

Letting go to gain Christ (part 1)
(Phil 3.1-11; 05-03-20)

Central thought: Nothing else compares to knowing Christ (cf. Mark 8.36)

I. Keep rejoicing and stay alert (1) Context: 1.27-30 or 2.17-18 (or both) (cf. Heb 12.2)

Finally

Rejoice in the Lord

Write the same things

II. God is not impressed by man's credentials – a religious pedigree does not change the heart (2-6)

A. Guard yourselves against false influences (2)

1. *Dogs* reference to wild strays that would attach those who were unalert or unprotected when used figuratively, always negative; not just a put down, describes aggressive intent
2. *Evildoers* speaks to motive; not just leave you to own negligence or apathy – seek do evil against you another word that describes intentional effort to cause harm
3. *Mutilators of the flesh* reference to circumcision; converts to Judaism required to be circumcised

B. Remember the marks of those who are true (3) contrasting descriptions with *opponents* of the truth

1. *worship by the Spirit of God* (Jn 4.23-24; 1 Cor 12.3; cf. Rom 12.1-2)

We were made for worship, and all of us will worship something or someone
Only those who worship God *by* or *thru His Spirit* are true believers

2. *glory in Christ Jesus* “glory in” means to “boast in” (Jer 9.23-24; 1 Cor 10.31)

Paul offers his own credentials beginning in v4 to remind us, true believers lay aside all self-glory
Any self-glory robs God of getting **all** glory – that's blasphemy – true believers *glory in Christ Jesus*

3. *put no confidence in the flesh* (Eph 2.8-10; Rom 8.5-8)

flesh (commentator): anything in us, or about us, that is isolated or separated from Christ

There is absolutely nothing in us that merits God's gracious gift of redemption
What can wash away your sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! Salvation is all of God

C. Paul's Jewish resume is second to none (4-6) couple things to note:

1. Paul begins by showing that if anyone has reason to be *confident* in what he has done, Paul does

2. Paul provides his resume

a. 1st, w/respect to Paul's heritage as a Jew/in Judaism, let's compare our gospel heritage in Christ

He is a keeper of the law *Circumcised on 8th day* grew up in synagogue (Baptists: "cradle rolls")
Christ fulfilled the law on our behalf; now, God's law is written on hearts of God's children

His nationality is certified *[of] people of Israel* natural born, Jewish citizen
Our nationality is redeemed; we are the people of God; we've been made citizens of K/om of God

His family is noteworthy *tribe of Benjamin* Paul was Jewish blue-blood
We are part of an eternal family – family of God; our tribe is the tribe of the redeemed

No foreign blood in Paul's veins *Hebrew of Hebrews* unquestionable heritage & pride in nationality
We have new blood – transfusion from blood of Christ; our heritage is imperishable (1 Pet 1.4ff)

b. 2nd, w/respect to Paul's fleshly honors or accomplishments, let's compare what God has done for us

Best education *as to law, a Pharisee* might say, Paul had Ivy League credentials
Our education comes thru H.S., who opens our eyes so we can see/understand/obey word of God

Defender of Faith *as to zeal, persecutor of church*
The defense of our faith is the gospel of truth & our zeal is for others to become part of the church

No criminal record *as to r/ness under law, blameless* above-reproach in human r/ness
Our criminal record been removed – washed clean by blood of Lamb (Rom 8.33-34; Rom 8.1)

Closing implications:

1. *Rejoicing in the Lord* trains your heart to be glad in God & find your hope in God
That shows the world that you are not despairing about the virus

2. Learning the truth & clinging to it is best defense against *dogs & evildoers* of false teaching

3. Human achievement can be noble & good; but it must not become your identity
For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul?

Your accomplishments must never become your treasure or your hope