

Philippians 3:1-11 Learn to Count

Today we are going to talk about Spiritual confidence!

A) Because Where your confidence lies – is going to affect the way that you live! – Whole Approach

B) Example: Kid learning to Swim – Dad would stand at the edge of the pool- Jump – “catch you – not let you go under”

1) Jump - So fun – back up farther and farther – pretty soon I was going under – he HAD ME

C) High School and college Baseball – I loved hitting against a pitcher who threw hard

1) 90 mph fastball – no problem – I would crush those guys – the harder they threw the more confident I was

D) Car - I don't pray when I get into my car each morning that it is going to start – MAYBE YOU DO

1) Confident in our cars – take care of them – they last

Here are a few things I am not confident in!

A) Music – hand me a guitar – I don't know what to do with it

B) Electricity – Scares me to death – There are things I will mess with at my house –

1) Electricity isn't one of them

C) Car problems – Unless basic – I am lost – I am not a car guy!

D) The things we are not confident in – we tend to stay away from

1) Run the other way!

The principle applies spiritually as well –

A) Having your confidence in the right place is a crucial to your spiritual success!

B) As we come to Chapter 3 today – Paul is going to paint a vivid picture of Spiritual confidence

C) Where it should be and where it shouldn't be

Note 5 things:

#1 A Reminder - #2 A Warning # 3 Affirmation
#4 A Testimony - #5 A Declaration

#1 A Reminder

V.1 Finally, {Futhermore my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.

A) Repetition is good for you – Stir up your minds by way of reminder

B) Theme is having Joy even in Difficult situations – Reminder – Rejoice in the Lord That is they Key

C) Rejoicing in Jesus – not rejoicing in ourselves

1) We are so awesome

D) Not Rejoicing in our circumstances – circumstances Change

1) Rejoice in the Lord – He doesn't Change – He loves you – he saved you – He is for you!

E) Rejoice in the Lord – Destiny in Him

1) Going to Heaven – were Hell

#2 A Warning: Paul gives a warning against those who might try to steal our Joy! V.2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

A) Beware 3X - Paul is using strong language – get our attention

B) Sometimes we ignore the warnings – Beware of Dog!

1) Ignore – Pass through anyway – How scary can it be

C) Beware: Speed - Patrolled by aircraft – I don't see any planes

I read about a Principal at a middle school who was having a problem – girls lip stick on the bathroom mirrors

A) They would go into the bathroom – put on lipstick and then kiss the mirror – lipstick Mark

B) He addressed the problem at an assembly – asked that it would stop – hassle – Janitors were getting upset –

C) The girls were giggling and completely ignored his request – the Mirror kissing continued

1) More Drastic approach – He gathered the girls he believed to be the biggest culprits –

D) Parading them into the bathroom with the Janitor – there in the bathroom was a mirror full of lipstick kiss marks

I want to show you what a hassle this is to clean – Looked at the janitor and said – go ahead Bill

A) Bill took his long squeegee and dipped it into the toilet – and proceeded to wipe the mirror with it

B) Problem solved! That little shock value – fixed the problem

C) Paul is doing the same thing here: Little Shock approach when he says beware 3 X 2 **Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!**

Problem: There were these guys known as the Judaizers who were creeping into the church –

A) spreading a false message.

B) Philippi was a gentile region – Almost seemed like these Judaizers followed Paul they show up in almost every gentile city

1) after Paul has started a church

C) These guys came with this message: Great that you believe in Jesus

1) but if you really want to be a Christian you need to also convert to Judaism – by being circumcised –
2) sign to Abraham

D) Circumcision was not common in that culture – God's mark on the Jews

1) Today we know the health benefits of it – God did too

E) But Circumcision was an outward mark that was meant to symbolize an inward reality.

1) **Symbolized the cutting away of the flesh** – and the intent to focus on Spiritual things and not Fleshly things

So these Judaizers were infiltrating these gentile churches with these message:

A) You need to add circumcision to your faith

B) Listen: Any message that tells you – that you need to add something to you believing in Jesus is wrong

C) Jesus – It is finished – nothing we can add to it that is going to make it better!

D) Notice the words that Paul uses to describe these guys

Beware Dogs: Not fido – not pets –

A) Dogs were Wild scavengers who steal chickens - attacked your kids or your farm animals

Evil workers: Workers – good right need more

A) Evil workers - Legalist might think their work is good –

B) They might sincerely mean well – but it has an evil affect **if it undermines the finished work of Jesus**

C) Every form of legalism does that!

1) It gets you to put your confidence in your work instead of the work of Jesus

D) Beware of Dog – Beware of Evil workers

Beware of The Mutilation:

A) This is sort of a play on words – the physical act of circumcision to some seemed like mutilating a child

B) Paul is painting a picture here of what legalism does to true faith it mutilates it

1) It destroys it and leaves it you deformed and marred

C) Anything that puts a confidence in the outward actions – mutilates or destroys genuine faith

1) It robs you of your joy – puts you on the performance treadmill

D) Leaves you - Forever answering the question – AM I doing enough – have I done enough

E) Warning- Beware of legalism – Joy stealer

#3 Affirmation

3 For we are the circumcision, {translate this because it is implied we are the true circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

A) Here is what Paul is saying; **Followers of Jesus spiritually are the true circumcision**

B) It is not about a meaningless outward mark –
1) It is the inward mark that counts – His spirit in our hearts

C) In fact in Romans Chapter 2 – Paul puts it this way that the true circumcision is a work of the heart by the Spirit

1) Not following some written code

Christianity is Not RELIGION – Relationship

A) It is a work that God starts on the inside that affects the outside.

B) This is what Paul means when he says – **We are the true circumcision – who worship God in the Spirit**

1) In the spirit = inward as opposed to the flesh – outward

C) In the spirit means – real – authentic

D) John 4 Women at the well – God is spirit and those who worship – spirit and in truth

In spirit = in sincerity – Real authentic

A) Listen you can stand in here – Sing – I surrender all – go home sleep with girlfriend – not authentic

B) Outward – looks fine – into it

1) But Actions reveal the heart

C) Sing the songs at church on Sunday – live like Hell M-F – not authentic

See when worship is authentic it comes from the heart –

A) What is happening on the inside affects how we live on the outside.

B) Example: I can say I love my wife – that I have a deep love for her in my heart!

1) I am committed to her! FOREVER

C) THIS RING – is an outward symbol of my love and commitment

D) But the sincerity of my love and commitment is going to be evidenced in the way that I treat her.

1) Do I treat her in a way that shows how much I love her and how committed I am to her.

E) That is what Paul is driving at here: The true Circumcision

1) – the true mark that we belong to Jesus is inward – is going to be evidenced by our outward actions

True circumcision Those who are authentic – rejoice in Christ Jesus –

A) that would be better translated – who brag on or boast about JESUS

B) Talking about People who are all about Jesus

1) Brag on him – always ready to talk about how AWESOME Jesus is!

I love to brag about my Kids – so proud of them! – Over board

A) Aaron great husband - his many gifts – doors that God has opened for him – his recent big step of faith

B) Amy such a hard worker – a great mommy and wife

C) Amanda – so creative – Photography – awesome wife

You are probably the same way about your kids or your wife or the things you are excited about in life.

A) But is Jesus at the top of the list? – When is the last time you bragged to someone about JESUS

B) Don't **brag about the church** – If you love it here – awesome – but let's brag about Jesus

C) What has He done for you! – Post it – **Brag about Jesus on social media this week.**

What is He doing in you right now – Someone says – how are you doing? –

A) Tell them about what Jesus is doing!

B) Doing well – Jesus is teaching me this right now something

C) He is helping me and my wife really get along –

1) He helped me with this project at work

D) Jesus needs to be a part of our daily conversation the way we would talk about anyone or anything else

So We are the true circumcision – who worship God in Spirit – who boast in Jesus – and who have no confidence in the flesh

A) This is at the crux of Paul's message- Where does your confidence lie?

B) Where your confidence lies is going to affect the way you approach your spiritual life

1) If your confidence is in the flesh – meaning your performance

C) you are going to always be trying to do more

1) You are going to forever be on the performance treadmill trying to do things to earn God's favor

D) The problem is you are going to always be wondering – Have I done enough? doing enough?

E) Am I reading enough – Am I praying enough – Am I witnessing enough – How much is enough?

1) That is exactly where Paul found himself before coming to Christ

#4 A Testimony

A) Paul had quite the resume for having confidence in the flesh/

4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, {Bible said to of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, {prominent tribe – King Saul a Hebrew of the Hebrews; {both parents 100% - not like the Hellenistic Jews – part greek and part Jewish – No 100% pure – concerning the law, a Pharisee; {conservative – Saducees were liberal 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; {talk Zeal concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. {Nobody could accuse me of anything!

B) That is quite a resume for the flesh – but the problem is –

1) none of that Gave Paul the assurance that he was right with God!

C) None of that filled his heart with Joy!

And Paul is not alone: People today still put confidence in fleshly performance –

A) Church attendance – Baptism- Christian school Born in America – confirmed

Ever thought like this: – I went to church ever Sunday this month –

A) Up to date in my reading plan – I tithed this month - surely God is going to bless me.

B) God just has to answer my prayer – I have been doing all the right things

1) That is putting your confidence in the flesh –

C) God owes you something because you are doing the right things

Now Bible reading – prayer – going to Church – tithing are all things that will benefit you spiritually

A) Prayer, Bible study and going to church will help you grow in your relationship with God

B) Prayer will help you grow in your dependency upon God as you are actively inviting him to take part in every area of your life

C) Tithing will increase your faith in God as well as your dependency upon him for provision

But none of those things are the basis of your relationship with God

A) they don't bring you into favor with God

B) Your standing with God as being a person who is blessed – If based on What Jesus did –

1) He paid the price – He did the work

C) Your standing if based on who you are in Christ

1) So Paul says: if anyone..... confidence in the flesh – me

D) But my confidence is not in my flesh but in the finished work of Jesus –

1) and my relationship with Him

E) So here is how Paul's confidence was going to affect the way he lived

1) Confidence affects the way we approach life

#5 His Declaration

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, NLT the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Because His confidence was no longer in his flesh – he did this: But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

A) Profit and loss statement – things I used to view as asset- gains now in the loss column

Loss Column

- His pedigree
- His religious training
- His Jewish heritage
- His religious zeal
- His religious works

A) His confidence for right standing with God was no longer placed in those things

B) He counted them as Loss

Counted is past tense:

A) So 30 yrs ago – I met Jesus – I counted all of what I used to trust in as loss – because I had Jesus

B) 8 Yet indeed I also count Count – present tense all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge 1) the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

C) Counted it lost – still counts it loss – why?

1) The flesh rears its ugly head

D) His flesh continued to try and get him to place his confidence in those things.

1) So I continue to **COUNT THEM AS LOSS**

E) Then just so we don't miss the point – Paul says

I Count as rubbish – Garbage

1) Actually stronger – **Dung in the KJV** – animal excrement -

Rubbish Garbage – One man's trash is another man's treasure!

1) You might want to get rid of it but someone else thinks it is valuable

C) No one wants your COW DUNG

1) NO one wants your Camel Dung

D) All my stuff – my pedigree – my religiosity – this is how I view it now!

How do you view Yours?

A) Still holding on to that – still confident in your performance

B) Filthy rags – Menstrual clothes

1) Gross

C) That is how God wants us to view – Human performance as it relates to righteousness

D) So my Pedigree? my religiosity Loss Column

1) So that I may gain Christ

Gain Column

- V.9 I may be found in Christ – His righteousness

A) Faith in Jesus – God places you in his son Covered in his righteousness – FAVOR!

Gain Column

- V.9 I may be found in Christ – His righteousness
- To Know Him and the Power of His Resurrection

Paul is saying I spent years trying to please God in my own energy- exhausting!!!

A) Learning now to walk in the Power that comes from Jesus – My Resurrected Lord

B) Note this: Paul is writing this after 30 yrs of following Jesus

C) I want to Gain Christ – I want to know Him!
1) Wait – After 30 yrs don't you already have him
Don't you already Know Him?

Jesus – Finished work

Gain Christ – Found in him

D) Yes but there is so much of Him to Know!
1) Just scratching the surface.

His power

His love

Gain Column

- V.9 I may be found in Christ – His righteousness
- To Know Him and the Power of His Resurrection
- To know Him in the fellowship of his suffering

Boast in Jesus today!

A) Paul was discovering the secret of the Crucified life.

B) Fellowship of his Suffering

1) Camaraderie - connectedness

C) But I think this statement really refers back to the example that Paul gave of Jesus in Ch. 2

D) Let this mind be in you..... Though equal with God – He lowered himself – became a servant
1) Became obedient – unto death – the cross

E) Therefore – God has highly exalted him

When Paul says that I may know him the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

A) I think he is referring primarily to what he was discovering about the crucified life

B) The more Paul died to his self and placed his confidence in Christ –

1) the more he discovered of the REZ Power of Jesus working in Him

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. ²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain.” Galatians 2:20

Where is your confidence?