

Week #6 - Rejoicing in Salvation

Philippians 3:1-4:1

Weekly Study Guide:

Day 1	Read and Copy	Read and copy Philippians 3:1-4:1 in your own handwriting.
Day 2	Observe and Ponder	<p>Re-read the Philippians passage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a note of what the passage tells us about God in your margins.• Make at least three observations from the text, write in the margin of your paper one question you might have in response to it.• Doodle or draw in your margins a picture to help you remember a concept from the passage this week (ex. covenant, resume, accounts/ledgers, etc.) <p>Re-read the Philippians passage and write a one-sentence summary of the passage at the bottom of your handwritten page.</p>
Day 3	Practice and Pray	<p>Take time to answer the discussion questions provided to prepare for your group time on Thursday.</p> <p>In your prayer time, consider starting with one thing to praise our God for that you learned about Him in this chapter.</p>

For Discussion:

1. Community Builder: Paul begins this week's section with the reminder to rejoice in the Lord. What is one thing for which you rejoice in the Lord this week?

2. Paul reiterates to the Philippians that it is no trouble for him to write these things about rejoicing in the Lord to them and specifically cautions them to watch out or beware of three groups of people who could diminish their joy (3:2). Who are the Philippians to beware of? Match the 3 groups of people listed with the description on the right.
 1. _____ A. A description of the "good works" people who are insisting on righteousness through works that distract from good and produce evil.
 2. _____ B. A derogatory term used by the Jews for the Gentiles, who they considered dirty. Paul flips the term back on the Jewish legalists who are insisting on ethnic purity through the law.
 3. _____ C. A description of the Jewish legalists who require that Gentiles first be circumcised and become Jewish before they can become Christians.

3. One reason that Paul cautions the Philippians against these three groups of people is that they unduly place burden on the new Christians, insisting that their salvation comes from Jesus *and* their works, specifically that of circumcision. **Read Genesis 17:1 -14.** Why was circumcision so important to the Jewish religious leaders? What was circumcision a sign of?

4. As we read in the Genesis passage, circumcision was a sign of the covenant that God made with His people to set them apart from those around them and remind them to whom they belonged. It is no wonder that it was hard for Jewish leaders to consider those who followed Christ as the new circumcision. **Read Hebrews 8:6-13 and Hebrews 9:11-15** (If you have time read all of chapters Hebrews 8-10) and make note of how this new covenant was put into place and by whom.

5. When Paul calls the believers the new circumcision, he is not talking about the physical act attached to the old covenant, but their worship of God in the Spirit (not the flesh) and glory in Christ Jesus (not their ancestry). As followers of Christ in this new covenant, we are given two signs as reminders of our salvation to remember to whom we belong and who we follow. What are the ways we as New Testament believers are called to remember the covenant we have with Christ? **Hint: Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 and Colossians 2:9-13.**

6. What an amazing gift it is to have received salvation into the new covenant with Christ. Take a minute and read through the “Roman Road” passages below that walk us through the story of our salvation, noting what each tells us about ourselves in light of our Savior.
 - Romans 6:23

 - Romans 3:23

 - Romans 5:8

 - Romans 8:1

 - Romans 10:9-10, 13

7. We read in Philippians 3:7-11 that Paul considers the gift of salvation in Christ worth more than anything on his stellar earthly resume. What kind of things would you have on your earthly resume? How do you view your salvation in Christ in contrast to your resume?

8. Salvation for Paul (and for us) is more than just assurance that we will not have to suffer in hell. It is the joy of knowing Jesus, being with Him, and suffering with Him, too. We are together with Christ on the mission to which He has called us. According to 3:12-14, how are we supposed to live out this salvation we have been given? What does Paul's use of this analogy teach us about the nature and worth of our salvation?

Put it into Practice:

9. Colossians 4:2-6 tells us that we should be ready to share the message of Jesus with grace and truth to those who have not heard. Take a few minutes to write out a short summary of how you would explain the need to others for and joy of the salvation that you have in Jesus.

10. Taking time to look back over Philippians 3:1-4:1, make note of what you learned about the character of God this week. Given the truth you know about His character, what is one way that truth will change the way you live this week? If you are comfortable, share this with your group to encourage one another and to help hold one another accountable to living in that way this week.

Prayer:

One of the gifts that we have that we can give one another is to hold each other up in prayer. Record ways that you can be praying for your sisters this week, and then pray for them this week.
