

**Philippians Chapter 3**  
**Part 2**  
**'Joy in spite of things'**

We ended our last study looking at how Paul had changed his value system immediately he met with Jesus and we looked at what things could possibly be holding us right now, together with any works of the flesh that we were using to gain our own righteousness, rather than the righteousness that is by faith.

In this study we are going to look at the **righteousness of faith** which we find in -

**Philippians 3:7-11** The Message

*<sup>7-9</sup>The very credentials these people are waving around as something special, I'm tearing up and throwing out with the trash—along with everything else I used to take credit for. And why? Because of Christ. Yes, all the things I once thought were so important are gone from my life. Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master, firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant—dog dung. I've dumped it all in the trash so that I could embrace Christ and be embraced by him. I didn't want some petty, inferior brand of righteousness that comes from keeping a list of rules when I could get the robust kind that comes from trusting Christ—God's righteousness.*

*<sup>10-11</sup>I gave up all that inferior stuff so I could know Christ personally, experience his resurrection power, be a partner in his suffering, and go all the way with him to death itself. If there was any way to get in on the resurrection from the dead, I wanted to do it.'*

Dog dung. Couldn't be much stronger – except in the Old King James Version where it doesn't mince matters and says '*I count it all dung*'.

So everything we put so much store by God is not impressed with is the message. And those are the very 'things' that manage to trip us up so often. Struggling to keep up at school then university, trying to 'keep up with the Jones's' as we used to say. All rubbish, dog dung. God just isn't interested in our efforts, certificates and merits. He looks on our heart. When we received Jesus as our Lord and Saviour we received His righteousness in place of all our unrighteousness – what an exchange!

When Paul met Jesus on the Damascus Road -

**Acts 9**

Paul became a believer, a child of God. It was instantaneous – a miracle of Grace – the kind of miracle that still takes place today whenever sinners admit their need and turn to Jesus the Saviour in faith.

When Paul met Jesus he realised how futile his good works had been and how sinful were his claims of righteousness. A wonderful transaction took place. Paul certainly lost some things, but he gained much more than he lost.

What exactly were Paul's losses? He had a great reputation as a scholar and a religious leader – those were the first things to go.

**Acts 26:24 AMP**

*'And as he thus proceeded with his defence, Festus called out loudly, Paul, you are mad! Your great learning is driving you insane!'*

As we saw previously he was also proud of his Jewish heritage and his religious achievements. All these things were valuable to him, and he could profit from them. He had many friends who admired his zeal, but he measured those treasures against what Jesus had to offer and realised all he held dear was nothing more than rubbish compared to what he had in Jesus.

Paul's own treasury brought him certain things, but they did not bring glory to God.

It did not mean that Paul *rejected* his rich heritage as a Jew. In fact if you read the progress of Paul's life through the book of Acts, you will find that both being Jewish and a Roman citizen meant something to him, but it was just that being a Christian meant **more**.

We have looked quite extensively at Paul's losses, so what were Paul's gains?

Remember Jim Elliott's words, *'He is no fool who gives that which he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose'*. This was what Paul experienced, he lost his religion and his reputation, but he gained far more than he lost.

So what *exactly* did he gain?

Firstly, he gained a knowledge of Jesus.

**Philippians 3:8**

This means much more than knowledge **about** Jesus: Paul had an historical knowledge of Jesus before he was saved. To know Jesus means to have a **personal** relationship with Him.

**John 17:3 AMP**

*'And this is eternal life: [it means] to know (to perceive, recognize, become acquainted with, and understand) You, the only true and real God, and [likewise] to know Him, Jesus [as the] Christ (the Anointed One, the Messiah), Whom You have sent.'*

Job says it somewhat more quaintly in the King James Version –

**Job 22:21 King James Version**

*'Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.'*

The second thing Paul gained was the righteousness of Jesus –

### **Philippians 3:9**

Righteousness was the great goal of Paul's life but it was a self-righteousness, a works righteousness, his own effort, but when he was saved he lost his own righteousness and was given the righteousness of Christ. The technical word for gaining the righteousness of Jesus is – imputation. Paul's account was **credited** with Jesus' righteousness.

### **Romans 4:1-8 NIV**

#### **Abraham Justified by Faith**

*<sup>1</sup>What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? <sup>2</sup>If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. <sup>3</sup>What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."*

*<sup>4</sup>Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. <sup>5</sup>However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. <sup>6</sup>David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:*

*<sup>7</sup>"Blessed are they  
whose transgressions are forgiven,  
whose sins are covered.  
<sup>8</sup>Blessed is the man  
whose sin the Lord will never count against him."*

So imputation means to put on someone's account. What a wonderful thing this is if we can truly grasp it. All the righteousness that is Jesus' is credited to us to make us accepted in the Beloved. Verses 7 and 8 contain great and precious promises for us, we are blessed because our sins are not only covered, but washed away with the precious blood of Jesus, and our sin, by His grace, will never be counted against us. What a glorious thought!

Paul's spiritual bank account stood at zero, just like ours, but Jesus spiritual bank was full and the righteousness of Jesus was credited to Paul's account, just as it is to ours.

The third thing Paul received was the fellowship of Jesus.

### **Philippians 3:10-11**

When Paul became a believer it was not the end for him, but the beginning. His experience of Jesus was so tremendous it changed his life.

### **Galatians 2:20**

### **Ephesians 1:15-23**

### **Ephesians 3:13-21**

Also Paul's experience of Jesus meant he had suffering, but Paul knew it was a privilege to suffer for Jesus.

### **Philippians 1:29-30**

Suffering had been part of Paul's experience from the beginning.

### **Acts 9:16**

As we grow in our knowledge of Jesus and our experience of his power, we will come under the attack of the enemy. Yet Paul gained more than he lost; Paul had the spiritual mind, he looked at the things of the earth from heaven's viewpoint.

People who live just for things are never happy because they are always protecting their things and worrying in case they lose them. Not so the believer, with the spiritual mind, their treasure is in heaven and it can never be lost, stolen or rendered valueless.

Let our decision this day be to set our affections on things above and not on the earth beneath, or as the Contemporary English Version puts it –

### **Colossians 3 Contemporary English Version**

*'<sup>1</sup>You have been raised to life with Christ. Now set your heart on what is in heaven, where Christ rules at God's right side. <sup>2</sup>Think about what is up there, not about what is here on earth. <sup>3</sup>You died, which means that your life is hidden with Christ, who sits beside God. <sup>4</sup>Christ gives meaning to your life, and when he appears, you will also appear with him in glory.'*

What a future we have in store for us - let's end this session by personalising Paul's prayer which we found in Philippians 1:9 – 11 -

*'This is my prayer: that my love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that I may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.'* Amen.

