

Introduction

We are studying Paul's letter to the Philippians, a wonderful book. **Paul's letter to the Philippians is personal.** Paul shares his feelings. He has an affection for the Philippians. He tells them they are in his heart. He thanks them for their service to him. He thanks them for their participation in the gospel with him. He thanks them for amply supplying his needs. May we learn to be a church that is full of thanksgiving. May we learn to thank one another for their service and their kindness. May we learn to thank the Lord for his many benefits, and forget not any of them. May we learn to enter His courts with thanksgiving and praise. May we learn to pray for one another, because we have each other in our hearts.

Paul's letter to the Philippians is transparent. He talks about his thoughts about death and continuing on with ministry. He shares his feelings and thoughts. I shared with you a few weeks ago about a pastor that I had served under for many years, and how he had to resign from Discovery Church. What I did not share with you were some of the reasons that I left that church. One of the reasons was a lack of transparency by that pastor. I always felt that he had something up his sleeve that he was not sharing or willing to share. He was not transparent. It made me uncomfortable. Was I wrong in my assessment? His church found out that the affair that he had with another woman had ended three years ago. He had an affair that lasted several years, but it had ended several years earlier. His wife and him had worked through it, but had never disclosed any of it to the church leaders. He was not transparent.

Paul's letter is real. He deals with where people are at. This is real life. It is relevant. It is authentic. He discusses with them their need to learn how to get along with one another. He shares with them the need to have the attitude of Christ in their relationships. They need to humble themselves. They need to empty themselves. They need to do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit. Instead, they are to think of others more highly than themselves. They are not to look merely at their own needs, but also the needs of others. They were not to regard position, but look for opportunities to serve. This was the attitude that Christ had. This humble attitude would help them to live together in unity.

We need the same message today. Husbands and wives need to learn how to live together in unity. Brothers and sisters need to learn how to get along together. People in the work place need to learn how to get along together. AND, people in the church need to learn how to get along together. God has called the church to be a family. He has called us to be brothers and sisters. He has called us to love one another. He has called us to be of one mind, striving together for the gospel. What a great book of the Bible for us to be feeding on. May the living word continue to do its work in us as we read, study, and apply the lessons from Philippians.

God wants you and I to be in right relationship with one another. He wants us to be personal. He wants us to be transparent and genuine. He wants us to be real and authentic. There cannot be any hypocrisy or phoniness.

As we come to chapter three, Paul is going to deal with the primary attack on the gospel that was affecting the body of Christ. Remember, he was passionate about the gospel. He rejoiced because the gospel was being furthered. His circumstances were not the reason for rejoicing. His definition of progress had to do with the gospel being preached.

09 Righteousness by Faith

(Phil 1:12) Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel,

Paul also told the Philippians to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel. He did not want anything to hinder the progress of the gospel. Lots of people do not go to church and are turned off by Christians because of the way we act. If we would conduct our lives in a manner worthy of the gospel, more people would be open to the gospel. It is a relevant message today.

(Phil 1:27) Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Paul tells them to stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. He has spent some time in chapter two telling them how to become of one mind, but the purpose of it is for the faith of the gospel.

A few weeks ago I mentioned to you some of the attacks on the gospel that we currently face, and some of the ones that Paul dealt with. His letter to the Galatians had been written because there were Jews were teaching that people needed to be circumcised to be saved. Paul had to address this with the Romans. He had to deal with it with the Ephesians. It was such a big deal in Antioch that the church sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem in Acts 15 to discuss the matter with the apostles and come to one mind about it. This was a big issue for the church at that time, and this is what Paul is going to address in our text today.

Paul speaks about circumcision and how we obtain our righteousness before God. He contrasts those who are attacking the gospel with the marks of a true believer. He shares his own testimony to drive home the point that our righteousness is not derived by things that we do in the flesh, but in by faith in Christ. Even though the text contrasts true believers from the evil workers, I have entitled the message, *Righteousness by Faith*, because that is the main idea that Paul shares in this passage.

Let's read our text together.

(Phil 3:1-11) 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. {2} Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; {3} 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, {4} 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: {5} circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; {6} as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. {7} But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. {8} 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, {9} 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, {10} that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; {11} in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

I. Attackers of the Gospel

Paul begins with the word, finally. This would indicate the end of a matter. It would indicate that he has shared some things earlier that he is going to wrap up and conclude. What has he shared? He has shared about his reason for rejoicing – that the gospel is being preached. He has told them to live their lives in a manner worthy of the gospel. He has told them to strive together with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and he has taken time in Philippians 2 to address how to accomplish this. He has been building up to this chapter. He has more to say to the Philippians about the gospel, but he needed to lay a foundation first. Paul is going to bring some concluding thoughts about the gospel.

(Phil 3:1) 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.

He tells them to rejoice. He has already told them to rejoice, and now he tells them to rejoice again. No matter what trial you are in, rejoice. No matter what circumstance you are in, rejoice.

Next, **Paul instructs the Philippians to beware**. In fact, he gives three bewares. He says to beware of the dogs; beware of the evil workers, and beware of the false circumcision. The Greek word is *blepo*, which simply means to look at, see, or beware. The Philippians need to be alert and watchful about certain people who are trying to wreak havoc in all the churches. He does not want them to be caught off guard. So, he gives them three short warnings and uses three different descriptions of those that would launch this attack on the gospel.

(Phil 3:2) Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

A. Beware of the dogs.

First, Paul tells them to beware of the dogs. Paul is not a dog hater. There are two words in the Greek for dogs. The first is *kunarion*, which means a little dog, or a little pet dog. It is used in Matthew 15, where Jesus is speaking with the Caananite woman, whose daughter was demon possessed. Jesus tells her that it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs. This is *kunarion*, which is a small pet dog. The woman answers that even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their master's table. The context alone tells us that these are pet dogs.

(Matt 15:26-28) And He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." {27} But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." {28} Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once.

The word that Paul uses is *kuon*. It is the root word and it means a dog, and in general, a larger dog. It is not a household pet. Dogs, particularly large dogs, were not common pets. They were scavengers. They were wild, and would roam around in packs. They would go through the garbage, looking for anything edible. They would growl, snarl, and threaten people. Frequently, they were diseased and rabid. Dogs were something to beware of, as they posed a threat to people.

Furthermore, dogs were unclean. The reason that Jesus mentioned to the Caananite woman that it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs was that the Gentiles were

considered unclean, just like a dog. Jesus had not come to the Gentiles yet; He had come to the children of Israel. God loves the Gentiles; most of us are Gentiles. He had a plan for us, but Jesus came to the Jew first. Dogs were unclean animals.

In Revelation 22 John writes about those who can enter into the heavenly Jerusalem and those who cannot enter. Those who have washed their robes have the right to the tree of life and can enter the gates of the city. We know it is the blood of Jesus that washes our robes. He clothes us in righteousness. But outside the gate are those who cannot enter in. These are the dogs and sorcerers and immoral persons and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. These are the unclean people who do not have their robes washed by the blood of Jesus. Dogs were symbolic of the unclean.

(Rev 22:14-15) Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. {15} Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.

So, it was common for the Jews to refer to Gentiles as dogs. In the Talmud, it says the nations of the world are like dogs. The Jews likened the Gentiles to unclean, filthy, scavenging dogs that would bite and attack their beliefs. The Gentiles were people to stay away from.

Paul turns the tables with his use of the word dogs. He is speaking to a Gentile church and he is referring to Jews as dogs. These are unclean people. These were self-righteous people who did not have their robes cleansed by the blood of Christ. These are vicious dogs that will bite and attack. These Jews who are preaching that you must be circumcised and follow the Law are dangerous dogs that you must be on guard against.

B. Beware of the evil workers.

The second beware that Paul issues is about evil workers or bad workmen. These false teachers were telling people that to become a Christian they had to be circumcised. They had a works mentality. You must observe the Sabbaths. You must observe the Feasts. You must ceremonially wash your hands. There were thousands of laws that the Pharisees had created.

(Phil 3:2) Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

Jesus called the Pharisees whitewashed tombs. They looked nice on the outside, but inside they were full of dead bones. They appeared righteous, but were full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. These men were stirring up problems in all of the churches. What they were doing was evil and was causing much damage. A doctrine of works is an evil doctrine. We are saved by grace through faith. A salvation by works is an evil doctrine and this is what these men were preaching. They were evil workman.

(Matt 23:27-28) "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. {28} "So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

C. Beware of the false circumcision.

The third beware that Paul gives is about false circumcision. In the Greek, it does not say false circumcision. The Greek work used is katatome. Kata means down and tome means to cut. The word for circumcision is peritome, which means to cut around. Katatome means to mutilate. These evil workers were preaching a mutilation, not a circumcision. The KJV says to beware of the concision, which is an archaic word meaning mutilation.

(Phil 3:2) Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

To gain an understanding of what Paul is saying, we must understand circumcision. In Genesis 17, God told Abraham to keep His covenant throughout all generations. The sign of the covenant was circumcision. Every male was to be circumcised at eight days of age. Medically, we know that the blood in babies does not begin to coagulate until it is eight days old, so there was a reason God commanded the Jews to circumcise the boys on the eight day. They could bleed to death if it was done earlier. But the main point of the circumcision was that it was a sign of the covenant that Abraham had with God. To the Jews, it was the sign that they were the chosen people of God. It was the sign that they were saved.

(Genesis 17:9-12) God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. {10} "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. {11} "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. {12} "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.

God also told Abraham that every uncircumcised male was to be cut off from his people, for he has broken My covenant. Therefore, it was the most important thing that a Jew could do. For him to be included and numbered with God's people, he had to be circumcised. He would be cut off if he was not circumcised. He would be cut off from his inheritance. He would be cut off from everything.

(Genesis 17:13-14) "A servant who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. {14} "But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

In addition to inclusion, the circumcision allowed participation. In order to eat the Passover Meal, a Jew had to be circumcised. Any foreigners that joined the Jews also had to be circumcised before participating in this feast.

(Ex 12:43-44, 48) The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; {44} but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. {48} But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it.

09 Righteousness by Faith

We find in Scripture that there were two circumcisions. **There is a circumcision of the flesh and a circumcision of the heart.** In Deuteronomy 10:16, the Lord tells the Jews to circumcise their hearts and stiffen their necks no longer. Stiffening the neck refers to rebellion and a refusal to do what has been commanded.

(Deut 10:16) "So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.

Jeremiah prophesies the same thing, saying, "circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or else My wrath will go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.

(Jer 4:4) "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD And remove the foreskins of your heart, Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Or else My wrath will go forth like fire And burn with none to quench it, Because of the evil of your deeds."

In Acts 7:51, Stephen preached, "you men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit, you are doing just as your fathers did. In all these references to the circumcision of the heart, they involve repentance and cleansing from sin. The physical circumcision allows a man to peel back the foreskin and clean his male organ. God was wanting the Jews to peel back the foreskins of their hearts and cleanse their hearts.

(Acts 7:51) "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

Probably the best passage that deals with both the physical circumcision and the circumcision of the heart is in Romans. Paul talks about the value of circumcision. He says it has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. If you are going to be under the law, you must obey the law in entirety, or you will be as a Gentile, one who is uncircumcised and not part of the people of God. There are two ways to heaven. You can live a perfect life or you can receive God's payment for our sins and be made righteous by His blood. God is holy and sinful man cannot enter into His presence. So, we have to live a perfect life like Jesus, or receive Jesus' payment for our lives. If you depend on keeping the Law, unless you keep all of them and live a perfect life, that way will not save you.

(Rom 2:25-27) Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. {26} If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? {27} The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.

Paul continues by saying that a man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly. Circumcision is not merely outward. He says that a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit. The Jews had relied upon an outward circumcision and Paul is telling them that it was never intended to be just an outward sign. True circumcision in the Old Testament was to be an outward and an inward circumcision; it was a circumcision of the foreskin and a circumcision of the heart. God wanted His people to be soft hearted. He wanted a broken and contrite spirit. He wanted a people who would be quick to repent and follow Him with their whole heart.

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(Rom 2:28-29) A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. {29} No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

What are the applications of circumcision today? Here are four applications that I believe we can apply from the principles about circumcision.

Applications today

1. **Receive Christ.** Paul said in Galatians 6:15 that circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but what is important is to be a new creation. We must receive Christ and be born again. We cannot depend on works or keeping parts of the Law. We must be born again.

(Galatians 6:15) Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

2. **Be baptized.** Paul tells us in Colossians 2:11-12 that we are circumcised by being buried with Christ in baptism. Abraham believed and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Then, he was told to be circumcised, which was a sign of the covenant. We also believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are saved by faith. And, we are told to be baptized after we believe. The baptism does not save us. It is an act of obedience, and it is a sign of our covenant. When we are baptized, we are buried with Christ in being immersed, and we are raised up out of the water with Christ, who was raised up from the dead. We are identifying with Christ's death and resurrection. If you have never been baptized, let me encourage you to be baptized. We will make arrangements for a baptismal service if we have people that need to be properly baptized. Let me know after the service.

(Colossians 2:11-12) and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; {12} having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

3. **Repent of all sins.** We must repent and live a life of obedience. In Deuteronomy 10:16, Moses tells us to circumcise our hearts and not to be stiff-necked any longer. He is telling us to repent and have a soft and obedient heart.

(Deuteronomy 10:16) Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer.

4. **Love God with all your hearts.** In Deuteronomy 30:6, Moses said that God will circumcise our hearts so that we can love Him with all our heart and with all our soul. That is the most important thing that we can do in life is to love the Lord with all our heart.

(Deuteronomy 30:6) The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

II. Righteousness by Faith (Four Marks of True Believers)

After telling the Philippians to beware of the dogs, evil workers, and mutilators, he gives four signs of a real believer. He says we are the true circumcision, those who worship in the Spirit of God, those who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh.

A. Have a true circumcision of the heart.

To the Jews, this was a slap in the face. They believed that they were the chosen people of God and relied on their outward circumcision. Paul is telling them that their outward circumcision is of no value, and that the true circumcision are those who have their hearts circumcised. The Gentiles who had received Christ by faith are the true circumcision. When we receive Christ into our lives, our hearts are circumcised, and we become the true circumcision.

(Phil 3:3) 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,

B. Worship in the spirit of God.

The second sign that Paul gives of true believers is that they worship in the spirit of God. This is what Jesus told the woman at the well. He said that true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. When a person receives Christ, God not only circumcises his heart, but He puts His Spirit in us. Only people who have been born of the Spirit can worship God in spirit and truth.

(John 4:23-24) "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. {24} "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3 that a man must be born of water and the Spirit or he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. When we receive Christ by faith, we are born of the Spirit.

(John 3:5) Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Paul tells us in Romans 8 that if we do not have the Spirit of God, we are not Christians. He says if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. True believers have the Spirit of God and they worship God in Spirit and truth.

(Rom 8:9) However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

C. Glory in Christ Jesus.

The third sign of a true believer is that he glories in Christ Jesus. In Peter's message in Acts 4, he says "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.

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(Acts 4:12) "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

One of the ways that you can tell a cult is by who they say that Jesus is. The Mormons say that Jesus is a god, but not God. They are a cult. The Jehovah Witnesses say that Jesus is the Son of God, but that He is not God. They do not believe in the deity of Christ. They are a cult. We had a person from the Way come to our church when we first started. They believe that Jesus was a god, but they do not believe that Jesus is God. They do not glory in Christ. They are a cult. The Moslems believe that Jesus was a prophet, but they do not believe that Jesus is God. They are a false religion. They are a cult. True believers glory in Christ.

(Phil 3:3) 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,

D. Put no confidence in the flesh.

The fourth sign of a true believer is that they put no confidence in the flesh. True believers are not depending on works of the flesh to earn their salvation. True believers are depending on the finished work of Christ. True believers are trusting in Christ for their salvation. True believers are saved by grace through faith, and not as a result of works. They put no confidence in the flesh.

(Eph 2:8-9) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; {9} not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Paul continues by giving a personal illustration. He says that if anyone had a reason to have confidence in the flesh, it was him. In fact, Paul says, "I far more." Then, Paul states why he would have more reason to put confidence in the flesh. He was circumcised the eighth day. He was of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a Hebrew of Hebrews. He was a Pharisee. He was zealous. And, he was blameless in the Law. If anyone had reason to have confidence in the flesh, it was Paul.

(Phil 3:4-6) 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: {5} circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; {6} as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

But Paul does not stop there. He says, whatever things were gain to me, those things he counted as loss for the sake of Christ. He says that he counted all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus as his Lord. He says that he has suffered the loss of all things, and counts them as rubbish so that he could gain Christ. There is an exchange that is mentioned. Paul uses the word loss three times. He suffered loss, but gained Christ. He has given up something in exchange for something that has surpassing value – that is knowing Christ.

(Phil 3:7-8) But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. {8} 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,

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In Matthew 13 Jesus was teaching about the kingdom of heaven. He said the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding a pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. This is what Paul did. He took all of his past righteousness that was based on works and traded it in on the pearl of great value. He counted it all loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ. He recognized that his past was rubbish in comparison with the surpassing value of gaining Christ.

(Matt 13:45-46) "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, {46} and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Paul has told the Philippians to beware of the dogs, the evil workers, the false circumcision. He has told them to beware of those who are preaching a righteousness derived from the Law. He has told them that the real circumcision are those who worship in the spirit, who glory in Christ, and put no confidence in the flesh. He has used his life as an example to illustrate his point. If anyone could have boasted in the flesh, it was Paul. Instead, Paul traded it all in for a righteousness based on Christ. Now, Paul shares his concluding thought. He has traded in his works for a righteousness not derived from the Law, but a righteousness through faith in Christ.

(Phil 3:9) 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,

Conclusion

The question we must ask ourselves is **what are we trusting in for our salvation**? Are we trusting in good works? Are we counting on God grading on a curve? Do we feel like our lives are pretty good, and no worse than anyone else? Do we think that we can gain or lose our salvation by what we do or do not do? What are we trusting in for our salvation?

God is a holy God. No sin can dwell in His presence. If we are going to keep the Law, we must keep it in totality. We must live a perfect life, without any sin. In Romans 2, Paul said that circumcision is only of value if you practice the Law, but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. He concludes that he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit.

(Rom 2:25-29) For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision....{28} For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. {29} But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Unfortunately, the Scriptures tell us that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. All of us are transgressors of the Law. All of us are counted as uncircumcision, those who are not part of the kingdom of God. Therefore, the only way we can become righteous and have our fellowship with God restored is through a righteousness based on faith. When we enter into a covenant relationship with God, He took the payment for our sins, and exchanged it for His righteousness.

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Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians that “He who knew no sin was made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” This was a covenant exchange based on faith in what Christ has done for us.

(2 Cor 5:21) He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

This morning, if you have trusted in works or doing enough good things, let me encourage you to receive God’s righteousness by placing your trust in Christ. Let me encourage you to put no confidence in the flesh. Let me encourage you to glory only in Christ. Let me encourage you to become a worshiper of God in Spirit.

God wants to have fellowship with us. God wants us to know Him and the power of His resurrection. He wants us to experience a powerful and transformed resurrection life. He wants us to know the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. But, it does not stop there. God wants us to attain to the resurrection from the dead. Just as Jesus was the first-born from the dead, we are also to be resurrected from the dead. We are to live a new life, a resurrected life. All of this comes through a relationship with Christ based on His finished work on the cross.

(Phil 3:10-11) that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; {11} in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Introduction (Phil 1:12, 1:27, 3:1-11)

- Paul's letter to the Philippians is _____.
- Paul's letter to the Philippians is _____.
- Paul's letter is _____.

I. Attackers of the Gospel (Phil 3:1-2)

- Paul instructs the Philippians to _____. (Phil 3:2)
- A. Beware of the _____. (Matt 15:26-28, Rev 22:14-15)
- B. Beware of the _____. (Phil 3:2, Matt 23:27-28)
- C. Beware of the _____. (Phil 3:2, Gen 17:9-14, Ex 12:43-44, 12:48, Deut 10:16, Jer 4:4, Acts 7:51)
- There is a circumcision of the _____ and a circumcision of the _____. (Rom 2:25-27, 2:28-29)

Applications today

- _____ Christ. (Gal 6:15)
- Be _____. (Col 2:11-12)
- _____ of all sins. (Deut 10:16)
- _____ God with all your hearts. (Deut 30:6)

II. Righteousness by Faith (Four Marks of True Believers) (Phil 3:3-11)

- A. Have a true circumcision of the _____. (Phil 3:3)
- B. _____ in the spirit of God (Phil 3:3, John 4:23-24, John 3:5, Rom 8:9)
- C. _____ in Christ Jesus. (Acts 4:12, Phil 3:3)
- D. Put no confidence in the _____. (Phil 3:3-9, Eph 2:8-9, Matt 13:45-46)

Conclusion

- What are we trusting in for our _____? (Rom 2:25-29, Rom 3:23, 2 Cor 5:21)
- God wants to have _____ with you and I. (Phil 3:10-11)
- God wants us to _____ Him and the power of His _____. (Phil 3:10-11)

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