

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

- 1) 06 Mar..... Phil 1:1-11 ..... Link Up with Others
- 2) 13 Mar..... Phil 1:12-26 ..... Lift Up the Gospel
- 3) 20 Mar..... Phil 1:27-2:11 ..... Live Up to the Gospel
- 4) 27 Mar..... Phil 2:12-30 ..... Light Up the World
- 5) 03 Apr ..... Phil 3:1-21 ..... Look Up to Heaven
- 6) 10 Apr..... Phil 4:1-23 ..... Never Let Up
- 7) 17 Apr..... Col 1:1-20 ..... Knowing the Truth
- 8) 24 Apr..... John 20:1-18 ..... Believing the Truth [Easter]
- 9) 01 May..... Col 1:21-2:7 ..... Expressing the Truth
- 10) 08 May..... Col 2:8-23 ..... Keeping the Truth
- 11) 15 May..... Col 3:1-17 ..... Be Focused
- 12) 22 May..... Col 3:18-4:18 ..... Be Faithful
- 13) 29 May..... Philemon 1-25 ..... Be Forgiving

**INTRODUCTION**

- How can we rejoice in God when the world is falling apart, or even our lives or livelihood might be in turmoil?
- Paul's emphasis was on our right relationship with God and always remembering the Big Picture and the End Prize  
 ➔ We Win and We Will be Transformed into Something Greater and more Glorious

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would we give up our high paying job, big house, 401k (or 201k these days) to pursue whippings, beatings, imprisonment for preaching to ingrates?</li> <li>• Remember the reward at the end is blessings beyond our current comprehension</li> </ul>
3:12-16	<p><b>Persecution can be Good – if it's Pursuing God</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Greek word for “press on” and “pursue” is the same word Jesus used in “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” (Acts 9:4) and when Paul said “I persecuted this Way to the death” (Acts 22:4)</li> <li>• Paul’s rap sheet included rejecting Christ; consenting to Stephen’s stoning; and chaining and imprisoning God-fearing men &amp; women - all crimes worthy of him having a millstone tied around his neck and being cast into the sea                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Most would be paralyzed with fear, regret and remorse after coming to Christ with such sins</li> <li>♦ Paul chose to forget his sinful past as Christ did</li> <li>♦ This doesn’t mean Paul was negligent in seeking forgiveness from those he harmed, but he focused on pursuing his future prize</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3:17	<p><b>Imitate Me</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul was not arrogant or egotistical. He was a leader, and as such good leaders lead by example</li> </ul>
3:18-19	<p><b>Again, Watch Out for the Enemies of the Cross</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know when to run, know when to stand</li> <li>• Why did Paul weep when he wrote this?                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Was he weeping for his enemies’ destruction?</li> <li>♦ Was he weeping for the damage his enemies would do to God’s people?</li> <li>♦ Should we weep for our enemies? Consider Psalms 119:136 – Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3:20-21	<p><b>Stay Focused on the Big Picture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our true citizenship is not here on Earth – like the old song, ‘This world is not my home, I’m just passing through’</li> <li>• Our frail bodies will one day be transformed into something glorious and eternal</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
Phil 3:1	<p><b>Rejoice in the Lord (7<sup>th</sup> of 10x in Philippians)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can we rejoice in God when we are shipwrecked, stoned, beaten, whipped? Paul did..... 2Cor 11:25</li> <li>• Can we rejoice in God even when we lose our job, deplete our savings, empty our refrigerator, and lose our house? Habakkuk did ....Hab 3:17,18</li> </ul> <p><b>Rote is a Great Teaching Tool</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul says to write the same things over again is no burden and it is a safeguard for the Philippians</li> <li>• How is repeating the same message a safeguard? Doesn’t it get tiring to here it over &amp; over again? ‘Remember to wear your seatbelt’ should never get old, and neither should ‘Rejoice in the Lord’</li> </ul>
3:2	<p><b>Paul Resorts to Name Calling to Make a Point</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Paul warns the believers to always be on guard against “Dogs” – What kind of people are they? - possibly those who would constantly ‘nip’ at you with trivial stuff, or ‘bark’ constantly to draw your attention away from God’s work, or who would attack you just to attack</li> <li>2. Watch out for “Evil Doers” – those who would blatantly harm you or entice you away from God</li> <li>3. ...and watch out for “Mutilators” – in other words, those who would mix grace with works (they could even be inside the church)</li> </ol>
3:3	<p><b>True Believers are Noted for their Behavior</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>We worship God in the Spirit.</b> This is not a “feel good” esoteric mood, but being righteous before God (be holy as He is holy)</li> <li>• <b>We glory or rejoice in Christ.</b> Whether we have nothing or everything, Christ is all we need</li> <li>• <b>We put no confidence in the flesh.</b> Our confidence is in God’s living Word</li> </ul>
3:4-11	<p><b>Paul had it All Before Christ – or did he?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul highlighted his blameless credentials – He was Top Dog, a Man among Men, a Hebrew of Hebrews, living right, and zealous toward God</li> <li>• BUT, in God’s eyes Paul was heading for Hell</li> <li>• When Paul saw the light his past became rubbish</li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS:**

- If we have it rough down here, rejoice in Christ your Savior
- If we have it good down here (and most Americans do), rejoice with what God has given us
- We are so blessed in America we have no excuse for not rejoicing and for not getting the job done – we must be about doing the Lord’s work with fervor while it is still day!

**NEXT WEEK: Philippians 4.** Rejoice always, be anxious for nothing, think on good things, be content, we can do all things through Christ, and God will supply all our needs

