

PHILIPPIANS (COUNT IT ALL JOY)
PROGRAM 18 (#912103)
WEEK 4 (#912321)
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SERIES: Philippians (Count It All Joy)

TITLE: Program 18 – No Confidence!

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

What my friend is it that really turns you on, that really lights your fire?
What is it that inspires you to get out of bed in the morning and causes you to press on? What are you trying to achieve? What is your passion? What are you reaching out for? What are you extending and pushing yourself in order that you might accomplish? Well when you stop and you look at it my friend, how does all of that relate to your relationship to Jesus Christ?

PART ONE

Welcome beloved. I am so thankful that you have joined me today because we are about to come to my favorite part of the book of Philippians. And it's my favorite part because it's full of passion, because it shows me what the emphasis of my life should be, what the goal of my life should be. And it's going to show you the same thing beloved. And if you and I will listen, and if you and I will follow Paul's example, then you and I can know this: that

when we see Jesus face to face, when the day of Christ comes we are going to hear, “Well done My good and faithful servant.” Now you may not be expecting to see Jesus Christ. You may be thinking, hey, that is so far off and I have a life to live now, and the life I have to live now is about me. Well let me just say this: He is coming. And when He comes, He’s bringing His reward with Him, Revelation 22:12. And He’s going to give to everyone according to their deeds, according to their works, according to what they are doing with their life. So what you’re doing right now will either have a negative effect or a positive effect when you see Jesus Christ face to face – if you’re a child of God. And the same if you’re not a child of God. Because even if you’re not a child of God, you are still accountable. And Revelation 20 tells you that. That when you stand at the great white throne judgment of God, the books are going to be opened, and He’s going to look at your deeds. So let’s see what Paul says. Paul has warned us about dogs. He has warned us about evil workers. He has warned us about the false circumcision. And then he has contrasted the false circumcision with the true circumcision. So listen to what he says. And we’re going to pick up in verse 3 of Philippians, chapter 3: **“For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God....” (Philippians 3:3a)** In other words, our worship, our service of God, is not motivated by the flesh, but it’s motivated by the Spirit. It’s not accomplished by the flesh, but it’s accomplished by the Spirit, directing our flesh, by the Spirit taking over and controlling what we do. And he says we **“...glory in [Jesus Christ].” (Philippians 3:3b)** We’re not going to glory in our flesh. We’re not going to glory in what we accomplish in other people’s lives, but we’re simply going to glory in only One, and that is Jesus Christ. Now that is a real different lifestyle from the lifestyle of many, many children of God, because we are glorying and having confidence in the flesh rather than glorying in Jesus Christ. And it goes on to say, the third thing if you’re of the true circumcision, you **“...put no confidence in the flesh.” (Philippians 3:3c)** Now watch what he’s going

to do. He's going to show you're not to put confidence in the flesh, but if you were to put confidence in the flesh I could have confidence in the flesh. So I'm not saying you can't have confidence in the flesh because I haven't achieved. He says I have achieved. Listen to his achievements. He says in verse 4, **"Although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh," (Philippians 3:4a)** and you would mark confidence in the flesh there. **"If anyone...has a mind,"** or an attitude, and you would put an A over that. **"To put confidence in the flesh, I far more." (Philippians 3:4b)** You say, I just found this program and you're telling me to mark in the flesh, you're telling me to put an A over the mind. What are you telling me to do? Well, I'm assuming that you've been with me. Forgive me for that assumption. And I want to welcome you to this program and I want to tell you that we have a study guide that you can download that is awesome that will teach you how to study God's Word for yourself, and that's what we're doing. We're moving through the Bible book-by-book and chapter-by-chapter and verse-by-verse, and we're learning how to study inductively. Inductively means you remove the middle man, and you go straight to the text of God's Word yourself to discover what does it say, what does it mean, and what am I to believe, and how am I to live in the light of it. That's what we're doing. So download that study guide. Go to preceptsforlife.com, preceptsforlife.com and you can download the study guide and you can study along with us. So if you're studying you want to put an A over mind. You want to mark confidence in the flesh because it is a key repeated phrase. And so he says, **"If anyone...has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day...." (Philippians 3:4b-5a)** He's going to pull out his credentials. He's going to give you his bio. He's going to let you see who he is. **"...Circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness, which is [found] in the Law, ...blameless." (Philippians**

3:5-6 “Blameless.” And then he makes this awesome statement. He says, **“But...,”** contrast, **“...whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.” (Philippians 3:7)** Now when he says, “I have counted [them] as loss for the sake of Christ,” he says they are absolutely meaningless to me, absolutely meaningless, because I am impassioned for one person and that is Jesus Christ. Now, as we’ve looked at Philippians, remember we’re looking at Philippians as the epistle of joy because joy and rejoice is mentioned about 16 times in this book. The word mind or attitude is mentioned about 11 times. But Jesus, is mentioned 36 times, and then if you add all the pronouns, I mean it’s all wrapped up in Jesus. So this is the epistle of joy. Joy is Jesus first, others second and you third. Joy despite imprisonment, which is the key word in chapter 1. Joy despite people – which is what chapter 2 is all about. And joy despite things – which is what chapter 3 is all about. So if it’s joy despite things, you want to mark the word things and what I did was I just took a orange Micro pen and put like a cloud around it and then I colored it orange. So I can look down and I can see where things are used, and I colored the pronouns in the same way. So he’s saying, “Listen, my relationship to Christ is so important that I count all things as loss for the sake of gaining Christ or for the sake of Jesus Christ.” He’s going to talk about gaining Christ later and we’ll see what he means by that. But what I want to do is, I want to stop for a minute and I want to read Paul’s bio again. And I want to take what he was trusting in his credentials, and I want to parallel them to us today. All right, so he said, look I was **“circumcised the eighth day,” (Philippians 3:5a)** and what he’s saying is, “I am not a proselyte. I didn’t come to the Jewish faith later on in life. I was circumcised as a Jewish baby boy.” Now they were instructed to circumcise their son on the eighth day. It’s very interesting because on the eighth day the prothrombin time, or the clotting time, in a little boy is at its peak. This is when they were to cut the foreskin and roll it back and circumcise that child as a sign of the fact that they are of the seed

of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his descendants forever. Now if you were a proselyte, if you were a Gentile, and you came to believe in the one and only God, in Yahweh, in Jehovah, then you had to be circumcised also. So what he's saying is "I did it the right way. I did it the original way. I was circumcised the eighth day." Now let me ask you, as a Christian or as a person raised in the church, what are you boasting in? What circumcision was to the Old Testament, baptism is to the New. And when I was baptized as an infant, I was taught by my church that that's when I became a child of God. Now the Bible doesn't teach that. The Bible doesn't come close to teaching that, because baptism is a sign of your identification with Christ. You're buried with Him in baptism and you are raised to walk in newness of life. In other words, you are united with Christ in His death, in His burial, and in His resurrection and to walk in newness of life. So are you trusting in your baptism to get you to heaven? Are you saying, hey, I've got it made? Well listen, I thought I had it made, too. I was dunked. I was sprinkled and I was poured, but I didn't know Jesus Christ. So baptism doesn't save you any more than circumcision saves you. As we saw, there has to be a circumcision of the heart. There has to be a belief in Christ and then there is a physical baptism. But the baptism in itself, the circumcision of itself, is nothing if there's not a change in the heart. Well that was one of the things that he was trusting in, and then the second thing that he pulls out, he says, "I'm of the nation of Israel." In other words, "Listen, I was born a Jew. I'm part of the nation of Israel." Well I talk to people and I say, "O, do you know Christ?" And they'll say, "O yes." And I'll say, "When did you come to know Jesus?" "O, I was born that way." Honey, or sir, you ain't born a Christian. You aren't born in the knowledge of God. Just because you were born into a Christian family it does not make you a Christian and this is the confusion, because I remember one day in Israel I was telling how I became a Christian at the age of 29, and my Jewish friend leaned over to one of my friends that was traveling with me, and says, "But she was born a Christian," because the

Jews think that, okay, I'm born a Jew, you're born a Christian. O no, we are not born a Christian. You say, this is interesting, I'm glad it is and we'll talk about it when I come back.

PART TWO

Welcome back my friend. You've had some interesting things to ponder, haven't you? If you are trusting in the fact that you were born in a Christian family and therefore you are a Christian, whether you are a Caucasian, whether you are an African American, if you think that you're a Christian because you were born in a Christian family then I can tell you this: you do not understand the gospel of Jesus Christ. You were born a sinner. It doesn't matter whether you're born into a Muslim family, a Christian family, a Hindu family, a Buddhist family; you are a sinner. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And you need to be born again. Well Paul was saying, "What were my credentials? What were the things that I was going to count as loss once I met Jesus Christ?" Well, he said, ["I was circumcised the eighth day." He said, "I was of the nation of Israel,"] (Paraphrase, Philippians 3:5) and that did not make him acceptable to God. And saying that you are born in a Christian family does not make you acceptable to God. So we've got those two parallels. The next thing he says is ["I was of the tribe of Benjamin."] (Paraphrase, Philippians 3:5) Now what's so great about the tribe of Benjamin? Well the very first king of Israel was a Benjamite. Who was the very first king? Do you remember? It was Saul and he was of the tribe of Benjamin. All right, also, who stood with Israel when the nation divided in 931 B.C.? After Solomon the nation split into the North and the South, it was Benjamin that stood with Judah, and it was Judah from which the promise of the Davidic covenant would come and the Benjamites were known for being very valiant in war. So he was proud of being from the tribe of Benjamin. What are you proud about? See let's parallel it. He was proud of being of the tribe of Benjamin. What are you proud about? Do

you know who my family is? Do you know my history in the church? Do you know who my grandfather was? Do you know that my father was a pastor? So many times when I talk to people and I'm sharing the gospel with them they say, "O well, you just don't understand. My father's a pastor." It doesn't matter if your father's a pastor. It doesn't matter if he's a bishop, that does not make you a Christian. That's not something that you can boast in. Well he goes on to say, ["I am a Hebrew of the Hebrews."] (Paraphrase, Philippians 3:5) In other words, you talk about attaining. A "Hebrew of the Hebrews" is like saying Jesus is Lord of Lords. In other words, you couldn't get any better Hebrew than what Paul was. You couldn't get any better Lord than who Jesus is. He is the Lord that reigns over all. Well what would be the parallel? Well I'm a Presbyterian of the Presbyterians. I mean I am a five point Calvinist. You can't get any more Presbyterian. I am a Baptist of the Baptists. I mean I am a true blood Baptist. I am a Pentecostal of the Pentecostals. So this is what they were boasting in. What are you boasting in? Are you boasting in your achievement in coming to the epitome or the height of your denomination or of your beliefs? Well he goes on with the list. **"As to the Law....,"** he says, **"...[I was] a Pharisee."** (Philippians 3:5b) Now there were basically two sects. There were the Sadducees and there were the Pharisees, but the Pharisees were the most legalistic. The Sadducees were the liberals, but the Pharisees kept the letter of the law. I mean they had every angle of the Law covered with all the traditions that they had added in their interpretations of the Law. And so he says, **"As to the Law, [I'm] a Pharisee."** (Philippians 3:5b) Well you might set there and say, I want you to know; of course I'm a Christian. Do you see how short my hair is as a man? I mean, do you know that I am in church every time the doors are opened? Do you know that I don't go to movies? I don't drink. I don't smoke. I don't chew and I don't go with girls that do. I mean this is the legalism. And we start evaluating ourselves. Have you ever had anyone evaluate you because you had on makeup and they didn't and they

think they're more spiritual? This is what he's talking about. He says, "I was as legalistic as they could get." And some people get legalistic and they miss the grace of God. Well he goes on to say, ["As to zeal, I want you to know I was so zealous as a Jew that I was a persecutor of the church."] (Paraphrase, Philippians 3:6) And that's what you see in Paul's testimony. You can read it in Acts, chapter 9. You can read it in Acts, chapter, I think it's 24 or 26. And what he's saying is, "I was a persecutor of the church, that's how zealous I was." And, and you could have such a zeal for your denomination that you are touting your denomination and you think everybody else is wrong. Or you can have such a zeal in your denomination that you become a persecutor of everybody that doesn't go along with you. And you become a follower of your zeal rather than a follower of Jesus Christ. And then he said and this is his last credential that he puts up. He says, **"...As to the righteousness which is [of] the Law..."** I want you to know, absolutely **"...blameless."** (Philippians 3:6b) I mean I kept every letter of the Law, every jot, every tittle; I did it. I was passionate to be righteous according to the Law. And you may say, "Listen, I would never dream of doing something like that. I would never dream of letting wine touch my lips, or I would never dream of going here or going there or saying this or doing that." And yet you are as mean as a snake. I mean you have this legalism and you have this righteousness that is of your own standard and yet you are not loving, you are not kind, you are not forgiving, you hold such a high standard that you make it miserable for everybody in the house and there's no love, there's no grace, there's no compassion, there's no character of Christ. Did I slap you up side of the head? If I did, because it hit home, it wasn't me; it was the Spirit of God. And what He's saying is look; those are things that have nothing to do with Christ, with the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Put those things aside. Don't let them be your passion or your ambition. Listen to what he says. **"But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of**

Christ.” He says, **“More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.” (Philippians 3:7-8)** That word “rubbish” literally is dung. It’s manure. And he says, “I’m telling you that now that I’ve come to know Jesus Christ, everything in my life is like manure. It is like just flush it, get rid of it. It’s excrement in comparison to knowing Christ. That’s what I’m counting it all as.” I mean it’s very, very graphic, isn’t it? I mean they didn’t translate it that way, but they should have translated it that way. But people probably would have gone (gasp), like that. But he wants you and me to understand that there is a goal worth pressing on for, and that goal is the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. It is to know Him. This is what he goes on to say, “To know Him, to know Him.” That’s what this program is all about, knowing Him. To know the power of His resurrection, to know what it is to walk in that powerful resurrection life, to know the fellowship of His sufferings, to share in common with His sufferings to, **“...attain to the resurrection from the dead.” (Philippians 3:11)** You say, what does that mean? We’re going to look at it in our next program. And it’s liberating and its life giving. O beloved, what is your passion? Don’t let it be things. Let it be Christ.