



TIC Connect Group Discussion Guide

18-24 August 2019 | Philippians 3:1-15

The Message. Find our joy and righteousness only in Jesus Christ.

Context. After a brief introduction and a section devoted to Paul’s thanksgiving and prayer for the church (1:1-11), the apostle begins ... emphasizing humility and unity in the face of opposition from without and division from within (1:12-2:18). Then, in 3:1-4:1, ... [b]ecause certain Judaizers had been in contact with the church, the apostle focuses on true righteousness in contrast to false, law-based righteousness. In 3:1-16 he uses his own life as a model of what true righteousness is and how it is achieved. In 3:17-4:1 he applies this message to the Philippian church. (Bible.org).

Concept. Circumcision in the Old Testament was ... an outward sign of being set apart from the sinful world ... In itself, circumcision brought no redeeming value. It did not save, nor did it sanctify. It was a picture of what must take place in the heart ... a cutting of the sinful heart that is hardened by sin. (Lawson).

Observation & Meaning

1. In 3:1, Paul calls the Philippians to “rejoice in the Lord”. In 3:2. He calls them to look out for the dogs. Who are the “dogs”? In what ways do they steal joy?
2. What are the things that Paul could have found his righteousness on?
 - a. As to the flesh (3:4b-5):
 - i. _____;
 - ii. _____;
 - iii. _____;
 - iv. _____.
 - b. As to the law (3:5b): _____.
 - c. As to zeal (3:6) : _____.
 - d. As to righteousness under the law (3:6): _____.
3. Why does Paul highlight these specific facts about himself?
4. Observe the reasons of the dramatic shift in Paul’s worldview.

Verse	Then	Now	Reasons
3:7	whatever gain	loss	
3:8a	everything	loss	

3:8b-11	all things	rubbish	1. _____ (3:8b-9).
			2. _____ (3:10).
			3. _____ (3:11).

5. Read 3:12. Is life as a Christian equal perfection? Why or why not?
6. Read 3:13-14. What kind of attitude does Paul have in living his Christian life?
7. What is one mark of Christian maturity does Paul suggest in 3:15? Why?

Application

8. ECF. What are the things of the flesh we are prone to find our righteousness in?
9. What are the things we are still hesitant to lose or count as rubbish for Christ?
10. "Good works ... justify our faith, though not our persons" (Whitefield). How is this a helpful distinction? What errors does it guard against?
11. How would we explain our own conversion in a minute?
12. How would we explain life as a Christian in one or two sentences?
13. Christ-Centeredness. What difference does Christ make in our lives?

Insight

Benjamin (3:5). Benjamin tribe gave Israel her first king, Saul (1 Sam. 9:1-2). It aligned itself with faithful Judah when Israel divided into two nations at the time of Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:21). It had the city of Jerusalem within its boundaries (Judges 1:21). (Guzik).

Hebrew of the Hebrews (3:5). This contrasted Paul with the Jews who embraced Greek culture as it spread through the Mediterranean. In that time, many Jews became ashamed of their Jewishness and tried to live and act as much like Greeks as they could. (Guzik).

Resources

Guzik, David. *Philippians*. Enduring Word Commentary. Enduring Word Media, 2012.

Herrick, Greg. "... The Judaizers and Paul (Philippians 3:1-8)." Bible.org. <https://bible.org/seriespage/true-righteousness-part-i---study-contrasts-judaizers-and-paul-philippians-31-8> (accessed on Aug 13, 2019).

Lawson, Steven. *Philippians For You: Shine with joy as you live by faith* (God's Word For You Book 18). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

"Philippians 3:2-16 Study." Cru. <https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/bible-studies/philippians-life-worthy-of-gospel/5.html> (accessed on Aug 14, 2019).