

SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians

Philippians 3:1-9 – “How to Be Right With God”

Philippians 3:1-9, *“ Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”*

If you were to die and stand before God, and He were to ask you, why He should allow you to enter Heaven, what would you say?

How can you be sure?

*“Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;*

In Philippians chapter three, Paul discusses the subject of salvation.

Thus my title: How to Be Right With God!

He uses three verbal concepts to teach the threefold aspect of salvation.

1st (vs. 9) *“found in him”* - Justification

2nd (vs. 10) *“know Him”* - Sanctification

3rd (vs. 20) *“look for (Him)”* - Glorification

Today we want to look at the subject of justification (vs. 1-9)

What is it?

How do I get it?

The act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Background – There were false teachers invading the church in Philippi

The Judaizers – Legalistic Jews who either held that circumcision and the observance of the Mosaic Law were necessary for salvation and in consequence wished to impose them on the Gentile converts, or who at least considered them as still obligatory on the Jewish Christians.

Legalistic Jews

Against the background of doctrinal error Paul writes to the Philippians.

There are two main divisions:

I. Not By Works Of The Law (vs. 1-6)

Philippians 3:1-6, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

1. Paul warns against false teachers (vs. 1-3)

- a. The necessity of the warning (vs. 1)
- b. The nature of the warning (vs. 2)
- c. The reason for the warning (vs. 3)

Notice the word "For we are the circumcision..." (the true people of God)

Marks of the true Christians (vs. 3)

1. *worship God in the spirit, (vs. 1)*

John 4:23,24. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for

the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. ")

2. *rejoice in Christ Jesus* (vs. 1)

No boasting in the flesh

3. *have no confidence in the flesh.* (vs. 1)

Illustration:

The first beatitude: Matthew 5:3, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

The word "*poor*" is the strongest word used for being poverty stricken.

Luke 18 - The story of the Publican and the Pharisee.

2. Paul warns against false confidence (vs. 4-6)

Notice the words: *"...no confidence in the flesh."* (vs.3)

"Though I might also have confidence..." (vs. 4)

Paul's illustration from his own life (vs. 4-6) – *"...If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:"*

Paul's past Pride (vs. 5-6)

1. His Pride in Ritual: *Circumcised the eighth day,* (vs. 5)

True circumcision removes the sin of the heart, not the skin 6
the flesh – it's spiritual!

2. His Pride in Relationship: *of the stock of Israel* (vs. 5)

The God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob... then Israel

(Not Esau)

3. His Pride in Respectability: *of the tribe of Benjamin* (vs. 5)

* Last of twelve sons born to Jacob, through his beloved wife Rachel

- * Israel's first King (Paul was named after him)
- * Jerusalem was located in the tribal area assigned to Benjamin
- * In battle the men of Benjamin had the place of honor in the front line (Judges 5)
- * In the Davidic Kingdom Benjamin stayed loyal to David and the tribe of Judah

4. His Pride of Race: *Hebrew of the Hebrews*; (vs. 5)

5. His Pride of Religion: *a Pharisee* (vs. 5)

Galatians 1:14, "And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."

6. Proud of his Reputation: *Concerning zeal, persecuting the church*; (vs. 6)

Illustrations: The stoning of Stephen (Acts 8)

Paul *"made havock of the church..."* (vs. 3)

"...Saul was consenting unto his death..." (vs. 1)

Romans 10:2, *"...a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."*

Zeal and sincerity do not constitute rightness.

You can be sincerely wrong!

7. Proud of his Righteousness: *touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.* (vs. 6)

How are we then saved?

II. By Faith in Jesus Christ (vs. 7-9)

Philippians 3:7-9, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"

Paul now tells us how to be right with God:

1. He rejected self-righteousness

A. He esteemed his gains as loss (vs. 7)

Jesus said in Matthew 16:24-25, *"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

B. He esteemed his gains as dung (a pile of manure) (vs. 8)

He considered his gains as being of no value and harmful.

C. He rejected his righteousness (vs. 9) *"...not having mine own righteousness..."*

2. He accepted Christ's righteousness

A. He now knew Christ (vs. 8a) *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:..."*

He did not exchange, one religion for another; it's now a person.

Illustration: Acts 9:5, *"...Who art thou, Lord?..."*

B. He won Christ (vs. 8b) *"...that I may win Christ,"*

Notice the word "that" – the reason for rejection of self-righteousness

To *win Christ* – in salvation you don't just get things from Christ you get Christ!

C. He was found in Christ (vs. 9a)

"...be found in him,..."

The sphere of acceptance comes from ones position: in Christ.

Ephesians 1:3, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"*

D. He possessed the righteousness of God (vs. 9b) “...but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

Are you ready to lose so you can gain?