

Epistle to the Philippians IV Chapter Three

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Let's remind ourselves that our fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ through His Spirit. That makes everything work right. That's what does it, not that we are anything, but *God and Christ are everything*.

I hope this is going to be uplifting and edifying today so that we can truly understand and experience the Word of God and grow in grace and knowledge.

Philippians 3:1: "Finally, my brethren, be rejoicing in the Lord. And truly it is not an irksome or laborious task for me to write the same things to you; and for you it is really a margin of safety, making sure you are secure":

- secure in the faith
- secure in God's way

Then we come to a point here in chapter 3 that is very profound. Once we have the love of God, once we're in relationship with the love of God—and brethren with each other—all of us collectively, then there are those who creep in unawares. We haven't experienced that! We've had all kinds of things in the way of doctrine come to us, and I personally have had so many things mailed to me concerning different doctrinal beliefs and so forth that it's really amazing and in some ways quite incredible. The Apostle Paul had the same experience. Then he begins here with this warning:

Verse 2: "Watch out and be on guard against those dogs..." This is right in the Word of God. It's an appropriate time to label the enemy for what they are. The Apostle Paul is doing it here.

"...those religious corrupters; watch out for and be on guard against those depraved, wretched workers of evil; watch out for them, be on guard against the concision" (v 2)—actually is a play on words for those who were requiring circumcision. Concision means *to absolutely cutoff and amputate*.

Today we are experiencing more and more of the problems of Judaism coming into the true religion of God. I've given sermons concerning the times right after the beginning of the Church and right toward the end and the synagogue of Satan. Paul had to fight against the synagogue of Satan. They were coming around saying that you are not complete in Christ. You need to be circumcised; you need to have sacred names; you need to offer sacrifices; you need to do all of these things. He says to *watch out and be on guard* against them.

Let's see how it was bothering the New Testament Church at that time, different ones coming around with new doctrines. I've received a study paper where everything that we've covered concerning the nature of Christ, the power of God is all being denied by this Judaizing group called *To Restore All Things*. It's really a Judaism attempt to restore all Christianity back to Judaism. Not Old Testament theology, but Judaism. We need to understand that Judaism is a perversion—a Babylonian perversion—of the Old Testament 'religion' of Moses. That's what we need to understand. And though we have the Holy Scriptures to lead us unto salvation through Jesus Christ, there are those who come along with a perverse reasoning, with these different requirement to try and perfect us *in the flesh!*

Titus 1:9: "Holding steadfastly to the faithful Word, according to the teachings of *Jesus Christ...*" That's what a minister is supposed to do; that's what we're all supposed to do: *hold fast that faithful Word* as we've been

- taught of God's Word
- taught of God's way
- taught of God's Truth

"...so that he may be able both to encourage with sound doctrine... [sound teaching] ...and to convict those who are gainsayers. For there are many rebellious and vain talkers and deceivers, especially those from *the circumcision party*" (vs 9-10). Those who were going around preaching another Christ, another gospel, a mixing of the requirements of the Old Covenant with the requirements of the New Covenant and actually denying Christ.

There are those people who say that because we keep the Holy Days that we are doing the same thing. No, we're not doing the same thing at all, under any circumstances whatsoever.

These are the ones who are corrupting, these are the ones who are deceiving, these are the ones who are of the circumcision, v 11: "Whose mouths must be stopped..." This is why we have to have doctrinal studies and go through every one of these things in very laborious painful study as it were to really know the Truth.

"...who are subverting whole households, teaching things which *they* ought not, for the sake of selfish gain" (v 11). In other words, they're just out there for their own money, their own advantage.

We find that the Apostle John had exactly the same problem. Those people came around claiming that they were of God, but they were denying Christ, denying God the Father, saying that they needed to ‘teach you new things.’

I had quite a little conversation with a ‘sacred namer’; absolutely insistent that there was no way for anyone to be saved unless you use the sacred names of the Old Testament. Of course, that’s absolutely wrong! In the New Testament we are taught that it is the Father and Jesus Christ. And *every knee is going to bow to the name of Jesus Christ!*

1-John 2:18: “Little children, it is *the* last time; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming...” We’re dealing in exactly the same kind of environment today. There are more *antichrists* around than ever before who deny Christ, who deny God the Father, who deny the Word of God.

“...even now many antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time” (v 18). Not only were they experiencing this, but it is also a prophecy of what we’re going to go through.

Verse 19: “They went out from among us, but they were not of us...” That’s how this all started. They all came in contact with the Church. They all came in contact with the Word of God. Then they created *their own* church, *their own* religion, and this branched off into the various forms of Catholicism, Orthodoxism, and later the Protestants came out of Catholicism and the Church of God was kind of way out in the wilderness; existing, keeping the commandments, keeping the Feast days, loving God and having the faith of Christ. Then there were those of Judaism who would try to come in and corrupt Christianity and restore all things to a Judaism approach. These are the antichrists! That’s what it says here.

Verse 19: “They went out from among us, but they were not of us because if they were of us they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed *to show* that *they* all were not of us. But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One, and **you have knowledge of all things pertaining to salvation**” (vs 19-20).

We don’t need these Judaizers to come along and preach to us and teach us the errors of Babylonian Judaism. That’s just exactly what it is! We are going to be confronted with this more and more. I can see it happening more and more. I guarantee you there is going to be more flack, there is going to be more resistance. I don’t even know what the unleashing of false doctrine is going to come. “But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One, and

you have knowledge of all things pertaining to salvation.”

Even as John said, ‘If any come to you and bring not this doctrine, don’t even wish them God speed.’ Why? *Because they are not there to help, to love, to serve and grow in grace and knowledge.* They are there to subvert, to take away, to develop *their own* movement and organization **rather than serving and loving God.**

Verse 21: “I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth, but because you know it, and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth.” The Word of God is

- true
- holy
- righteous
- good
- perfect

We know that, brethren!

Verse 22: “Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?...” He truly was the Son of God, He was God, He was God manifested in the flesh. ***The one who denies that is the antichrist!***

“...He is the antichrist—the one who denies the Father and the Son” (v 22). We need to realize and understand that.

- Catholicism is antichrist!
- Judaism is antichrist!
- Muslimism is antichrist!
- Buddhism is antichrist!
- Hinduism is antichrist!
- parts of Protestantism—which reject Christ—is antichrist!
- Why should we want to bring any of these things into the Church of God?
- Why should we want to bring any of those things into our fellowship?
- Why should we want to bring any of those things into our worship and love of God?
 - ✓ to pervert
 - ✓ to destroy
 - ✓ to divide and conquer, setting one against the other

That’s what the Apostle John is talking about here.

Verse 23: “Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either. Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you; if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father” (vs 23-24). That’s the whole purpose of what we are doing, brethren. We are in the Father and we are in the Son, that we have the Father; we have the Son.

Verse 25: “And this is the promise that He has promised us: eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray.... [to deceive you; come in and trick you] ...But you yourselves have **dwelling in you** the anointing ... [of the Holy Spirit] ...that you received from Him...” (vs 25-27). The Holy Spirit is living and remaining in you. Jesus said, ‘If a man be keeping My words, He is loving Me and My Father will come unto to him and WE will make Our abode with him’—in your very heart, mind, soul and being. Brethren, that is what is so important, and we need to constantly have that in mind, heart, soul and being to go forward on that every day!

“...and you do not have need of anyone to indoctrinate you ...” (v 27)—to teach you. You don’t need any other man coming in and revealing *new* truth, which is *old heresy!* That’s what this whole New Age religion is. That’s what this whole movement is to Judaize the New Testament, to Judaize the Church.

There are even some people claiming that the New Testament was never written in Greek, but it was written in Hebrew. That is an out and out lie to Judaize the followers of Christ. They are of the concision. They are, as Paul says, ‘the religious corrupters and dogs.’ It can’t be said any more strongly, brethren. We don’t need anyone coming and teaching us

“...for the same anointing instructs you in all *spiritual* things... [because you can’t learn without the Spirit of God, without the Word of God] ...and is true, and is not a lie; and *if you do* exactly as it *has* taught you, you will be dwelling in Him. And now, little children, dwell in Him, so that when He is manifested we may have boldness, and not be put to shame before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone who practices righteousness has been begotten by Him” (vs 27-29).

It’s really important that we need to realize that there was this terrible situation going on in the New Testament Church. Remember, ***there is nothing new under the sun!*** So, we’re going to go through these things in various cycles time and time again.

- Satan is there to try and pervert!
- Satan is there to try and destroy!
- Satan is there to try and corrupt and deceive!

There are some important things that we need to know in the book of Galatians—very powerful Scriptures. Right now we know that the Worldwide Church of God is becoming more and more Protestant and following more and more of the doctrines of Protestantism, leaving the Truth of God,

leaving the understanding that they have to be accepted of the world. In fact then, when that happens, they are preaching another gospel! Paul was very emphatic about that very thing here:

Galatians 1:1: “Paul, *an* apostle, not *sent* from men nor *made* by man, but by Jesus Christ...” Every minister has his faith, loyalty and allegiance to Jesus Christ! That’s one of the things that has made it very hard to work with other people, because so many are out there serving their own, doing their own, whatever.

There are some ministers who are dedicated to this very thing that we are, and we should be able to work with them in the future, and we hope that we can. But in the meantime, we have to stand for what is true, for what is right, and know what we believe and why we believe what we believe.

“...and God *the* Father, Who raised Him from *the* dead; and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, **Who gave Himself for our sins...**” (vs 1-4). Notice how Paul always goes back to the very basic thing of the purpose as to why Jesus Christ came, gave Himself as the perfect sacrifice, and is our offering and our High Priest before God the Father right now.

“...in order that He might deliver us from the present evil world...” (v 4). That’s why we’re to not go back and live in it. Though we live in it, *we are not of it*; our life is not living in the world, *our life is living for Christ* and for *God the Father!*

“...according to the will of our God and Father; to Whom *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen. **I am astonished** that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel” (vs 4-6). Who are people being removed from? *From God the Father!* God is the One Who calls us! Jesus says, ‘No man can come to Me except the Father draw him.’

When we get all of these false doctrines coming in, we are being drawn away, by another gospel, from God the Father.

Verse 7: “Which *in reality* is not another Gospel...” There can’t be any other gospel; there is only one *true, faithful, righteous* Gospel; there cannot be another!

“...but **there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ**” (v 7). Oh yes, they twist it! They turn it! It sounds good! It is smooth and pleasing, in some cases. But that is not the Gospel of Christ.

Verse 8: “But if we, or even an angel from

heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!” That means *cut off, anathema from God!* That’s pretty strong language. This is how he starts the book of Galatians. Pretty powerful!

In Gal. 2 he had to publicly correct Peter because Peter was getting carried away with the Circumcision Party and separating himself from the Gentiles when they sat down to have a meal; thinking that would make them more righteous before God. *Nonsense!*

Verse 9: “As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For **if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ**” (vs 9-10).

This become very important in relationship to Philipp. 3. Beware of the concision, those religious corrupters.

Verse 11: “But I certify to you, brethren, that the Gospel that was preached by me is not according to man... [not after man; it didn’t originate with men!] ...because neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught *it by man*; rather, *it was by the revelation of Jesus Christ*. For you heard of my former conduct when I was in Judaism, how I was excessively persecuting the Church of God and was destroying it; and I was advancing in Judaism *far* beyond many *of my* contemporaries in my *own* nation, being more abundantly zealous for *the* traditions of my fathers” (vs 11-14).

This shows that Paul says, ‘Look, I have knowledge and experience of what I am preaching and teaching. I know the difference between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and this false gospel of circumcision, and this false gospel of Judaism.’ Judaism is a Babylonian perversion of the Old Testament Scriptures. I cannot say that anymore strongly! I cannot make it anymore clear than that!

Our justification before God, through Jesus Christ, *is by faith and not by works!* Yes, we are to have our works of righteousness through Jesus Christ. But we cannot do a work by any law that is going to compel God to give us salvation. The circumcision that we’re talking about is not in the flesh. Paul says that if you be circumcised as a requirement for salvation, that Christ does you no good.

Galatians 5:5: “For we through *the* Spirit are waiting for *the* hope of righteousness by faith; because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision; rather, *it is the* inner working of faith through love” (vs 5-6).

Nothing in the flesh profits to the spirit. Let’s understand that. Jesus said, *‘The flesh profits nothing!’* Someone is going to say, ‘Well then, we can go out and eat unclean meat.’ *NO!* That’s not what it’s talking about whatsoever. It means that *we cannot be spiritually perfected by the physical things that we do*: whether circumcision or not circumcision. But we are not going to be able to attain to the Kingdom of God by breaking the laws of God and the commandments of God—*no way possible!*

But there’s another law-breaking that we don’t understand. That law-breaking is taking the laws of Judaism to substitute for the laws and commandments of God. That law-obedience to the *commandments of men* is not obedience to the commandments of God. That’s what Paul is saying here.

Verse 6: “Because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision; rather, ***it is the inner working of faith through love.***” Faith and love are going to lead you to keep the commandments of God, because this is the love of God: *that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome!* That’s what John wrote.

Verse 7: “You were running well. Who hindered you, *persuading you* not to obey the Truth?” See where these doctrines lead? Sooner or later they lead down the road to take away from the Truth!

- The *Truth* of the justification of God—that He gives you as His gift—before His very throne, to be Holy and unblamable and unprovable in His sight.
- The *Truth* about the keeping of the commandments of God.
- The *Truth* about the circumcision of the heart and mind.

As we will see, *that is the true circumcision!*

Verse 8: “This persuasion *is* not coming from Him who calls you. **A little leaven leavens the whole lump**” (vs 8-9). This kind of sin takes away from the unleavenedness of our spirit, mind and attitude, which is in Christ Jesus!

Verse 10: “I am persuaded concerning you in *the* Lord that you will be otherwise minded...” What have we learned? *Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus!* Be not “...otherwise minded...”

“...and he who troubles you shall bear the judgment, whoever he may be. But I, brethren, if I still proclaim circumcision... [as a requirement for salvation, as a requirement for the gift of eternal life]

...why am I yet being persecuted? Then the offense of the cross has been taken away” (vs 10-11). You can’t accept Jesus Christ and continue in your old Judaism!

Just like today, a person who is a Catholic must come out of Catholicism. A person who is a Protestant must come out of Protestantism. Likewise, a person who was involved in Judaism—as was Paul; clear up over his head in it—must come out of Judaism. That’s what Paul is saying here, very clearly. If he preached Judaism along with Christ, then there was no stumbling block or offense of the cross.

Verse 12: “I would *that* they would even make themselves eunuchs—those who are throwing you into confusion.... [that’s what concision means] ...For you have been called unto freedom, brethren; only do not *use* this freedom for an occasion to the flesh; rather, serve one another with love” (vs 12-13). There we come full cycle to the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ as taught by the Apostle Paul.

Verse 14: For the whole law is fulfilled in this *commandment*... [this is the basis of the whole meaning of the Law]: ...‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *lest* you be consumed by one another. Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (vs 14-16).

Let’s look at the requirement that God gave, even in the Old Testament, concerning circumcision. The circumcision in the flesh was only a token of the covenant. That did not change the heart and the mind. That’s the whole important purpose of the New Covenant.

Here’s actually a prophecy of it—Deut. 10. Here is what conversion is to do; here is what yielding to God is to do, exactly the same Gospel preached right here in the Old Testament. Now you know why Paul told Timothy that ‘you have the Scriptures, you have known them from a child, that through Christ they are able to make you wise unto salvation.’ Here is part of those Scriptures. Notice how this fits right into New Testament teaching. When the New Testament came along, it was also part of the teaching that had the prophecy of it, foundation of it in the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 10:12: “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” Is that not New Testament doctrine, brethren? *Absolutely!*

Verse 13: “To keep the commandments of the LORD, and His statutes which I command you

today **for your good**? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *belong* to the LORD your God, the earth also, with all that is in it. Only the LORD had a delight in your fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, you above all people, as *it is today*” (vs 13-15).

Who had delight into choosing you and me? *God the Father, through Christ!* Brethren, that is really something to let sink in. If there’s any one thing that you could say would be the theme of the Feast of Tabernacles, that is it.

- It is God the Father Who has done the work!
- It is Christ Who saves us!
- It is by His Spirit!
- It is by His love!
- It is by the very mind of Christ!

What does that do for us? Here’s a prophecy of the requirement of the *spiritual circumcision* in Christ:

Verse 16: “Therefore, circumcise **the foreskin of your heart**, and be no longer stiff-necked”—that is carnal-minded and hostile against God.

It tell you one thing, until the begetting of the Holy Spirit takes place in the mind of an individual, there is no way to get rid of the hostility of the carnal mind. *The carnal mind is not subject to the Law of God and neither indeed can be!* Here’s a prophecy of the circumcision in Christ.

Verse 17: “For the LORD your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, the mighty and awesome God Who does not respect persons nor take a bribe.” There is nothing physical that you can do to compel God to give you salvation! That’s the whole lesson of circumcision. People, on the other hand, will say, ‘we don’t need to keep the commandments of God; it’s all done and finished in Christ.’ Wrong! *Wrong! Wrong!* When you have the circumcision of Christ in your heart and mind:

- you’re going to want to keep the commandments of God
- you’re going to want to love God
- you’re going to want to serve Him

That’s the whole thing that no law in the world can compel you to do, except you choose to do that. Through the circumcision of Christ it is accomplished.

Verse 18: “He executes justice for the fatherless and widow, and loves the stranger in giving him food and clothing.” Showing the prophecy of the future calling of all Gentiles into the Church.

Verse 19: “Therefore, love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” We’re going to see that all have sinned—Jew and Gentile (Rom. 2_[transcriber’s correction])—one is no better than the other. Here’s a prophecy of it right here.

Verse 20: “You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve Him, and you shall hold fast to Him, and swear by His name. He *is* your praise, and He *is* your God, Who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down into Egypt with seventy persons. And now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of the heavens for multitude” (vs 20-22).

Same thing when God called the 12 apostles. That was the beginning of what was to be the Church. Now look at the multitude that has come since then. At the resurrection we’re going to find out how many that’s going to be. I think we’re all going to be very surprised. Happy to be there, but surprised!

Colossian 2 talks about that circumcision that is in Christ; that circumcision that is of the heart, of the mind, which takes away the hostility, the carnality, and is replaced with the love and faith of God.

Colossians 2:6: “Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him; being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. **Be on guard so that no one takes you captive...** [same kind of lesson taught Philip. 3] **...through philosophy...** [through religion of men to explain the existence of things as they are, and to try and establish a religion out of observation] ...and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him...” (vs 6-10)—in Christ you are complete:

- everything that Christ is
- everything that Christ has done
- everything that Christ has taught us
- everything in example as to what He did

We’re to follow in His steps, which then is the completeness of everything. Paul is saying that you don’t need this outside philosophy. You don’t need this outside tradition of men to make you complete in Christ.

You are complete in Christ! “...Who is the Head of all principality and power in Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of

the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (vs 10-11). That’s important to really know and understand.

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Now let’s see how this circumcision of the heart and mind takes place, v 12: “Having been buried with Him in baptism... [we’re going to see how important that is and what it does for us] ...by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead.” Let’s see how complete and how important and thorough that this circumcision really is.

A very profound and important thing concerning this kind of circumcision is actually a destruction of the old self, the whole old way of living. A complete change of heart, mind and attitude through the receiving of the Holy Spirit of God.

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** We who died to sin...” (vs 1-2). That is the circumcision of the heart and mind, that you are no more stiff-necked, rebellious and carnal-minded against God; you are dead to sin.

“...how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?” (vs 2-3). We’re conjoined in His death. Buried together so that, in fact, the old person has been crucified with Christ! *‘I am crucified with Christ, yet nevertheless, I live, and the life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who gave Himself for me!’ That is the circumcision in Christ!*

Verse 4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life”—as a new person, as a new being, rejuvenated by the Spirit of God.

Verse 5: “For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death... [the circumcision that is in Christ] ...so also shall we be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin” (vs 5-6). That’s very clear! That’s very powerful! That’s also very positive, too!

Verse 7: “Because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin.” If you have died in Christ you are freed from that sin. Why? *Because Christ has paid the penalty!* You accept that payment and now you walk in newness of life, attitude and heart. That is the circumcision of the heart.

Let's see this circumcision of the heart, Romans 2:25: "For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision."

If you're circumcised in the flesh and you are not keeping the laws and commandments of God, your circumcision doesn't mean a thing! It's the same as though you have never been circumcised.

Verse 26: "Therefore, if the uncircumcised... [in the flesh] ...is keeping the requirements of the law..." Here we are *keeping* the law in a right way. Both are required to keep the law, the circumcised and the uncircumcised. What he's saying is that the circumcision in the flesh is not going to be counted *spiritually* if you are not obeying God!

"...shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the law, judge you..." (vs 26-27). If there's anything that would set a Jew on fire, that is it! To say that the Gentiles, the uncircumcised—they consider them 'goyim' dogs; wretched people—they're going to judge you. Now you know why the Jews hated Paul. They said, 'Christ we can understand, Paul we'll never forgive.' To this day that's how they are.

"...who, with *the* letter and circumcision, are a transgressor of *the* law? For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit and not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God" (vs 27-29). That is the circumcision that we have, brethren.

That's why Paul said in Philippians 3—maybe you will understand it a little more since we've gone through this and realize even more what it is.

Philippians 3:2: "Watch out and be on guard against those dogs, those religious corrupters; watch out for and be on guard against those depraved, wretched workers of evil; watch out for the be on guard against the concision because we are the true circumcision, **having our hearts spiritually circumcised**; we are the ones who are truly serving and worshipping God in the Spirit, even boasting and rejoicing in Christ Jesus; and we are not trusting or putting any confidence in the fleshly things or accomplishments" (vs 2-4).

Isn't it interesting that the Jews today still say that they are the 'chosen people.' When the fact is, they are—until they accept Christ—the rejected

people! *We are the true circumcision of God!* We don't have any confidence in the flesh.

Verse 4: "Although I might also have confidence, trust and reliance in fleshing things (the accomplishments and achievements of the physical life and world.) If anyone thinks or imagines that he has good cause for confidence, trust and reliance in flesh (through the power of his own being to produce his worldly accomplishments and achievements). I can claim far greater ones!"

There are a lot of people out there teaching the power of positive thinking, you can be anything you want to be, you can do anything you want to do, and all of that sort of thing. They rely on the flesh, rely on their own physical achievements, and have self-esteem! I tell you what, Job didn't have very much self-esteem after God got done with him.

It is true, we're to love our neighbors as ourselves. We're to have enough love of ourselves because we love God, but not to be boasting and bragging on all of the things that we have done.

I remember a church leader that said, 'Now, brethren, we have preached the Gospel in all the world! We're on so many radio stations, so many television stations, we have produced so many magazines and so many booklets, and so many articles.' Bragging and boasting on physical accomplishments and achievements. Where is it today? Where is that accomplishment? *Nothing! Because when sin enters in on anything that we do, it is nothing!* That's what Paul is talking about here.

Verse 5: "Concerning circumcision in the flesh, on the eighth day... [done right and properly] ...concerning race, Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews! Concerning law and law-keeping, a Pharisee." He was the greatest, climbing and going in advancement in Judaism to be a leading rabbi! That's what Paul was headed for. Paul studied at the feet of Gamaliel. Paul was ready to go ahead and take over the seat of Gamaliel. That's where Paul was headed. That's what kind of Pharisee he was.

Verse 6: Concerning zeal..." Someone comes and says, 'Oh, I love the Lord; I have zeal in my heart for the Lord.'

"...persecuting and ravaging the Church (actually instigating the death of some); concerning a righteousness, which is derived from a rigid law structure (Judaism), having become blameless and without error or defect" (v 6). Wasn't that said of Job? God said to Satan, 'You see Job, My servant, who is perfect'—in the flesh, but not in the spirit. This is what Paul is talking about here.

Verse 7: “But all of those things, which were a gain or an aggrandizement to me as a person, to my self-image—I have reckoned, considered and viewed all those things as a total loss (a vain, empty waste—hallow achievements) on account of Christ.” They don’t mean a thing!

Verse 8: “In addition to that, truly in every instance I am still reckoning, considering and viewing everyone of those things as a total loss...” What are we willing to count as loss for Christ? Is there anything that we’re not willing give up? You know what Jesus said, ‘Anyone who comes to Me and hates not his father, mother, brethren, sisters, land, yea, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. Whichever one of you who does not take up his cross and follow after Me, cannot be My disciple.’

We see the same thing in Paul; he said, “...I am still reckoning, considering and viewing everyone of those things as a total loss (a vain, empty waste; hollow achievements) when compared to and on account of the excellence and preeminence, the superiority and high character of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord and Master; through whom I have suffered loss, and have completely forfeited every one of those things, and I am reckoning, considering and looking upon them as the dregs of refuse and putrefying dung, I order that I may win Christ” (v 8).

The Greek for *dung* is ‘skubalon.’ It means *a pile of manure*. Total waste; fit for destruction! The home of worms and maggots. That’s how he viewed his whole entire past life, and that’s how we must also view our lives, brethren, *that we my win Christ!*

Verse 9: “And that I may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which originates and is solely derived from a rigid law structure (Judaism); but instead that I be found having the righteousness (that right standing with God) originating and emanating from God, rooted in the faith.” That’s where it is all at. Brethren, this is so tremendous!

In part 5 of this series, we will really amplify the positive part concerning the resurrection from the dead and attaining and growing in Christian character.

Look at what was in his heart and mind and burning in his brain, v 10: “Even to know, understand and discern Him (Christ). and the miraculous power, majesty and omnipotence of His resurrection, and the participation, fellowship and partnership of His suffering and passion (of His crucifixion)...”

Paul was saying, ‘I can even count anything unless I know that I have participated even in the sufferings of Christ.

“...being conformed to (so wholly spiritually identified with, as to be assimilated into) His very own death” (v 10). That’s how much Paul wanted Jesus Christ. That’s how much we need to want Jesus Christ and the very plan of God.

Verse 11: “If by any possible means I may attain and arrive at the resurrection of the dead.” Brethren, what is the great and wonderful thing that we are going to have an opportunity to do? *We are going to rule and reign with Jesus Christ to bring this world the Truth of God!* And to provide, through the crucifixion, sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus, this same salvation for all humankind. That’s why Paul said that he was doing everything possible to attain to that.

Verse 12: “Not that at this time I have already attained, or that I have it within my grasp, or that I have already been perfected (that perfect growth in Christian character and enlightenment)... [he didn’t count that] ...but I am pursuing, pressing forward and striving for that achievement, that I also may obtain and lay hold of that perfection for the resurrection: and for this same cause and reason I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.”

Verse 13: “Brethren, I am not regarding or considering myself as having achieved, or having laid hold on, or having completely within my grasp (the assurance of the resurrection); but this one thing, the primary thing, I am doing; forgetting those things which are behind, in the past; I am stretching out, reaching forward to the things which are ahead, I am pursuing, struggling to attain and straining to achieve the goal and prize, that crown of victory of the high, eminent calling of God in Christ Jesus” (vs 13-14).

Scriptures in Philippians from *The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Philippians, An Inspirational Bible Study; A New Expanded Amplified Translation* by Fred R. Coulter

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Philippians 3:1-8
- 2) Titus 1:9-11
- 3) 1 John 2:18-29
- 4) Galatians 1:1-14
- 5) Galatians 5:5-16
- 6) Deuteronomy 10:12-22
- 7) Colossians 2:6-12
- 8) Romans 6:1-7
- 9) Romans 2:25-29

10) Philippians 3:2-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: Galatians 2

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *Who is Jesus?*

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