


# Philippians 3

FOR TO ME  
TO LIVE IS  
CHRIST,

AND TO  
**DIE**  
IS GAIN.

PHILIPPIANS 1:21





# Opening Questions

- What is the goal of every Christian?
- What does it mean to be a citizen of heaven?

---

- Themes

- Fellowship
- Unity
- Love
- Confidence
- Hope
- Joy in difficult circumstances





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

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no 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, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

**V1: Why could Paul sum up the previous section by directing the Philippians to “rejoice in the Lord”?**

- This is the first addition of “in the Lord.” He is the source of all joy, no matter what circumstances we are going through, proper understanding of our relationship to Jesus and His sovereignty must drive our joy.

**V2: What things does Paul find very important to re-enforce?**

- Dogs – Packs of Jews with false motives, legalists out for self gain
- Evil workers – Drawing attention away from the work of Christ and to self legalism
- Mutilation – Becoming Jewish (extreme cutting mocked as a pagan practice) as an entrance to Christianity

**V3: What does being of the circumcision mean?**

- True Christians are of a clean heart, the true circumcision

**V3: What are the indicators of those “in the circumcision”?**

- Worship God in the Spirit – To render respectful service, not legalism
- Rejoicing in Christ Jesus – To “boast with exultant joy.”
- No confidence in the flesh – Not trusting in our human abilities

**V4: What qualifications did Paul have to make this determination?**

- He was the “Pharisee of The Pharisees” and perfect from a Jewish perspective
- His qualifications weren't just knowledge, or Jewish theology, it was action, including persecuting the church
- If any Jew could attain salvation through their works, Paul was saying it was him

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, 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.

**V7: What did Paul attribute his zeal towards salvation?**

- The highly-educated Paul uses accounting terms to say accomplishments many accounted financially as gain were actually worthless (the word is dung) or even damning. See Matt 13:45-46

**V8: What is "the knowledge of Christ" used by Paul here?**

- This phrase in Greek indicates to know beyond knowledge, like personally or experientially

**V9: What was Paul's true desire?**

- To be found in Christ through faith
- To know Christ intimately
- To have fellowship with Christ through His sufferings

**V9: How does Paul recon faith?**

- Not salvation from his works (from the law)
- Total reliance, dependence, and trust in Christ for salvation

**V10: What is the power of the resurrection?** (answers by David Guzik)

- Evidencing power. It is the evidence and seal that everything Jesus did and said was true.
- Justifying power. It is the receipt and proof that the sacrifice of the cross was accepted as payment in full.
- Life-giving power. It means that those who are connected with Jesus Christ receive the same resurrection life.
- Consoling and comforting power. It promises that our friends and loved ones who are dead in Christ live with Him.

**V10: What is fellowship with Christ's sufferings?**

- Comfort in communion with Jesus in our sufferings, knowing how much more He suffered for our behalf, including death

**V11: How does Paul expect to have resurrection from the dead?**

- "By any means" – However God chooses, Paul trusted and longed for his resurrection "from the corpses." Thought to be the rapture

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

**V12: What process is Paul talking about?**

- The sanctification process or becoming more Christ-like.
- Pressing – Like a “running for your life” in Greek

**V13: How should we think about our past?**

- Like a competitive runner, it slows us down to look behind us
- Focusing on the past is not fruitful (Luke 9:62)

**V14: What is the prize?**

- The call itself, working with God to do His work

**V15: Was Paul going to point out who was deficient in pressing towards the goal?**

- No, mature Christians should have the attitude (mind) of pursuing the prize
- If a Christian doesn't think that's the goal, God will reveal the truth to them

**V16: What are the commands in v16?**

- A lack of understanding didn't change the fact that we are all to act in unison, with the same unity of purpose and execution



17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. – 1 John 3:2

**V17: If Paul knew of his sinfulness and imperfections, why would he say to walk like him?**

- To see how we approach the truth, imperfections, and the goal of sanctification (Christlikeness)

**V17: Was Paul the only person to pattern?**

- No, Paul desired the Philippians to mimic others that also walked like him

**V18: Who were the enemies Paul was talking about?**

- Those that were infiltrating the church and teaching false doctrines
- Likely those that were not teaching the constant reaching to become more like Christ

**V19: Who was this (likely)?**

- Either Jews – God's were their bellies (dietary laws) or good works
- Gnostics – Teaching antinomianism, or discarding of moral law

**V20: What does citizenship in heaven mean?**

- Believers home - John 14:2, 3
- Where our names are registered - Luke 10:20
- Where our inheritance awaits - 1 Pet. 1:4
- Where we will reunite with other believers - Heb. 12:23
- Where we belong to the kingdom under the rule of our heavenly King
- Obeying heaven's laws - 1 Pet. 2:11
- Eagerly await His return – Rom 8:23

**V21: What happens after our death or rapture?**

- Our bodies will be transformed in a body suitable for eternity, like Christ's – 1 John 3:2

# The Christian's Riches

1 Corinthians/ 2: Isa 64/65 - Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered the heart of man, The things which God has prepared for those who love Him

John 3:16 - Life that will never end

John 4:14 - A spring of spiritual water that will never dry up

John 6: 37, 39 - A gift that will never be lost

Romans 8: 39 - a love from which he can never be separated

Romans 11: 29 - a calling that will never be revoked

2 Timothy 2: 19 - a foundation that will never be destroyed

1 Peter 1: 4- 5 - An inheritance that will never diminish



# Next Up

---

Philippians 4





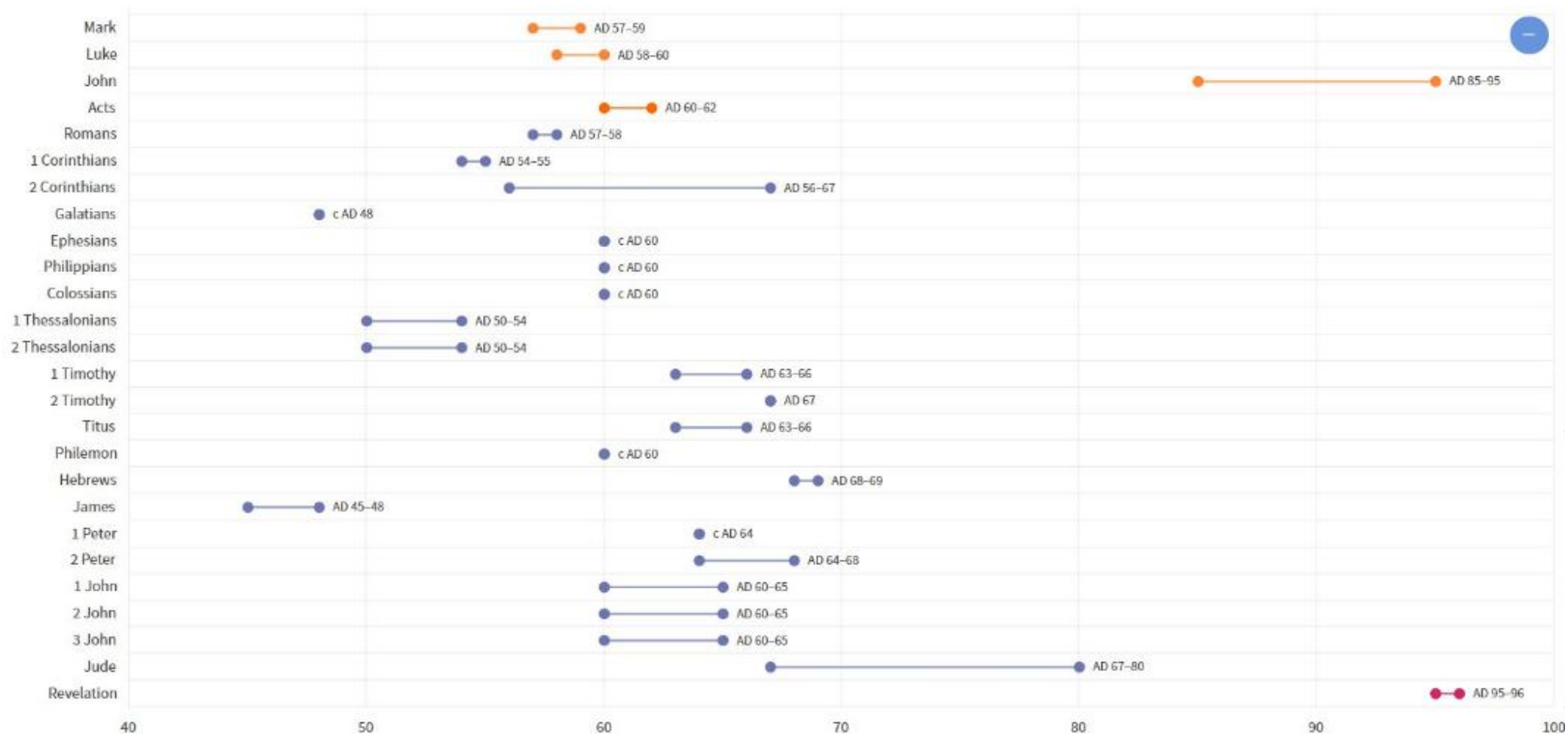
## Co-writer – Apostle Paul

- Born as Saul in Tarsus (on the southern coast of modern-day Turkey). Likely borne about the same time as Jesus.
- Schooled as a Pharisee under the Jerusalem religious famous Gamaliel.
- Became a traveling missionary and preacher for the early church; renamed Paul.
- Worked as an artisan who made tents – maybe subcomponents
- Was imprisoned multiple times by the Roman authorities for his religious agitation.
- Believed to have co-written 6 letters to the churches.
- Died sometime between AD 62–64; Paul, believed to be in Rome.





- **AD 33 Damascus – Direct conversion**
- **AD 33-36 Arabia – Receiving direct revelation from the Lord (Gal 1)**
- **3 missionary journeys to Asia minor**
- **AD ~55-60 Wrote Philippians on first imprisonment in Rome**
- **One of 4 Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians)**





- **Philippians – Joy in Christ**