



Transcendent Joy: Learning How to Rejoice No Matter What

Message #18: **Living from God's Point of View** (Philippians 3:17-4:1) – April 2, 2023 - Pastor Jeff

- Paul is committed to motivating the church to know Jesus Christ as our “surpassing value” and to wholeheartedly run the spiritual marathon to victory for Him. To do this, Paul teaches us to view life through God’s point of view.
- Everyone has a view of life and the world whether they realize it or not. This is called a worldview. A worldview is the lens through which you interpret your life and the world around you. You can reduce a person’s view of life down to two:
 - The earthly versus the heavenly or human versus the divine.
 - The uniqueness of Christianity is that it views life through God’s lens, and this changes how believers view and understand everything (purpose, meaning, morality, destiny, identity, hopes, ability, etc.)
- Paul shows us three practical ways to live life from God’s point of view:

① Look around for godly examples (3:17)

- Paul invites everyone to follow his example since he is running to win the faith race.
- Follow model-worthy leaders like Paul (“*join in following my example*”). Paul is not a “*do as I say, not as I do*” kind of leader, but one who strives to be a good model in following Christ (1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 4:9; 1 Cor. 4:16; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14; 2 Thess. 3:9)
- Follow model-worthy learners like others (“*observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us*”). Others like Timothy and Epaphroditus were worthy of imitation as they follow Paul’s good example. Are we modeling Christ before others in our sphere of influence? 1 Tim. 4:12

② Look out for godless enemies (3:18-19)

- Paul recognizes there will be “*enemies of the cross of Christ*” that we must stay aware of. These enemies can have a big influence on God’s people and require the church leaders to protect the church family from false teachers (Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:9-16).
- This is not an insignificant problem in the church. Paul uses two words to highlight this reality and need to stay vigilant: “*many*” and “*often*”. These false teachers have considerable influence, and the church must maintain a realistic view of the opposition that undermines the sufficient message of the cross.
- Who are these enemies? They are most likely false teachers known as libertines or antinomians (anti-law) who “*turn the grace of God into licentiousness*” (Jude 4). They use the grace of God to tolerate and excuse sin which is a false way to win the race. There are four truths about these enemies:
 - They are headed for the wrong destiny (v. 19: “*whose end is destruction*”). The word for “*destruction*” (waste, loss, perish) describes their eternal loss away from Christ (2 Thess. 1:9)
 - They worship the wrong deity (“*whose god is their appetite*”). They love to feast on idolatrous sensuality & earthly desires. They bow down to the god of pleasure (Gal. 5:19-21)

- They glory in the wrong delights (“*whose glory is their shame*”). They are proud of what they ought to be ashamed of.
- They view life from the wrong direction (“*who set their minds on earthly things*”). They view their life through their sinful lens, not God’s heavenly lens which passes away (1 John 2:17)

③ Look up toward glorious expectations (3:20-4:1)

- Paul provides ultimate reasons to live life from God’s point of view:
 - Because heaven is our home (“*for our citizenship is in heaven*”). The word “*citizenship*” was a word about politics or a colony of foreigners who live outside their home. This reminds the church that our politics is in heaven.
 - Because heaven contains our hope (“*from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*”). This pictures believers on their tip toes waiting in great anticipation for Christ to return. Our hope is Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 1:1), His appearing (Titus 2:11-13) and being like Him when He returns (1 John 3:2)
 - Because heaven changes our humanity (v. 21). Right now, we live in “*the body of our humble state*” (a decaying earthly tent), but a great bodily transformation is coming (“*will transform the body...into conformity with the body of His glory*”; 1 Cor. 15:51) and it will be accomplished by “*the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself*” (Jesus is all-powerful as Creator, Sustainer and able to subject all things)
 - Because heaven motivates our here and now (4:1: “*therefore...stand firm in the Lord*”). Our great transformation necessitates that we stand our ground in Christ and not be moved by all the things and ways of this earthly, momentary life.