

17 December

 Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: Joy in Christ – week 5



Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member that a relationship with Jesus Christ is a believer's greatest gift?
2. In whom must we rejoice according to Paul in v.1? (**Rejoice in the Lord.**)
3. What is Paul's four reasons for why he might have confidence in the flesh according to v.5? (**Circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews.**)
4. What does Paul say about all his achievements in v.7? (**But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.**)



Let's go deeper

5. Where do our righteousness (right standing) come from according to v.9? (...Through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith).
6. What is the one thing Paul does in v.13? (**Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead...**)
7. What motivates Paul to continue in his faith according to v.14? (**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**)
8. What is Paul's encouragement to the church in v.15 – 16? (**Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. v.16; Only let us hold true to what we have attained.**)



Let's apply this

**9. Philippians 3:9;** ...and be found in Him, **not having a righteousness of my own** that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the **righteousness from God that depends on faith.**

The only way we can have a relationship with Jesus Christ is through faith (trusting Jesus), and not through our good works or achievements.

- Do you trust your own achievements or good works for salvation, or Jesus Christ's finished work on the cross as a substitute in your place?
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you that salvation is a free gift from God the Father, through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

SUMMARY:

Joy in Christ: Week 5

Read: Philippians 3:1 – 16

**v.1 – 2; “Rejoice in the Lord:”** This is the theme for the whole letter. Paul shared with the Philippians the principle of being able to rejoice in the Lord not in circumstances or in situations, but in the Lord who works all things together for good. This joy is fitting for the believer because it shows that we really do trust in a God whom we really believe is in control.

**v.3 – 4;** Their joy is not found in their own ability to be justified by the law or by their law-keeping. Jesus and Jesus alone is their joy. They do not trust in their own ability to be righteous before God through external works (the flesh), but their only confidence is in Jesus.

**v.5 – 6;** Paul first listed four reasons why he might have confidence in the flesh: Paul was **circumcised the eighth day** in accordance with Leviticus 12:3. Paul was **of the people of Israel**, a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and therefore, an heir to God's covenant with them. Paul was **of the tribe of Benjamin**. Benjamin was distinguished by the fact that it gave Israel her first king, Saul (1 Samuel 9:1-2). Paul was raised by his parents as **a Hebrew of the Hebrews**.

Paul was **concerning the law, a Pharisee**. This tells us that among an elite people (the Jews), Paul was of an elite sect (the Pharisees), who were noted for their devotion to the law of God. There were never more than six thousand, and their name means “*The Separated Ones*.” **Concerning zeal, persecuting the church**. Paul was also an active fighter against the church and believers. **As to righteousness under the law, blameless**. This shows that Paul achieved the standard of righteousness which was accepted among the men of his day – though this standard fell short of God's holy standard.

**v.7 – 8;** Paul rejects all confidence in the flesh. Paul's confidence is in a living relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul here put a personal relationship with Jesus Christ at the very centre of the Christian's life. He joyfully accepted the loss of all other things for the greatness of this personal relationship.

**v.9 – 11;** Paul wanted Jesus, not self. Knowing Jesus means knowing this power, the new life that is imparted to us now, not when we die.

**v.12 – 14;** Paul was focused on one thing and would not let those things which are behind distract him from it. He pressed on for the prize.

**v.15 – 16;** Paul had great trust in the ability of the Lord to deal with His own people. He did not have the attitude that if he failed, they would then never be convinced.