

LIFE DURING LOCKDOWN #8
“Life Before and After Christ”
Philippians 3:1-9

Warnings about false teaching abound in the Scripture. Paul is giving the Philippians a word of caution about Jewish false teachers that they should take to heart. When Paul was at Philippi, he warned them about these false teachers and is reminding them again just in case they show up in their city and try to lead them astray. During our time of lockdown, we have a great opportunity to study the Bible and make sure that we can articulate the true gospel of Jesus Christ. It truly matters what we believe because embracing false teaching can have dire consequences.

#1. DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CAN EXPERIENCE JOY EVEN IN DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES, 3:1-2

- A. Rejoice in the Lord (a command), v. 1
- B. Rejoice in the Lord - Paul’s mantra for the Philippians, v. 1
- C. Rejoice over the reunion with Epaphroditus, (2:25-30)
- D. Rejoice that you know the true gospel, 3:1-2

#2. DISCIPLES OF CHRIST SHOULD BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR FALSE TEACHING, 3:1b-2

- A. Warnings are necessary when false teaching abounds, v. 1
- B. Watch out for the Judaizers who advocated faith in Christ in addition to following the law for salvation, v. 2 (Acts 15, Gal 2:4-5, 16, 3:1-5, 5:12)
- C. Watch out for those dogs, v. 2 (Pro 26:11, Mat 7:6)
- D. Watch out for men who do evil, v. 2
- E. Watch out for mutilators of the flesh (false circumcision), v. 2

NOTE: The Judaizers were Jews that believed in Jesus and insisted that Gentile believers must Judaize: become converts to Judaism and get circumcised, keep the Sabbath, and follow the ancestral traditions in order to be truly saved. However, these Jewish nationalists were presenting a false gospel. The Jerusalem Council rendered the verdict that Gentiles who became believers in Christ don’t have to subject themselves to circumcision, the law of Moses and the ancestral traditions (Acts 15). The only requirement for salvation is to believe in Jesus Christ. Adding any requirement to faith in Christ for salvation is heresy.

#3. DISCIPLES OF CHRIST SHOULD KNOW THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRUE GOSPEL, 3:3

- A. Christians are the true circumcision, (Deu 10:16, 30:6, Rom 2:28-29, Col 2:11)
- B. Christians worship God in the Spirit
- C. Christians rejoice in Christ Jesus
- D. Christians have no confidence in the flesh (human effort)

#4. DISCIPLES OF CHRIST SHOULD REFLECT ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE THEY TRUSTED IN JESUS, 3:4-6

- A. Paul is speaking as Saul the Pharisee, v. 4
- B. Paul is sharing his testimony, vv. 4-6
- C. Paul had confidence in the flesh before believing in Jesus, v. 4
- D. Paul has more to boast about than the false teachers, v. 4
- E. Paul’s spiritual accomplishments:
 - 1. Boast: Circumcised the eighth day, v. 5
 - 2. Boast: The stock of Israel, v. 5
 - 3. Boast: The tribe of Benjamin, v. 5
 - 4. Boast: A Hebrew of Hebrews, v. 5
 - 5. Boast: Concerning the law a Pharisee, v. 5
 - 6. Boast: Zealous persecuting the church, v. 6
 - 7. Boast: Righteousness keeping the law he is blameless, v. 6

#5. DISCIPLES OF CHRIST SHOULD REFLECT ON WHAT THEY BELIEVE ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS AFTER THEY TRUST IN JESUS, 3:7-9

- A. Paul is using an accounting metaphor-profit & loss, v. 7
- B. The things Paul boasted in he now sees as loss (*zemia*), v. 7
- C. Knowing Christ is gain (*kerdos*), v. 7
- D. Paul considers the things he boasted in as refuse (*skubalon*), v. 8
- E. Righteousness is in the gospel, v. 9 (Rom 1:17, 3:21-23, 4:3-5)
- F. Righteousness is a gift of God through faith in Christ, v. 9 (Rom 5:17, 2 Cor 5:21)

TODAY’S SCRIPTURE
Philippians 3:1-9

Finally, my brothers, 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. ²Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh. ³For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God,

who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh--⁴though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised 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; ⁶as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. ⁷But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and 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 and is by faith.

Colossians 2:11: In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ,

Romans 3:20-23: Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ²¹But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²²This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Acts 15:1-6: Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." ²This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ³The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the brothers very glad. ⁴When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them. ⁵Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses." ⁶The apostles and elders met to consider this question.

Discussion Questions

- #1. Discuss what error the Judaizers were promoting.
- #2. What is the definition of heresy?
- #3. What are some false teachings today that sound very appealing to the Christian community?
- #4. Why is it fruitless to trust in one's own righteousness for salvation?
- #5. Describe how Paul's view of righteousness changed after becoming a believer in Christ.
- #6. What is the difference between self-righteousness, imputed righteousness and righteous living?
- #7. What is spiritual circumcision? (Col 2:11, Rom 2:28-29)
- #8. Pharisaic Judaism and Christianity are righteous (holiness) movements. The difference between the two movements is how one becomes righteous. Discuss the difference between the two different views of righteousness. (Rom 3:20-23)
- #9. Acts 15:1-21 is known as the Jerusalem Council. This was the first major doctrinal challenge that the church faced. Answer the following questions:
 1. What were the two contrasting points of view under debate?
 2. Why was this debate so crucial to the future of the church?
 3. What was the verdict rendered by the council?
 4. Who had the final say in this decision?
- #10. Read Galatians 2:11-21 and answer the following questions:
 1. What was the issue that Paul confronted Peter about?
 2. Why did Peter behave this way?
 3. What does this tell us about the pressure placed on Jews to keep the ancestral traditions? (even Barnabas followed Peter)
 4. What was Paul's correction to Peter and the others?

#11. Read Romans 4:1-5, 20-25 and discuss how Abraham was considered righteous before God? How does that apply to us?

#12. List the things that you thought would put you in good favor with God before you became a Christian in the column on the left. In the column on the right list how those ideas changed after becoming a Christian.

Before Christ	After Christ

#13. What is your takeaway from this teaching?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday Bible Study at 6:30: a discussion of the previous sermon.

Wednesday prayer and study at 6:30. (access both by clicking the zoom link)

Fellowship Gathering at Garbolina Park: Saturday, October 24th, at 9am. This is a time to visit with the church family and keep our in person connections.

Thank you for financially supporting the ministry of Hillcrest Church. You can give online or mail your check to the church.

- Give to the general fund (our operating expenses)
- Give to the elder's fund (to assist those in financial need)
- Give to the Great Commission fund (for the missionaries of the CMA)

If you need spiritual counseling during these crazy times don't hesitate to contact any of the elders:

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