



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Short Study 070: Philippians Study 5 Pressing on in Christ

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Read Philippians 3:1-14

Introduction: Faced with his work for the Gospel being undermined by false teachers, Paul sets forth his own credentials and emphasises the overwhelming value of knowing Christ.

v1 Rejoice in the Lord. Why in the Lord?

Repetition. What is the value of repetition?

v2 Three disapproving descriptions of those who try to deny Christians the freedoms they have in Christ:

dogs. In Paul's time these were wild, not loveable pets. Peter too refers to false prophets as dogs'. (See 2 Pet 2:22). To what were the false teachers in Paul's time returning?

evil-doers. It is evil to take away what Christ has given believers at great cost to Himself.

mutilators. (NJKV 'the mutilation' is a literal translation of the Greek, but the meaning is those that *do* the mutilation – 'the mutilators'.) What did circumcision represent and why was Paul so opposed to it?

v3 Three signs of 'real circumcision':

Worship God in the Spirit

See John 4:24. What do think this means?

Rejoice in Jesus Christ

The Jews rejoiced in belonging to Israel;
Christians rejoice in belonging to Christ

Have no confidence in the flesh Hoping to win God's forgiveness by keeping numerous rules

vs 4-8 What Paul threw away to follow Christ, because following Christ was far better. Can you identify them in these 3 verses?

v9 True righteousness. 'Righteousness' is being right with God. That is granted by God's grace, not by trying to earn His favour. How important, then, is behaving rightly?

v 10 Know is not head knowledge but personal **experience**.

To *know Christ* is to experience intimate relationship with Him. How can we do this?

to know *the power of His resurrection* is to experience the same power that raised Jesus from His death.

To know *the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death* is to experience the same sort of self-sacrifice as Christ, willing to suffer and even to die for obedience to God. Read and consider Rom 6:4-11; Phil 1:29; Matt 16:24 and Col 1:24.

vs 11-14 If by any means I might attain to the resurrection from the dead. Paul knew he would be resurrected anyway (1 Cor 15) but he desired to reach a standard of Christlikeness that would make him a worthy candidate for resurrection.

To think about: How well do I 'know' Christ, in the light of verse 10?

To dig deeper: Read what commentaries you can find on these verses.