

14. TRUE AND FALSE CHRISTIANS: **Philippians 3:1-3** by Brett Baggett on Sunday, August 30th, 2020

Q. Are you truly a Christian? I can ask this same question in a variety of ways. **Q.** Are you *in* Christ? **Q.** Have you been born again? **Q.** Has you repented of your sin and trusted in Jesus Christ alone? **Q.** When you die, will you be accepted by Jesus into heaven or will you be cast into hell to pay for your sin? **A. Hear me: you can KNOW. You can have assurance of your salvation—assurance that you are forgiven and are destined for Jesus’ loving presence.** (John -> 1 John)

That brings us to our passage of Scripture. THEME: “Marks of true Christians, along with marks of false Christians that must be watched out for.”

I. TRUE CHRISTIANS REJOICE IN THE LORD (v.1a)

PHILIPPIANS 3:1 “Finally (*Furthermore*), my brothers, rejoice *in the Lord*.” Think of what reasons you have to rejoice! Sin/Christ

II. TRUE CHRISTIANS LOOK OUT FOR FALSE CHRISTIANS (v.1b-2)

PHILIPPIANS 3:1b-2 “To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. **2** Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.”

I) You must watch out for those that teach salvation by works (v.2a)

2a “Look out for the dogs,” “Dogs” in verse 2 is contrasted with “For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God” in verse 3.

- **Galatians 1:6-9** “let him be anathema.”

- **The Jews followed Paul from one city to another in order to stir up the people against him!**

- **JMAC:** “Are dogs unclean and filthy? So are the false teachers. Are dogs vicious & dangerous, & to be avoided? So are the false teachers.”

II) You must look out for those that brag about themselves (v.2b)

2b look out for the evildoers, “Evildoers” in verse 2 is contrasted with “glory in Christ Jesus” in verse 3.

- **Q. Therefore, what is this evil that they do? A.** At least this: They glory in themselves. They love themselves. They talk about themselves. They exalt themselves before men. They want praise for themselves.

- **Galatians 6:13** “For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.” (*they want you to be circumcised so that they may brag about how they converted you*)

III) You must look out for those that make a big deal of outward signs (v.2c)

2c look out for those who mutilate the flesh. “Mutilate the flesh” in verse 2 is contrasted with “put no confidence in the flesh” in verse 3.

- **Q. Why did these false Christians make such a big deal concerning circumcision? A.** It is outward. It is man-controlled. It is all about externals—what is on the outside; what can be seen; what will show others how holy I am.

- **Galatians 6:12** “It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised.”

III. TRUE CHRISTIANS HAVE HAD THEIR HEARTS CHANGED BY GOD (v.3a)

PHILIPPIANS 3:3a “For we are the circumcision”

Rom. 2:29 “circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter.”

IV. TRUE CHRISTIANS WORSHIP GOD BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD (v.3b)

PHILIPPIANS 3:3b “who worship by the Spirit of God”

- **THOMAS MANTON:** “This implies worshipping God with the inward and spiritual affections of a renewed heart.”

- **John 4:24** “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

- **True worship is not merely what you do on the outside; true worship starts within and comes out in expression!**

- **Ephesians 5:18-19** “be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord *with your heart*.”

- **THOMAS FORD:** “It is unlovely when some in the congregation *sing* out of tune—but the greatest absurdity of all is when our *hearts* are not in tune.”

- **True worship does not only mean what we call *praise and worship*; true worship is all of life lived to the glory of God!**

V. TRUE CHRISTIANS BRAG ABOUT CHRIST JESUS ALONE (v.3c)

PHILIPPIANS 3:3b “and *glory* in Christ Jesus”

Galatians 6:14 “But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

SPURGEON: “You will never glory in God till first of all God has killed your glorying in yourself.”

VI. TRUE CHRISTIANS PUT NO CONFIDENCE IN THEMSELVES (v.3d)

PHILIPPIANS 3:3c “and put no confidence in the flesh—”

- “The only thing you contribute to your salvation is the sin that made it necessary.” — **Jonathan Edwards**

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Q I. Do you have confidence and trust in Jesus rather than yourself; do you have confidence in Jesus rather than *ANYTHING* you can do?

Q II. Does it follow that you brag about Jesus, rather than yourself?

Q III. Do you worship God from the heart, because He has changed your affections—your very desires?

Q IV. Do you rejoice in the Lord; does your unworthiness and Jesus’ free grace lead you to be joyful *in Him*?

A. If you can answer yes truthfully, you are truly a Christian.

IF NOT, then I) Put your confidence in Jesus right now and be saved! **II)** Begin bragging about Jesus! **III)** Start worshipping God from the heart!

IV) Watch out for dogs! **V)** Rejoice in the Lord!