

Series – Joy in Christ, a study of Philippians

Joy in Christlikeness **Philippians 3:1-21**

When I grow up I want to be just like ...

Review – Joy in Christ

The joy of the Christian experience is the dominant theme running through the book of Philippians. The words "joy" and "rejoice" are used 16 times in the epistle.

Chapter 3 begins with a word often translated “Finally” but it is more than a final word – it is the finality of “whatever happens”. In this case Paul says whatever happens **REJOICE in the Lord** to safeguard your faith.

I. Warning against outward religion **2-3**

- A. Outward signs without heart change is mutilation
Taught by “dogs”, impure teachers with impure motives
- B. True identification with Christ is by faith
Worship by the Holy Spirit
Confidence in Christ and not our “works” or “worth”

II. Witness of the worthlessness of outward religion **4-8**

A. Paul’s credentials

Circumcised on 8th day according to law
Pure blooded citizen of Israel
Tribe of Benjamin – special

B. Paul’s attainments

Pharisee – taught by Gamaliel
Zealous – persecuted the church
Law abiding – without fault

C. Paul’s evaluation

Worthless for salvation

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. Ephesians 2:8-9

To be discarded like waste (lit. dung)

III. Wealth of right relationship with Christ **8-16**

A. Value of knowing Christ **8-11**

Not knowing of, acquaintance with but being one with
Having a righteousness through faith in Christ

1. The Power of His resurrection
Power over death, sin and hell
Power to eternal life with God

2. The Fellowship of His suffering
Identify with Him as He does with us *Matthew 5:11-12*
For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives Romans 6:4

3. Assurance of eternal life

We will take part in the resurrection of the righteous

B. Value of our pursuit of Christ **12-16**

1. Dissatisfied Devotion – sober evaluation
Not “perfect” – means fully developed
2. Determined Direction - singleness of heart
Focus on one thing – eyes on the goal
Forgetting past – both failures and victories
Forging ahead – God’s best is yet to be
3. Disciplined Drive - stretching for the goal
Press forward like runner crossing tape
Possessing the prize God has for me
4. Daily Drill – stability in progress
Attitude is key – agree with the Spirit

IV. Walk according to the Spirit **17-21**

A. Follow godly examples

Study the life of Paul and his followers

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ 1Corinthians 11:1

Read biographies of great believers

B. Avoid Enemies of the Cross

They think only about present pleasures

C. Live as citizens of Heaven

We are eager for Christ’s return

Steps to Christlikeness

Check Reality

Realize where you are in Christ now and what God’s goal is for you

Set your sights on victory

Forget past failures and victories and focus on the finish line

Give your all

Live up to standard already achieved and endure to the end

Begin with your attitude

Have the mind of Christ and let the Spirit control your thinking