

Philippians: Finding Joy Right Where You Are!

Key Scriptures

Phil. 3:1-9 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. 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! 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. 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;

Key Point

Joy doesn't come through our successful attempts at righteousness, but through knowing Jesus Christ.

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- What are some of your most important goals in life?
- Have you ever become excited about an idea only to be deflated by the realities of making it work?

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Why were the people Paul warns against in verses 2-3 so dangerous?
- Contrast Paul the Pharisee (vv. 4–6) with Paul the Christian (vv. 7-11). How have his reasons for confidence changed?
- How has knowing Christ turned his former profit into loss (v. 7) and his outstanding credentials into rubbish (v. 8)?

Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Have you ever placed your confidence in something, thinking it would bring you closer to God, which you now consider to be rubbish? Explain.
- What “false hopes” are you currently tempted to pursue?
- How has your hope in Christ sustained you in difficult times?
- In verse 6 Paul speaks of a kind of “legalistic righteousness.” What kind of legalism do Christians face today?

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- Ask God to help you know Jesus Christ in a greater way every day, to depend on Him more than things you might tend to easily lean on.

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week!

- Decide that you will “rejoice in the Lord” each day this week, even in the difficult circumstances.