

Quarter One: Uniting Heaven & Earth: Christ in Philippians & Colossians

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Lesson 6—Confidence Only in Christ

Sunday: Rejoicing in the Lord

February 1, 2026

- **Last Week:** “Shining as Lights in the Night”
 - Phil 2:12 – 30
 - Christians to receive & impart Jesus, the Light of the Word
 - Commendations to Timothy & Epaphroditus
- **This Week:** “Confidence Only in Christ”
 - Phil 3:1 – 16 (next week, finish book of Philippians: rest of chapt 3 & all of chapt 4)
 - Grace vs Works
 - Over 4,000 different religions
 - 5 major world religions:
 - 1. Christianity - largest
 - 2. Islam – 2nd largest – both have over a billion followers
 - 3. Buddhism
 - 4. Hinduism
 - 5. Judaism – definitely smaller; historical significance as well as impact on Christianity
 - Most religions have one thing in common: “heaven by works”
 - Salvation by works
 - Appeals to our sinful nature – we want to perform
 - We crave satisfaction from it being our work
 - Appeals to our pride – we are “good enough” to merit something
 - Isa 64:6 – all our righteousness = filthy rags
 - Christianity = only religion, at its fundamental level, = religion of God’s righteousness, not self-righteousness
 - Jonathan Edwards – “You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary.”
 - Protestant Reformation – built on concept that grace alone saves us, through faith
 - Catholicism = religion of works
 - Rom 1:17 – the just shall live by faith
 - Heb 12:2 – Christ is the Author & Finisher of our Faith
 - Danger of righteousness by works
 - Many Christians, while claiming religion of grace, degenerate into religion of works
 - Many claim, Justification by grace through faith
 - Yet, Sanctification by “works”
 - “When we don’t feel wanted, we work to become needed.”
 - At its core, works-based religion is based on a misperception of God

- Somehow,
 - Keeping the Sabbath
 - Eating the right foods
 - Refusing to react in anger – we think that earns us merit with God
- Sanctification is Biblical
 - Eph 2:10 – “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”
 - Sanctification is by grace – it is a gift from surrender to Christ and allowing Him to live inside
 - Wed & Thurs lessons
- This week, study Paul’s argument against works
 - Circumcision “argument”
 - Circumcision is not necessary for salvation

Memory Text: “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead” (Phil 3:10, 11, NKJV). (James’ day)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** Rejoicing in the Lord (Jill)
 - Phil 3:1 – 3 – Paul’s argument against those who claimed circumcision was necessary for salvation (argument against salvation by faith + works)
- 2. **Monday:** Paul’s “Past Life” (John L)
 - Phil 3:4 – 6 – a good pedigree, good works, what’s good in the “eyes” of others accounts for nothing with salvation
- 3. **Tuesday:** The Things that Matter (John D)
 - Acts 9 & John 9 – spiritual blindness & the true worth of things that matter in the sight of God
- 4. **Wednesday:** The Faith of Christ (James)
 - Phil 3:7 – 9 – salvation by grace through faith: residing in Christ for the entire salvation process: justification, sanctification & glorification
- 5. **Thursday:** Just One Thing—Knowing Christ (SQ)
 - Phil 3:10 – 16 – ways we become closer to Christ: 1. The power of His resurrection; 2. The fellowship of His sufferings; 3. Pressing toward the goal (eternal life)

Sunday: Rejoicing in the Lord

Phil 3:1 – 3; Ps 22:16; Isa 56:10; Matt 7:6; 2 Pet 2:21, 22; Acts 15; Phil 4:4; Ps 31:7; Ps 5:11; Ps 9:14; Ps 19:14; Isa 58:13, 14; Ps 119:162; Prov 23:24, 25

- 2 sides of same coin: about salvation
 - Paul’s challenge to rejoice in the Lord
 - Positive reminder that our joy & salvation comes from Jesus – not works (or circumcision)
 - Paul’s warning against salvation by faith + works

- Negative reminder that salvation is not based on our works (combating those who claimed circumcision was necessary for salvation)
- Phil 3:1 – “**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**.”
 - Finally = “and now”
 - Same things = Paul is making a repeated call to “rejoice”
 - Is safe = reminders keep us from mistakes & from discouragements
 - Do we need a reminder to rejoice?
 - Life can have trials; life can have setbacks & discouragement
 - Marriage fall apart
 - Children leave God
 - Health crisis
 - We can think we’re growing in Christ by ourselves
 - Rejoice that we are in Christ and He in us
 - Rejoice that Jesus died so we could be saved & sanctified
 - Rejoice that He is coming again
 - Who or what are we to rejoice in?
 - Rejoice in the Lord
 - If you rejoice in the Lord, you will love the gospel.
 - Love the gospel and you will rejoice in the Lord.
- Phil 3:2 – “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation.”
 - 3-fold warning – not found anywhere else in Scripture
 - Actually only one warning, describing false teachers in 3 different ways
 - *Important enough to describe 3 times
 - What is the danger? (false teachers & teaching of salvation by works)
 - Dogs = wicked or irreligious people in Israel
 - Evil workers = false teachers who excluded Gentile believers
 - The mutilation = those imposing physical circumcision to join the church or for salvation
 - Circumcision debate in early Christian Church
 - Acts 15 = Jerusalem Council (AD 49)
 - Judaizers came from Judea & taught that Gentiles must be circumcised to be saved
 - Same teaching from Gal 2
 - Leadership met & discussed & decision made
 - Circumcision not necessary for salvation / church membership
 - Larger issue = works is not necessary for salvation
 - Certain regulations put forth for Gentile Christians
 - Abstain from things offered to idols, from sexual immorality, etc.
 - Circumcision not one of them

- Rom 4 = Abraham & justification by faith
 - Vs 3 – Abram believed God & it was accounted to him for righteousness
 - Was his justification by faith before or after his circumcision?
 - Before circumcision – works is not essential for salvation
 - Phil 3 – Paul says beware of those teaching salvation by works
 - Circumcision is essential for salvation
- Phil 3:3 – “For **we are the circumcision**, who worship God in the Spirit, **rejoice** in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh;”
 - We are the circumcision = believers of every cultural background (Jews & Gentiles)
 - Who have accepted God & Jesus & who depend wholly on Him
 - Gal 2:20 – “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”
 - Christ is dwelling in me
 - Col 1:27 – “Christ in you, the hope of glory”
 - Eph 3:17 – that Christ would dwell in your hearts through faith
 - Rom 7:17 – “sin that dwells in me”
 - Rom 2:28, 29 – “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; (29) but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”
 - Sermon on the Mount – 6 antithetical statements
 - Spirit of the law – broad, sweeping nature of the law into the heart
 - Rejoicing in Jesus enables us to not focus on the flesh or salvation by works
 - Heb 12:2 – “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, & has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”
 - Look at Jesus & away from self