

The True Circumcision

Sermon 13 in the Philippians Series

Philippians 3:1-3

I. Rejoice in the Lord -- v. 1

1. Finally

2. Rejoice

2:17 – **I am glad and rejoice with you** = I rejoice and co-rejoice with you

2:18 – **You be glad and rejoice with me** == You rejoice and co-rejoice with me.

3. Safe

We see this illustrated in Acts 16:23-24.

²³ And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them **securely**. (ie – safely)

²⁴ Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison

Hebrews 6:19a -- This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both **sure** and steadfast,

II. Beware...Beware...Beware -- v. 2

1. Dogs

“Dogs is an expression of reproach and contempt. The dog was generally considered by the Jews as the most despised, shameless and miserable creature. The herds of dogs which prowl about Eastern cities, without a home and without an owner, feeding on the refuse and filth of the streets, quarrelling among themselves, and attacking the passer-by explain the application of the image.” Lightfoot

To call them “dogs” is one of the worst insults you could make against these legalists.

Illustrated from Matthew 15:22-28

2. Evil Workers

They were workers – of what is bad, harmful, even dangerous.

Their supposed “good works” spoil that which is truly good.

They were drawing attention away from Christ and toward the OT ceremonies that were never meant to save

3. The Mutilation

Here is a play on words in the Greek.

Circumcision = *peritome* Mutilation = *katatome*

Those that demand circumcision are being likened to Baal worshippers.

To them – circumcision was the chief sign and means of spirituality.

III. The True Circumcision Described v. 3

Three descriptions for those who teach salvation by works (dogs, evil workers, the mutilation)

Three descriptions for the true people of God -- who are the spiritual circumcision.

- Who worship by the Spirit of God (in truth – as opposed to their error)
- Who rejoice in Jesus Christ (instead of what was meant to point to Christ)
- Who have no confidence in the flesh (as opposed to those who glory in their mark in the flesh)

1. True Believers are the True Circumcision -- Romans 2:28-29

This is not a new doctrine.

Deut. 10:16 -- Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart,

Deut. 30:6 -- And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

2. True Believers worship by the Spirit of God -- Ezekiel 36:26-27

He has made us worshippers.

We worship by the Spirit He has given us.

We do not glory – except to glory in Christ.