



THIS JOY THAT I HAVE
A Journey Through Philippians
Philippians 3:1-9

Series Aim: To equip and encourage believers to embrace and choose joy in every season of life.

JOY PARTICIPANTS v. 1

When Paul writes, “my brethren”, this is a clear reference to the believers in Philippi. These “brethren” are those brothers and sisters in Christ who have been born again into the family of God. Such supernatural joy is experienced only by those who have a supernatural birth. Non-Christians may know happiness, but they will never know this joy.

JOY PURSUED v. 1a

When Paul writes “rejoice”, he does not mean that the Philippians are to be frivolous or silly. Neither does he mean that they are not to fear God or rejoice in sin. Neither does it mean that they are never to cry or have sorrow. Instead, Paul means that even in the most difficult moments in life, they can rejoice because they have joy in the Lord that transcends their circumstances. Why should we pursue living a life a joy? Being joyful is necessary in order to live like Jesus Christ.

JOY PROVIDED v. 1b

What is the source of joy? It is defined in the next three words “in the Lord”. The sphere in which joy is found is in a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. True joy is a gift from God that only He can give. **Psalms 4:7, Psalms 16:11**

JOY PROTECTED v. 1c

There are many perils that threaten to steal the joy of Christians. Paul understands that he must address the danger of teachers who corrupt the word of God, or the Philippians will be headed for a certain fall into error and sin. False doctrine was threatening to disconnect the Philippian believers from their source of joy.

JOY POLLUTED v. 2

Paul proceeds to describe these false teachers who threaten to steal the joy of the Philippians. Paul describes the false teachers in three ways.

“**dogs**”-This reference is not to a domesticated house pet, but to wild scavengers.

“**evil workers**”-This speaks of their evil character, as well as their endless industry in spreading evil. **Romans 16:17**

“**false circumcision**”-The religious rite of male circumcision was taught in the Old Testament as a sign of God’s covenant with the nation of Israel (Genesis 17). The death of Christ fulfilled the meaning of circumcision. But these Judaizers were attempting to keep people under the old covenant by requiring their followers to be circumcised. **Colossians 2:10-14**

JOY PRODUCED v. 3

The call of the Philippians is not simply to give up or resist the false teaching of “Judaizers.” It is to experience and appreciate the gospel which produces joy in Christ. Paul now gives a description of the true believers who experience authentic joy in the Lord.

“**We are the true circumcision**”-Believers are those who have experienced internally what external circumcision was once a sign of.

“**Who worship in the Spirit of God**”-Only the one who has been truly circumcised in the heart can worship God with their heart. True worship must be generated by the Holy Spirit. It transcends all outward rituals.

“**Put no confidence in the flesh**”-The “flesh” refers to a person’s own fallen ability independent of God. Paul is referring to anything that you and I might do apart from a reliance upon the power of the Holy Spirit.

BEFORE CONVERSION

Seven Different Facts Paul Once Trusted

- ✓ **Impressive Beginning v. 5**-Paul explains that he had the right beginning. The Mosaic Law required that on the eighth day, a baby boy would be circumcised. This ritual signified that there must come a time in which the heart of the individual must be circumcised as well.
- ✓ **Impressive Nationality v. 5**-Paul had the right nationality. Israel was God's chosen nation, and they were the people who were privileged to hear the word of God preached to them.
- ✓ **Impressive Lineage v. 5**-Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin. Of the twelve tribes of Israel, Benjamin was one of the two elite tribes. They were one of the two tribes that remained loyal to King David's descendants when the kingdom divided; together they formed the southern kingdom of Judah. In the land assigned to Benjamin the capital city, Jerusalem was situated.
- ✓ **Impressive Upbringing v. 5**-Paul was raised according to Hebrew tradition. He was reared in a Hebrew home and learned the Hebrew language. He was as religiously a Hebrew as anyone could possibly be.
- ✓ **Impressive Standard v. 5**-Paul was also a Pharisee. The Pharisees were those men most committed to the Old Testament Scriptures. They were fiercely devoted to studying the word of God.
- ✓ **Impressive Sincerity v. 6**-Paul was not lukewarm about anything he did, and certainly about religion. He was full of zeal and passion for holy things.
- ✓ **Impressive Morality v. 6**-Paul sought to live by the standard of God's law. He was outwardly moral. He was extremely upright.

AT CONVERSION

RIGHT CALCULATION v. 7

Paul expresses his conversion in accounting terms. Paul describes his conversion to Christ as an accountant would look at a profit and loss statement. Paul uses the word "counted" three times in verses 7-8. Paul has added up the numbers and come up with a bottom-line calculation.

RIGHT CHANGE v. 8

When Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, everything immediately changed. Paul declares the former things that he used to cherish as rubbish. Rubbish means garbage, waste, or trash. The best that Paul once had to offer to God became rubbish and trash in the moment, he saw Christ.

RIGHT CONFIDENCE v. 9

Paul continues to talk about his reordered priorities after his conversion. Paul came to know salvation the only way anyone can "through faith in Christ". Faith is turning to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ.