

Philippians #6

Rejoice!

Phil 3:1-11 (Complete text at the end of these notes)

Mark Crawford
Oct. 27, 2024

A quick overview of Philippians so far:

Philippians At The Halfway

Paul's thank you note
Suffering for Christ
The affections of Christ
Humility and service
Combating the hermeneutic of suspicion
Hope - practicing gratitude
Solidarity - building genuine relationships
Service - sacrificing comfort

This is Paul's thank-you for the Phil's "gift basket" they sent to him. Paul ID's himself as a servant of Jesus. He talks about suffering in the context of a relationship with Christ and his affection for us. He mentions humility and service and caring for each other. Last week ERic talked about combatting the hermeneutic of suspicion by practicing gratitude, building genuine relationships, and service.

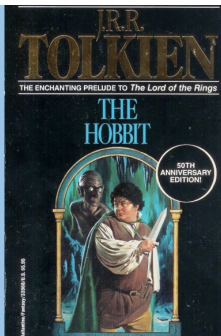
This is a Mark sermon: we are going to talk about Tolkien and sports. The NBA started this week and I love basketball! You can find many podcasts on this topic with lists about what to look for this coming season which prompted me to ask nine questions related to Philippians 3:

9 Questions for Philippians 3

(The first part anyway)

1. What's this rejoice word anyway?

Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you.



We have seen "rejoice" three times so far. I've been reading the Hobbit and you can see the cover I remember as a child about Bilbo's adventures in caves and lost in the woods. Along the way, it says over and over Bilbo wished he was home by the fire with a hot cup of tea (not for the last time). Today we will also talk about rejoicing, not for the last time.

the

1. What's this rejoice word anyway?

Luke 1:28 - The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."
John 19:1-3 - Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.
2 The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe 3 and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they slapped him in the face.

Joy is present in every circumstance: REJOICE is verb of having JOY, meaning "to make much of Jesus!" This is what REJOICING IS!. There are other notable places where this word is used.

The first is in Luke 1:28 when Mary finds out she will have a baby. The word “Greetings” is the word “Rejoice.”

Curiously, the next is John 19, right in the middle of the passion of Christ. The word “HAIL” is the same as “REJOICE.” The Roman soldiers beat and spit on Jesus and said “rejoice” to Jesus and then slapped him. It’s a greeting and an important word, a “safeguard” to you according to Paul.

2. Was Paul a cat person?

BEWARE OF DOGS



I added cats to Rembrandt’s painting. Answer to this question: YES!

3. What’s with the vitriol, Paul?

Beware of dogs,
beware of evil
workers, beware of
the mutilation!



This verse in the NKJ has “beware” three times. It appears that at first Paul is happy and grateful and then suddenly, he writes this verse. It’s like getting a card from your grandmother that says “the trees are beautiful, I made a pot roast today, and watch out for snakes.”

4. Why “mutilation” and why “circumcision”?

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the **mutilation!** For it is we who are the **circumcision**, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh – though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

Circumcision was the sign of the covenant: on the 8th day every boy was circumcised to mark them as part of the people of God. It’s part of the Law which tells how to be in relationship with a holy God: follow these rules. However, Paul says WE are the circumcision. In contrast, he says mutilation is just “cutting.”

The church at time was made of Jews who believed that their Messiah had come. Peter and then Paul then go and tell everyone that Jesus is the Messiah, even people who aren’t Jews. Some people said these new outsiders needed to do what the Law says to do, starting with circumcision. Paul, however, says this is NOT circumcision: we aren’t dependent on being marked; it’s just cutting. Conversely, WE are the circumcision not because we are following the law. Then he builds his argument further:

5. Show me the receipts Paul...

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: **circumcised on the eighth day**, of the people of Israel, of the **tribe of Benjamin**, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the **law, a Pharisee**; as for **zeal, persecuting the church**; as for righteousness based on the law, **faultless**.

(I realize this is not a question) Paul is building his case: he was circumcised, he was a law-following Jew, he was of the tribe of Benjamin, significant because not all Jews knew their lineage. He was a Pharisee and held a position in the synagogue. He was trained in the Scriptures. Paul even approved the stoning of Steven.

The Jews actually believed if everyone would follow the law for ONE day, the Messiah would come. Paul was zealous for something and wanted to preserve its purity. He was faultless and righteous concerning the Law. This righteousness technically meant he could go into the presence of God: he was whole. Yet, Isaiah was a prophet of God who could go into the presence of God yet he realized he could withstand being in the presence of God. God then put a burning coal to Isaiah's lips and declared that HE has made him righteous. This is not something a person could do for himself.

6. Do you even lift bro?

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them **garbage**, that I may gain Christ



Gains in weight-lifting build muscle. This is a picture for us of Paul's gains: he did everything right. But he considers all those gains as a loss, actually they were "garbage," actually a four-letter word for excrement. This means all the things Paul did for God were worth nothing except to be thrown into the street that he might gain Christ.

There is a treasure in a field and a man sold everything he had to buy the field. Paul realizes this is not about earning righteousness. This leads to the next question:

7. What is the difference?

and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.



Righteous by the law or by faith? We don't follow the Law and sacrifices yet we still try to earn our righteousness to hold onto control. Today, we think, "if I live a certain way, limit my screen time, exercise daily, etc etc, then I will be righteous." Paul says we can never quite get there: there is a limit. Even if I get it right on one day, I have to wake up the next day and do it all again. The righteousness that comes by faith is a GIFT which takes us out of the mire and muck to be made whole and righteous.

8. What do you want Paul?

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.



Paul wants to know Christ; this is all he wants in life. This is not a death wish, though. He says he wants to know his sufferings so that in death he could attain the resurrection. Attain means arriving, not earning. It means reaching the finish line.

9. What does this have to do with rejoicing?



Paul says rejoicing is a safeguard, yet his next word is "beware" of the people who suggest you can earn this and figure it out. Paul says to get rid of this and instead embrace this as a gift that we can rejoice in.

Rejoicing is the safeguard! In life, we are constantly trying to

figure out if our footing is safe: Am I OK? To rejoice is to have firm footing on Christ, to stand firm in Him.

Matt 7:24-27 (end of the sermon on the mount)

24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. **26** But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. **27** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Rejoicing places us on firm footing: we stand on the rock and rejoice in Christ. To rejoice is to constantly come back and remember what Jesus has done so we can walk out and care for the people around us, participating in the Kingdom.

Your Assignment:

We will return to this idea of *rejoicing* in 2 weeks. In the meantime, let's take on **REJOICE** as our greeting to one another. We are in the Kingdom, the king has done great things, therefore Rejoice! When you see fellow other Villagers this week, say to them “Rejoice in the King!” When you come to PG this week, say, ‘Rejoice in the King!’ Respond with “Rejoice!” Rejoicing is not to ignore the pain or suffering, it's to acknowledge that Jesus shares them with us.

Phil 3:1-11 (NIV)

Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. **2** Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. **3** For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— **4** though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: **5** circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. **8** What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in[a] Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. **10** I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.