

# Home Group Helps

## Philippians 3:1-3

### *Joy for the Journey: Rejoice in the Lord! – Part 1*

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. <sup>2</sup> Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; <sup>3</sup> for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, <sup>9</sup> and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; <sup>11</sup> in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

**I. Rejoice in the Lord (v.1)** – Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

**II. Religious Rogues (v.2)** – <sup>2</sup> Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

Three insults made by Paul toward these religious rogues:

1. the dogs (*kunas*)
2. the evil workers (*kakous erg/atas*)
3. the false circumcision (*kata/tome*)

**III. Real Religious (v.3)** – <sup>3</sup> for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

Three hallmarks of true teachers and true Christians:

1. who worship in the Spirit of God
2. and glory in Christ Jesus
3. and put no confidence in the flesh

#### **1. Launching Question(s):**

- What are the leading causes of a lack of joy in your life?
- What are the leading contributors to joy in your life?

## 2. Observation Question(s):

- The verb "rejoice" (in vs. 1) is in the present tense/active voice/imperative mood. This means Christians must take action to rejoice and that they are commanded by God to do so.<sup>1</sup> Does the fact that God commands us to rejoice assist you in showing joy?

## 3. Interpretation Question(s):

- J. M. Boice states, "Joy is the supernatural delight in God and God's goodness."<sup>2</sup>
- To C.S. Lewis, joy is realized through a longing (for God) – *Sehnsucht* (in the German).
- "It is an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction – I call it joy."<sup>3</sup>
- Do you agree with these definitions?
- How might you define Christian joy?
- Does Christian joy depend upon our circumstances?
- Paul calls the false teachers (Judaizers) plaguing the Philippians, "dogs, evil workers, and the false circumcision."
- What is the meaning behind each of these insults?
- Why does Paul use such strong language to expose the false teachers?
- How does his accusation of "false circumcision" give you insight into the particular errors of these false teachers?

## 4. Reflection Question(s):

- Paul uses very strong language to expose the false teachers. Do you think that the church has "grown soft" on confronting false teachers?
- Explain the three hallmarks of true teachers/Christians "who (1) worship in the Spirit of God and (2) glory in Christ Jesus and (3) put no confidence in the flesh."

## 5. Application Question(s):

- What areas of your life will you be determined to show joy in this coming week?

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<sup>1</sup> Lawson, Steven. *Philippians For You: Shine with joy as you live by faith* (God's Word For You) (p. 138). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup> J.M. Boice, *An Expository Commentary: Philippians*. 163.

<sup>3</sup> C.S. Lewis. *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*. Harper One. 19.