

Philippians 3:1–3

“Rejoicing in Christ Is the Beginning, Middle, and End of Anything Genuinely Christian”

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Philippians chapter 3 our portion this evening is verses 1 through 3, let's ask God for his help. Our father in heaven how we? Marvel that of this to the sons of Adam who had forfeited all of our joy. You have been pleased to give us not just. The joy that Adam ought to have had but even your own joy.

Delighting in rejoicing in exalting in your son. To also as he makes us to be like himself by his spirit makes us to delight in exalt in. To enjoy you our Father. That your spirit is one who opens our eyes to rejoice over Christ and loosens our tongues. To call you our Abba.

With Philial joy. And so we pray that you would conform us to the image of Christ we pray that as you have worked graciously in others and have done this work in the past working in them to will and to work according to your own good pleasure. Sustaining them in the working out of their own salvation that you would make us to follow their examples working in us by the same grace.

And that you would help us to beware of those. Who do not have this singular. Overarching joy overall. And keep us from being those against whom your people would have to be warned. By not having this joy.

And so on to that end we come to these. Three verses in which you've talked about these things. We ask that your spirit would help us that we would understand the text and we understand how it fits that we would have our hearts stirred up to Christ and turned away from confidence in our flesh.

So help us we pray a holy spirit in Jesus' name. Amen.

Philippians three verses one through three, these are God's words. Finally my brethren. Rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not to just. But for you it is say. Beware of dogs. Beware. Of evil workers. Beware. Of the mutilation. For we are the circumcision.

Who worship God in the spirit rejoice in Christ Jesus. And have no confidence in the flesh. So far God's inspired and inherent word. The Apostle here. Gives us a warning passage he's told us to have enough the mind that is in Christ he's described how Christ humbled himself and gave himself for us and the name that Christ has that is above all other names he is king of kings and Lord of lords.

And then he's commanded us to work out our own salvation with fewer and trembling because I'm just God who works in us that which we are commanded to work out and he's given himself as an example and he's given Timothy as an example and he's given a path for data says an example, and now he says watch out.

Because not everyone who seems like as an example is actually a good example. And he gives us the number one instruction for figuring out what kind of person not to follow. And that's someone who fails the number one instruction and all of Christianity rejoice in the Lord. And it's corresponding corollary do not have any confidence in the flesh.

Do not rejoice in the flesh now there's active very helpful and useful warning because there are many people in the churches who do not take their church membership, seriously. And being set apart as part of God's covenant people is a great blessing. But not everyone who says take your church membership, seriously.

Is enjoying it as a blessing. And there are many people in the churches. Who hate the law of God. Or at least say hate being told about it. Or thinking about what we ought to do in obedience to it. The idea that Jesus is our king and that we should love his law because it is the royal law of liberty.

Because it's Jesus's law. The idea that. It's not burdensome and we love it because it's his is to then offended. Soon as you start to talk about law, you know, they can feel the bitterness and poison curdling in their mouths on their tongues. And yet not everyone who says we should really keep the commandments of Jesus.

Says so because they're rejoicing in Jesus.

And there are a lot of people in the church who say well, you know the sacraments are nice and they're good tradition but they're really not that big a deal baptism isn't really that big a deal or even baptism is something that we do to make it testimony about what we have done rather than baptism as a sign and seal that the Lord has put upon his people which were them of Christ's authority for them and to remind them of Christ's authority over them.

And to encourage us independence upon him as we seek to be conformed to his image. There's precious little understanding of and valuing of baptism. And yet not everyone who says baptism baptism baptism is saying so out of a rejoicing in Jesus Christ. It's possible for people to rejoice in.

The act of applying the water as a tradition from scripture without actively rejoicing in Christ himself who marks us and declares us to be

his. Well, there were people who the Philippians might have been tempted to think were examples who had said you really have to go go all the way in your Christianity and become a full-fledged Jew Jesus was a Jew Jesus came from the Jews Salvation came from the Jews being set apart in the church your membership in the church is is everything.

And in fact that's who the apostles talking about. He says finally my brethren rejoice in the Lord for to me to write the same things to you as not to use but for you to say beware or talks. Is a you need to be set apart like us holy and special Jews and not like those Gentile those Gentiles out there and the Jews actually referred sometimes to gentiles as dogs.

But the apostles says watch out for someone who talks about membership. And doesn't talk about it in the context of or under rejoicing in the Lord. It's Jesus that has given us our membership. And it's Jesus who is the specialness of that membership? And so if they tell you membership members at membership, but it's not a rejoicing over Jesus.

They're actually dogs. He uses the most offensive term for what they really are. Then he does the same thing. Beware of evil workers. Well who were these evildoers they talk about what he's talking about the ones who are saying, you know, there's a whole lot of laws that those apostles aren't commanding you to keep and you better keep them with us because they're in the Bible they're right here and Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

He says well. They're not rejoicing over Jesus. As the fulfillment of the ceremonial law, they're not rejoicing over Jesus as the one whose kingdom has come. So that the kingdom of Christ is not now a state on earth. He says in their emphasizing laws even laws from the Bible.

But not rejoicing over Jesus as the giver of the laws the one who's kept it in our place is the one whom we are being made like as the guarantee that we will like we heard in first John 5 today, but be eventually the the work of of God and us that started with his beginning us giving us life so that we could believe so that we would love him so that we would love us all because of this is so that we would love his people because there is.

If they say lalala, but they're not rejoicing over Jesus. Then whatever they tell you to do, it's actually. Or whatever they are doing there actually evildoers and this in a full and complete sense because without faith there is a possible impossible to please God and whatever is not a faith is sin.

Even the attempt to outwardly keep the law of God even the attempt to inwardly keep the law of God. If it's not in a resting upon Jesus and it's delighted devotion to him upon whom we depend then it's just evil works according to God. He doesn't see anything good.

In anything we think or feel or say or do if it doesn't come from the life of Jesus in us. Says, I know they sound like they're real good, but they're actually evil workers. And then in the third place, they're saying you've really got to get circumcised. Circumcision is one of the the greatest things that Jews had.

You should really get circumcised and we could say the same thing about baptism circumcision was wonderful. Baptism is wonderful. But if we're emphasizing the ceremony that we have in the church. And not what God declares in that ceremony and how he uses it to to give us grace and strengthen our faith and give us faith and strength and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ if he is not the one on whom we are dependent it's a sign it points to Jesus not what?

So I worry when I hear people who always say look to your baptism. And they're not saying remember that your baptism says look to Jesus. And that Jesus says in your back to. Look at this one that. My church. And so if you take the sign and you separate it from Christ.

He uses a really grotesque word here in the neeking. James's cleaned it up a little bit. He says the outward sign without this spiritual reality of which Christ is that reality. Is just a grotesque physical thing, that was done. Now baptism is in his gross. He's his water.

But the main thing is rejoice in Jesus. That's what he set before us the sun glad to do whatever the father gave him the father glad to set the sun before us as our joy Paul rejoicing to serve Christ by doing whatever he can upon the sacrifice poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice of the Philippians who rejoice to serve Christ Timothy who doesn't think of his own things but he thinks of Jesus's things.

So the rejoicing over Jesus he's glad to look out for the the spiritual well-being of the Philippians. Because he's rejoicing over Jesus in the Philippians belong to Jesus. If Aphroditus is didn't even value his own life. So that he might serve. In the service of Jesus. And then he says, but not everyone who sounds like they've got a solution for what's wrong in the churches.

Is a solution. You watch out for anybody? Who doesn't have rejoicing over Jesus at the beginning and end of their message and that's exactly what Paul says about himself. He says finally brethren rejoice in the Lord is a finally I thought that was firstly. Well, yeah, it's firstly and lastly and all the in-betweenly.

Says I don't get tired of telling you to rejoice in the Lord Jesus says for me, it's not teaches. I'm glad Write you as many rejoice in the Lord's lines or preached you as many rejoice in the Lord's sermons, it'll never grow teaches to me. But it will always be safe for you.

Because with our remaining sin with our remaining fleshliness there is always a temptation to emphasize things that are from Jesus and connected to Him. Without rejoicing over Jesus Himself. In those things. And if we fail to rejoice over Jesus we'll end up having our confidence where in the flash city says look you want to find out who the circumcision is, look at the ones who worship God and asparaged look at the ones who rejoice in Christ Jesus.

Look at the ones who have no confidence at all. In the flesh. God grant that we would be such people and that we would heed the warning. That you would not take as your heroes or your podcast or people or your newsletter people the ones that you're always looking to to read the latest

or hear the latest from them.

Beware of anyone like that. If they're not always telling you and modeling for you to rejoice over Jesus, let's pray.

We thank the Lord for what you have shown us of your son in the last chapter and change in Philippians indeed what you keep showing us of him. Throughout your word that you have made him the great display of yourself. And we pray that your spirit would stir up our hearts to rejoice in the Lord Jesus.

And since we are prone to admire those who seem to be going against wrong streams in your church, we pray that you would give us discernment. We thank you for warning us. And we pray that you would help us to see those and listen and imitate them as they imitate Christ.

That we would have as models of what your work of grace looks like in another. To be those who are rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ, most of all make us to rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ. Fill our hearts with gladness of him in him that the joy of the Lord would be our strength.

That he would be the joy of our membership and the joy of our obedience and the joy of your sacraments to us. For we ask it all in his name amen.