

LESSON 11 – PRESSING TOWARD THE GOAL

Philippians 3:1-21

Summary

After comforting the Philippians' concern for Paul and encouraging them to humbly seek each other's welfare, as Christ sought our own, Paul turns our attention to the matter of false teachers, which were a threat to their joy, unity, spiritual focus, and eternal salvation. Based on Paul's response, it seems these were Judaizing false teachers boasting in their physical circumcision, Jewish lineage, and religious training by men. Paul compares that with his own superior pedigree, and he contrasts their fleshly confidence with his own eagerness to forsake his ancestry and accomplishments to gain Christ. Paul exemplified and requires a tremendous spiritually-focused mindset that is ever reaching forward toward our heavenly goal and reward. After again encouraging the Philippians toward unity in Christ, he commands them to follow his pattern of spiritual mindedness, while warning against those whose mindset is fleshly and doom is destruction. Finally, he reminds the Philippians of their heavenly citizenship and glorious resurrected body, which will far surpass any glory the Judaizers could falsely offer them.

Bible Reading With Questions

Beware of and Silencing False Teachers – Philippians 3:1-6

1. Why does Paul keep mentioning joy and admonishing the Philippians to rejoice?
2. What attitude were the Philippians to have toward false teachers? Why?
3. How were these Gentile Christians to be considered the “*circumcision*”?

Forsaking Carnal Confidence to Gain Christ – Philippians 3:7-11

4. Why did Paul turn his back on his pedigree? What was Paul willing to sacrifice to achieve his goal? Can we say the same? Do our lives reflect that?
5. How can we reconcile passages that require obedience with passages, such as **Philippians 3:9**, which teach that our righteousness comes from God?

Pressing On and Reaching Forward to the Goal – Philippians 3:12-15

6. Should Christians be discouraged by their past sins, or should they revel in the past accomplishments in the Lord? Explain.
7. What has Paul promised that God will reveal to us, and how will He do it? Provide supporting Scriptures.

Sharing a Common, Heavenly Mindset and Citizenship – Philippians 3:16-21

8. How does the above attitude and promise affect our ability to “*walk by the same rule*” and to “*be of the same mind*”?

9. Are we given the ***option*** of following apostolic example? Do we have to remain unmarried, shave our head, make tents, and travel the country preaching, like Paul? Explain.

10. When was the last time you were moved to the sorrow of tears by thought of the “*enemies of the cross of Christ*”? What would it take for us to have such a heart of concern?

11. What will happen to the body that these false teachers are serving? How does this relate to their doctrine and practice?