

PHILIPPIANS (COUNT IT ALL JOY)
PROGRAM 16 (#912101)
WEEK 4 (#912321)
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SERIES: Philippians (Count It All Joy)

TITLE: Program 16 – Beware Evil Workers!

MONDAY

OPEN

When you hear the word evil, Beloved, what does it conjure up in your mind? Does it conjure up vileness and does it conjure up brutality? Does it conjure up someone that has just almost got fangs and is, is sneering or leering and drooling and just mean as a snake? Do you know that God uses the word evil in connection with workers within Christianity? That’s what we’re going to talk about today.

PART ONE

Well, Beloved, if you’ve been studying the Bible with me, if you’ve been going through Philippians, then you know the minute that I said evil that I’m going to take you back to Philippians, chapter 3, verse 2, where Paul is saying, “Beware, beware, beware.” See if you can say it with me. See if we can get the order straight. First of all, they are to beware of, what? (Barking) They’re to “**beware of dogs.**” They are to “**beware of evil workers.**”

That's right. And they are to **“beware of the false circumcision.”**

(Philippians 3:2) Now these are three great concerns of Paul's. And we remember that when he was in Miletus and called the Ephesian elders – because he was going back to Jerusalem, and he knew that he was going to be arrested – God had already shown him that chains awaited him because of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Well we know that Paul, when he gathered those elders he warned them about what would happen after his departure. Well now he is separated from those in Philippi. And so he is writing to them with this basic same concern. And that same concern is of men who are unscrupulous of people that come in professing to know Jesus Christ, saying that, yes, you need to be saved, but they are really in character, “dogs.” They are really in character or in deeds, “evil workers.” They are really in doctrine, those “of the false circumcision.” And so he's warning them about these evil workers. And when we think of evil we usually don't think of anybody that would be naming the name of Jesus Christ. Of course the media is always quick to point out the quacks and the quirks and those that are just absolutely vile, and yet are professing Jesus Christ, and yet, in kind of an insane way. But this is not what he's talking about here. I mean those people are easy to spot. But he's saying, [“Beware, keep on looking for, keep on watching out. Keep cognizant of the fact that among you there are going to be dogs, that among you there are going to be evil workers that among you there are going to be the false circumcision.”] (PARAPHRASE Philippians 3:2) Well today, what we want to do is to look at these evil workers. And remember now, as we learn to study the Bible, that I told that scripture is the best interpreter of scripture. Now Paul also wrote a letter to his son Timothy. In fact it's the very last letter, and a letter is the same as saying an epistle. It's the very last letter that Paul ever wrote. Because when he writes this last letter he knows that he is going to die; God has shown him that He is going to take him home. He says this in 2 Timothy, chapter 4. In verse 6, **“For I am already...poured out as a drink offering.” (2 Timothy**

4:6a) Now, do you remember that? I mean, don't you love the way it clicks? When you study the Word of God yourself, when you mark the text, when you observe it carefully to see what it says, then the interpretation comes to the surface and you understand what does it mean and then you know how to apply it correctly so that you think biblically and you have a biblical world view; that's application and you have a Christian or a biblical behavior, and that is the behavior like Christ. So when Paul says that the time has come, he is already being poured out as a drink offering. This is the last time he'll be poured out as a drink offering. A drink offering was what was poured out on an altar in worship, and he says, **"I am going to be poured out as an act of worship. My death is going to be an act of worship."** And he goes on to say, **"I am...being poured out, [for] the time of my departure has come."** And then he says this: **"I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith. [And] in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day."** I know I've got a crown awaiting me. And he says, **"And not only to me, but...to all who have loved His appearing."**

(2 Timothy 4:6-8) Now remember, as we have read in the book of Philippians, in chapter 1 and in chapter 2, he has talked about the day of Christ. The day of Christ is when you and I see Jesus Christ face to face. We believe that the day of Christ is synonymous with the judgment seat of Christ, when we give an account, when He gives awards, as Paul is saying; he is going to get a crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge is going to give him. Now, what would be a man's last words, as he gets ready to depart from this life, as he gets ready to totally, completely finish his course? Well, he sits down and he writes to Timothy. Now remember we saw in Philippians, chapter 2 that Timothy was a kindred spirit with Paul, that he was equal souled. In other words, that they were one and the same and that Paul said, ["I'm going to send Timothy to you because I have no one else who is so genuinely concerned for your welfare as Timothy. We are

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of kindred, equal souled spirit.”] (PARAPHRASE Philippians 2:19-20) Now he’s writing his final epistle to Timothy and he’s giving him his final charge. And he wants him to remember something. In chapter 2 he has told him that, **“The things [that] you have heard from me [among] many witnesses, [I want you to commit to] faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”** And then he goes on to say, “[Now look,] **suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” (2 Timothy 2:2-3)** Remember our program with Vasile when we told you that Paul had called Epaphroditus his brother, his fellow worker, and his fellow soldier. Well here in 2 Timothy, chapter 2 he says, **“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life.” (2 Timothy 2:4a)** Now listen, he’s saying, “No soldier, no good soldier, no soldier that’s on active duty entangles himself with the affairs of this life.” In other words, you’re on the battlefield. You don’t have time to be doing business at home. You’re on the front lines for Jesus Christ. And he says, **“So that he may please Him, the one who has enlisted him as a soldier.” (2 Timothy 2:4b)** So watch the contrast now. Here is a man, Timothy, who like Epaphroditus is a brother, is a fellow worker, is a fellow soldier. Now contrast it with the evil worker, because in this book, in his final epistle he is going to remind Timothy of the evil workers, so that as Timothy carries on the ministry, as Paul passes him the baton of the gospel of Jesus Christ and says, “Run son, run. Take this and disciple men. Teach them to observe everything that Jesus Christ has commanded them.” And as he passes that baton he wants to warn him. And so in 2 Timothy, chapter 3 he says, **“... but realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men...”(2 Timothy 3:1)** Now he’s going to describe evil workers. He’s going to describe men that are living in the last days and have infiltrated into the church, have come in among them, as Jude says. Remember we looked at Jude and Jude said that men are going to come in and undetected among you and they are men that are deceptive men, and you

have to be careful of them. Well he says in verse 2, of chapter 3 of 2 Timothy, **“For men will be lovers of self.” (2 Timothy 3:2a)** Now here’s a list and this is not a list that I would necessarily mark 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 in my Bible, but I would just look at it and know hey, here’s a list of things. Here is a description of men in the last days. He says, “Men will be lovers of self.” I want to ask you a question. Are you a lover of yourself? I mean is everything about the gospel, everything about Jesus Christ all for your benefit? If it’s for your benefit then you are an enemy of the cross of Jesus Christ and your god is your appetite. You say, “You sure a strong speaking woman.” Well you know what? I love you enough to be a strong speaking woman. I love you enough to tell you the truth and then you have to decide whether you want it or not. You have to decide whether you’re going to believe it or not. But I’m going to tell you something: I will never mince words with you. I will say it graciously, I pray. I will say it gently, I pray, because the gentleness increases somebody’s learning ability. I had to learn that a long time ago. But I will tell you straight. And so as we go through this list, hey, look at the list, check it twice, see if you’ve been naughty or nice. All right, he says, **“Men will be lovers of self, lovers of money.” (2 Timothy 3:2a)** Do you tune into television programs that are going to tell you how to get wealthy, that are going to tell you how to have a great car and have a great home and how to get these things from God? Listen, loving money is a sign of an evil worker. **“Lovers of money, boastful, [boastful,] arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful.” (2 Timothy 3:2b)** I mean there’s no gratitude. Do you remember when Vasile was on the program? Do you remember his gratitude and how thankful he was for what had been done in his life? What are you like? Are you grateful? I’m going to stop the list right there. We’ll come back right after the break.

PART TWO

Welcome back, brave soul. You know it's good for us to judge ourselves because if we judge ourselves, then we're not judged by God. And it's good for us to measure ourselves by the plumb line of God's Word, the symbol, the logo for Precept Ministries is a plumb bob, because a plumb bob is hanging on a string and it shows you what's straight. And that's what the Word of God is. You know in the book of Amos he said he was going to put a plumb bob down so that people could measure themselves and that's what we need to do when we study the Word of God. Remember these are precepts for life to be applied to our life. So we're looking at these last days and these difficult times that are going to come because of the character of men, because of evil workers. Now watch what it says. That these people are "ungrateful." That's where we left off. They're "unholy." They are "unloving." In other words, they're "un." They're supposed to be grateful and they're ungrateful. They're supposed to be holy and they're unholy. They're supposed to be loving and they're unloving. "Irreconcilable." In other words, you come to them and you try to make up with them or something has happened and somebody's been offended and they won't reconcile. Just get out of my face. Get out of my sight. I don't want to see you again. I'm sorry, but you see the ministry of the gospel is all about reconciliation. That's what 2 Corinthians, chapter 5, says, that we are **"ambassadors for Jesus Christ"** and our message is to **"be reconciled to God."** 2 Corinthians 5:20) Well, these people are irreconcilable. They are **"malicious gossips."** I mean they just don't gossip, but what they say is malicious. I mean it is mean. ["They are without self-control. I mean whatever they want to do they do it. They don't restrain themselves. They are brutal, brutal. And you can be brutal physically. You can be brutal verbally. They are haters of good. They hate good. They are treacherous. They are reckless. They are conceited. They are lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."] (PARAPHRASE 2 Timothy 3:3-4) Now I know all

these characteristics don't fit you. But let's just stop and ask a question. Do you love pleasure more than you love God? Do you love the pleasure of watching television more than the pleasure of studying God's Word? If you do, Beloved, you do not qualify. You do not qualify as a fellow worker. You do not qualify as a fellow soldier, as Paul talks about and describes to us in the person of Epaphroditus in Philippians, chapter 2. You don't qualify. You see God has called you and me to a cross. He's called us death to self and it's not me, but it's Christ in me. That's the way it's supposed to be. Well then it says they hold to a form of godliness. Now this is what makes them so dangerous. I mean if we were just talking about the world, sure, all those things are in their job description. I mean it's what sinners do. But these are people that hold to a form of godliness; they're portraying themselves as workers, but they're evil workers and that's what makes them so dangerous, and that's why Paul is saying beware. And then he says, **"...Avoid such men as these."** (2 Timothy 3:5b) Spot them and avoid them. And listen, if you hear them, on television, if you hear them on the radio, if you connect with them in the Internet, if they come into the church and they want to gather a group around them, avoid them. And he goes on to say, **"For among them,"** among these evil workers, **"are those who enter into households."** They'll get into your home. And they **"captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses."** (2 Timothy 3:6) In other words, they're women that go strictly by emotions, strictly by feelings, not by the Word of God. And they're **"always learning..."** and they're **"...never able to come to the knowledge of truth."** (2 Timothy 3:7) In other words, "O teach me, teach me," but they never really, really learn. These are evil workers. Well I want you to go to one other quick passage, and that's 2 Corinthians, chapter 11. And these evil workers were giving Paul an absolute fit, because they had come into the church and they were drawing others away from the teaching that Paul had left them with. And he says in verse 13, **"For such men are false apostles."**

(2 Corinthians 11:13a) False apostles. There are many that are going around and saying that they are the new day prophets. Listen, you've got enough to know this Word. When you know all of this Word and you understand it, then go listen to a prophet. Listen to the words of God. What do the words of God have in common with straw? And the only way that you know that anybody's speaking the truth is to know the Word of God. So he goes on to say in verse 13, **"Such men are false apostles."** They are **"deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ."** And he says, **"No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants, [if Satan's servants] also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness."** **(2 Corinthians 11:13-15)** This is what makes them dangerous. This is why Paul is saying, **"Beware of...dogs, beware of...evil workers."** **(Philippians 3:2a)** Remember these are deceitful workers whose end will be according to their deeds. Well, let's go back to Philippians now. We have another one to cover and that is to **"beware of the false circumcision."** And when he says **"beware of the false circumcision"** he does a play on the words and when he says, **"Beware of the false circumcision,"** he's using the Greek word k-a-t-a-o-m-e, k-a-t-a-o-m-e, (KATATOME) which means the false mutilation. In other words, it's not a genuine circumcision, but it is a mutilation. And then he says, **"Beware of the false circumcision, for we,"** contrast, **"are the true circumcision."** **(Philippians 3:2b-3a)** And the true circumcision, the word circumcision there is P-E-R-I-T-O-M-E. So it's a play on the words. And what he's saying is, because it is a false circumcision then it is a mutilation. Now what do we mean by a false circumcision? Well a false circumcision is they're coming along and they're saying okay, you're saved by believing in Jesus. They'll go along. They're in, they've infiltrated the ranks. They've secretly come in and they're introducing destructive heresies. So they come in and say, okay, you're saved by faith, but you have to be circumcised, because if you're not

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circumcised then you're not going to make it. Now remember Philippi was a Gentile city. It was not a Jewish city. When Paul got there remember, there weren't even ten Jewish men there. There was no minyan, which was the ten that was necessary to form a synagogue. And so they were going in among the Gentiles and saying, okay, believe on Jesus Christ and get circumcised. Now what did all that mean and why was that so dangerous, and why did they have to be aware of that? Why did they have to watch out for that? Well we will get to that in the next program. And you don't want to miss it because we're going into my favorite part of Philippians. Now just remember, Beloved, that God wants you to know and understand in the last days, that there are going to be evil workers. You need to know them. You need to spot them. You need to avoid them. That is a precept you need to remember.