Philippians 2026 – Week 5 – Philippians 3:1-11

Philippians 3:1-14: *Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you.* ***2*** *Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh.* ***3*** *For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—* ***4*** *though I myself have reasons for such confidence.*
If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ***5*** *circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee;* ***6*** *as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.*
7 *But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.* ***8*** *What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ* ***9*** *and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.* ***10*** *I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,* ***11*** *and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.*

INTRO to **Philippians**: The letter of Philippians is the perfect starting place for biblical teaching on following Christ as a disciple. This letter speaks to obedience and faithfulness in the life of the individual believer, and the importance of being healthy and unified in the Church. Philippians presents God's instructions in a warm and encouraging tone, as believers are challenged to conduct ourselves at all times and in all places "in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ."

INTRO to **Philippians 3:1-11:** This chapter begins with one of the key themes we've seen in the letter: "Rejoice!" This letter was written while the Apostle Paul was in prison and the Philippians were also facing difficult and persecution, and yet the words for rejoicing and joy are used sixteen different times throughout. This theme goes along with others we've seen:

1.) God has used Paul's imprisonment and chains to advance the Gospel **(1:12**
2.) The Lord will continue and complete the good work He begins in the lives of believers **(1:6)**
3.) If believers are truly to "walk in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ," we are to "have among ourselves the same attitude as Christ Jesus **(1:27, 2:5-11)**
4.) When we follow Christ's example, we "shine like stars" in the darkness around us, much like Timothy and Epaphroditus. **(2:19-30)**

I. True joy is found in Christ. (vs. 1)

-This chapter begins with the call for believers to "rejoice" no matter what one faces.

-The “indestructible” nature of true Christian joy means it is a gift from God, not a choice. Rejoicing, however, is a choice and a protection/safeguard for the soul in the face of doubt, discouragement, and darkness.

-These reminders about are a safeguard for the believer, because Christ is our joy.

II. As we grow in Christ and His joy, we learn to put no confidence in our own flesh. (vs. 2-6)

-Paul follows up the encouraging word about joy with a direct warning: **beware**. Be on your guard – watch out for false teachers known as the “Judaizers” who were preaching a warped gospel – specifically telling Gentile men that they had to become circumcised Jews before they could be Christians.

-Instead, as Scripture teaches, those who truly know and serve God in Christ and through the Holy Spirit are actually circumcised in their hearts—they are being transformed to be more like Christ from the inside out, not only in appearance. (see **Jeremiah 31:33-34** below).

-Therefore, the believer who lives in the power of God and the joy of Christ learns not to put confidence in their own knowledge, strength, or accomplishments.

-Paul, himself, had one of the most impressive resumes of his day in terms of his Jewish background, education, Roman citizenship, and male leadership roles. He was also rigidly obedient to the Jewish law and practices, so much so that he had once believed persecuting Christians was the right thing to do. (**vs. 4-6**).

-As we see next, a transforming relationship with Christ changed everything for Paul.

III. To be found in Christ is to gain that which we could never earn on our own—true righteousness and eternal life. (vs. 7-11)

-Paul explains that his greatest accomplishments are like garbage when compared to the gifts of faith, righteousness, and eternal life which he had found in Christ.
-In Christ, we become a “new creation” entirely (see **2 Corinthians 5:17** below). As we are transformed to be more like Christ, His priorities and pursuits become our priorities and pursuits, and He becomes our measure of gains and losses.

-Therefore, as Paul writes, even if we lose all our worldly successes, achievements, and possessions, we gain what really matters and is eternal in Christ Jesus—and we have permanent citizenship in His Kingdom (see **Philippians 3:20-21**).

-In the end, the goal of this life is not simply to know more about Christ, but to know Christ personally and, therefore, to know God and eternal life (see **John 17:3** below).

-When we know life in Christ and the true joy that is only found in Him, we can live with peace and confidence that death does not have the last word! (See **1 Corinthians 15:54-57** below).

Other Scriptures Referenced:

Jeremiah 31:33-34: *"This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel*
after that time," declares the Lord.
"I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.
34 No longer will they teach their neighbor,
or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,'
because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest,"
declares the Lord.
"For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more."

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation; the old things passed away; and behold, new things have come.*

John 17:3: *Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

1 Corinthians 15: 54-57: *When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."*
55 *"Where, O death, is your victory?*
Where, O death, is your sting?"
56 *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* ***57*** *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Other Quotes/Resources:

-"Once you become aware that the main business that you are here for is to know God, most of life's problems fall into place of their own accord." –J.I. Packer

-"Journey to a personal Savior," by John Stott:

Step 1: I need **A** Savior because I am lost on my own.
Step 2: I need **THE** Savior, who is Jesus.
Step 3: I need **MY** Savior, I need Jesus Christ to be my Lord and King.