

Philippians 3:1-21 **No confidence in the flesh – Guard against traditions of men**

Rejoice in the Lord

¹ Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.

Beware of evil influences

For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. ² Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

Have No Confidence in the Flesh – Paul's Fleshly Credentials

³ For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴ though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul's choice toward Godliness

⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Forget the past – Press on toward the Goal

¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

Follow my example – Note the enemies of the Cross of Christ

¹⁷ Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things.

Heavenly Citizenship

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Rejoice in the Lord [\[Philippians 3:1\]](#)

- ✚ Whatever the circumstances it is always appropriate for those in the Lord to rejoice.
 - ✧ When we consider the glory that will come through our Salvation provided by God's grace in Christ Jesus, we may rejoice, because the trials are for a brief time and then the blessings of eternal life in the presence of our Lord.
 - ✧ Paul's favorite theme is for the Saints to rejoice. [Philippians 3:1, 4:4, Romans 5:2, 11, 15:8-10, 1 Thessalonians 5:16]
 - ✧ Peter also expressed the great cause for rejoicing in our Salvation: [1 Peter 1:3-9, 4:12-13]

Beware of evil influences [Philippians 3:1-2]

- ✚ From early in his ministry, Paul has encountered the forces of the Judaizers who insist that to be saved all gentiles need to be circumcised and follow the traditional laws of Judaism. [Acts 15:1-33]
 - ✧ Throughout the ministry of Paul he encountered the same problem through the Jews in every area where he planted churches.
 - ✧ Since it is a continual problem, Paul said that warning the Gentile believers of this influence is not tedious, because it is needed for the believers that they not be caught up in this false doctrine.
 - ✧ Paul called those who promote such false doctrine "dogs and evil workers."
 - ✧ Paul called their insistence on circumcision of gentile believers "mutilation."

Have No Confidence in the Flesh (circumcision) – Paul's Fleshly Credentials [Philippians 3:3-6]

- ✚ In Christ Jesus all are equal both Jew and Gentile so Paul compares them as the circumcised who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. [Romans 2:25-29, 3:27-31, 4:9-12, 1 Corinthians 7:18-19, Galatians 2:1-13, 5:1-11, 6:11-15, Ephesians 2:11-13, Colossians 2:11-14, Titus 1:10-11]
- ✚ Paul gives his own credentials compared to the Judaizers:
 - ✧ I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:
 - ✧ Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin,
 - ✧ A Hebrew of the Hebrews;
 - ✧ Concerning the law, a Pharisee;
 - ✧ Concerning zeal, persecuting the church;
 - ✧ Concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul's choice toward Godliness [Philippians 3:7-11]

- ✚ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.
 - ✧ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.
 - ✧ In Christ, Paul is not attempting to establish his own righteousness through works of Judaism.
 - ✧ Paul is seeking the righteousness God imputed to him through faith in Christ.
 - ✧ Paul desires to know Christ and the power of His resurrection.
 - ✧ Paul is willing to join in the sufferings of Christ, and be conformed to the death of Christ.
 - ✧ Paul's deepest goal is to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Forgetting the past – Press on toward the Goal [Philippians 3:12-16]

- ✚ Paul does not claim to have attained the resurrection from the dead or perfection.
 - ✧ Paul has made it his goal as long as he lives to press on faithfully, working to accomplish the work God in Christ has called him to do.
 - ✧ To accomplish this goal Paul has set his approach as:

- ✧ Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- ✧ Paul then calls for those who are mature to have the same mind and the same goal.
 - ✧ Paul looks to the Holy Spirit of God to make the same concept real for those who might disagree.
 - ✧ Paul acknowledges that believers have already made progress and encourages them to seek unity of mind one with another and with himself.

Follow my example – Note the enemies of the Cross of Christ

- ✧ Brethren, follow my example.
 - ✧ Paul has set himself and the choices he has made an example for believers to follow.
 - ✧ Paul calls for the believers to recognize those who are like minded and live according to his instructions holding the true message of the Gospel as a right pattern to follow.
 - ✧ Paul is grieved to the point of weeping over those who follow the doctrine of the Judaizers.
 - ✧ They are enemies of the cross of Christ, seeking to earn their own righteousness by works, instead of receiving God's righteousness by faith. [[Romans 1:16-17, 3:21-26, 4:1-25, 9:30-33, 10:1-13, Galatians 5:1-6, Philippians 3:8-11, Hebrews 11:4-7](#)]
 - ✧ Their end is destruction, their desire for gain and fame is their god.
 - ✧ Their glory in the flesh and traditions is their shame.
 - ✧ Their minds are set on earthly things.

Heavenly Citizenship [[Philippians 3:20-21](#)]

- ✧ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - ✧ Jesus Christ will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body. [[Philippians 3:21, 1 Corinthians 15:35-54, Romans 8:23, 1 John 3:2](#)]
 - ✧ The power that changes us from mortal to immortal, is the power by which God is able to subdue all things to Himself.