians 3: 1:...To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

**Philippians 3: 2: Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.**

This is a common reminder the Lord gives us through Paul--warning us about will-works religion. Christ messenger is a watchmen. The watchmen is to cry and warn of danger. The Lord calls false preachers "*blind watchmen...dumb dogs that cannot bark.*" (Is 56: 10)

Here the Holy Spirit gives three names for one enemy: "dogs, evil workers, the concision." They promote the greatest sin and greatest danger we face: will-worship. The evil works are not what you might think: the Pharisee's appeared holy and righteous outwardly. The evil is that in all their works they are trusting their morality and good works rather than Christ.

"*Concision*" because they cut the flesh. In Paul's day they insisted that believers must be circumcised and come back under the law of Moses or they could not be saved. In our day, they simply bring believers back under the law, making the keeping of the law a necessity for salvation. They major on cutting out *things*, dressing a certain way--the mind the things of the flesh--carnal things--cut out this, cut out that. By cutting out these things they think they make themselves righteous and holy and accepted of God. Paul, with his play on words, says in

Galatians 5: 11: And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. 12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

None of man's works equal the righteousness God requires. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Matthew 7:22-23).

Galatians 3: 1: O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Galatians 5: 8: This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

I find the best way to shine light on the false is to preach the truth. So let's hear God's word on who his people are

**Philippians 3: 3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**

## **WE ARE THE CIRCUMCISION**

It means we are the true Jew. We are the spiritual Israel of God. Circumcision was a token given to Abraham by the Lord to typify the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart in the new birth.

Romans 2: 29: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

The Lord gave Abraham the outward sign of circumcision, long after the Spirit had regenerated him in heart and given him faith--and revealed to Abraham that God imputed the righteousness of Christ to him. We saw the blessedness of God's grace

in that God imputed the righteousness of Christ to Abraham through faith, without his works under the law. Abraham did not even have the law of Sinai.

Romans 4: 9: *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? [does God impute the righteousness of Christ through faith to his elect among the Jew only or to his elect among the Gentiles also?] for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10: How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. [then much later] 11: And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12: And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised. 13: For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14: For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. 16: Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

True Jews, the true Israel of God, are God's elect from among all nations given a new heart by the Spirit of God and gifted with faith in Christ by God's grace to whom God imputes the righteousness of Christ, apart from any works of the law on the sinners part.

## **WE WORSHIP GOD IN THE SPIRIT**

This is the first characteristic of God's true Israel. True worship of God is in the new heart God has given. We worship God in the new spirit God has created in his child.

John 4:23: But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

True worship is in the spirit through faith in Christ. Believers worship and serve Christ trusting Christ alone is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Holiness and Redemption. Our motive is the love of Christ for what he has done in making us righteous and holy in him. True worship is in the Holy Ghost so that Christ is our Righteousness, Christ is our Peace and Christ is our Joy.

Romans 14:17: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The Pharisee and the publican both bodily went to the house of God and prayed outwardly. The difference was their inward heart. In his depraved heart, the Pharisee thought his works made him better than others. He could not see his sin. He could not see that his self-righteousness was sin.

But in the new heart given by the Spirit, the publican saw himself as nothing but the sinner. Therefore, he begged God for mercy. His begging for mercy was the result of faith in Christ given by the Spirit of God circumcising him in the heart. So it is for each one God gives faith.

True worship is in the new spirit, the new man, given by the Spirit of God. From the new man, in spirit, we see ourselves as nothing but sin. Sin is in everything we do at all times. It will not let us boast that we have made ourselves righteous or holy by our works.

From the new man, in spirit, we cast all our care on the mercy of God and God makes us know in the new man that we are righteousness in and by Christ alone. God makes us know that we have peace with God in and by Christ alone. So our joy is in and by Christ alone. This is true holiness of heart!

## **WE REJOICE IN CHRIST JESUS**

We rejoice in Christ himself. We rejoice that Christ is our Wisdom. We see him as Wisdom in how he alone is how God could be just and the Justifier of his people. So we trust Christ to be our Wisdom to lead us and guide us. and we trust our brethren to him to lead and guide them.

We rejoice in Christ as our Righteousness. Faith believes Christ himself is our only Righteousness. We have no righteousness and cannot produce it. Christ alone is our Righteousness. He alone justified us from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. His blood purged all our sin and made us the righteousness of God in him.

We rejoice in Christ as being our Holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Christ formed in us is the holiness of our new man by which we look to Christ alone as our Righteousness--by his will, doing the will of the Father, he sanctified us by his one offering.

Hebrews 10: 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

We rejoice that Christ is our Redemption. He freed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us. Christ freed us from our sin-nature by taking the rule of our new heart. His grace keeps us free, looking only to him. He shall redeem us from this world into the glorious liberty of the sons of God in heaven.

## **WE HAVE NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH**

God's true Israel put no confidence in anything about our flesh be it positive or negative--be it due to our good works or due to our sin. True self-denial is to be granted repentance from having confidence in anything about our own person or works so that we trust Christ's person and works alone.

**Philippians 3: 4: Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, 9: And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**

Knowing we worship God in spirit through faith, knowing our righteousness, peace and joy is in and by Christ alone, knowing that in our flesh dwells no good thing, when a brother or sister sins, we fulfill the law of Christ--which is *faith which works by love*.

Through faith, constrained by Christ's love for us, we believe Christ is our brother's righteousness and holiness, who put away their sin.

Through faith, believing Christ called us and gave us faith and made us stand, we trust our fallen brother to Christ to work in his heart--because that is what the love of Christ does for us.

Through faith, beholding how Christ bore our sin, we bear one another's burden--we bear their sin, their fall, we cover their sin--because that is what the love of Christ does for us.

Through faith, beholding how Christ restores us, we restore them with the gospel of Christ--because that is what the love of Christ does for us.

In doing so, in a far lesser way, we love one another as Christ loved us because all of that is what Christ did *and has done* for us since the day he called us to believe on him.

Galatians 6: 1: Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3: For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

To not do this is *to put confidence in our own flesh*, the same as if we stood with the Pharisee and prayed with ourselves, boasting in our works and looked down upon the sinful publican.

Ephesians 4: 29: Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30: And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31: Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: [that is all in relation to a brother who has fallen--it comes from putting confidence in the flesh] 32: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. 1: Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2: And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Colossians 2: 9: For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10: And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

As fully as he is the fulness of the Godhead bodily--that is how fully complete we are in Christ. In Christ, nothing is missing. In Christ we have everything God requires. Holy God receives us right now **ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED**.

**Amen!**