

"Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, **just as your soul prospers.**" (3 John 2)

A significant contrast between joy embraced and joy spurned is presented in Luke 18 and 19

- ⇒ The Rich Young Ruler (Luke 18:18-25) "went away very sad because he was extremely rich."
- ⇒ Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-9) "hurried and received him gladly" giving away his riches.

Blistering One's Feet

I have read somewhere of a minister sitting on a hotel plaza at Saratoga one morning. He was greeted by a young girl who said to him: "Good morning, Doctor." "Good morning," he replied. "Are you very well this morning?" She answered, "Oh, I am so tired! I blistered my feet dancing last night. By the way, Doctor, what do you think about dancing?" Very gravely he answered, "You are a professing Christian, are you not? Did you ever blister your feet for God?" The young girl felt the question deeply, and turned away. A few days afterward she spoke to the minister again and said: "Doctor, I have scarcely slept since you asked me that question, and I want to tell you I have never blistered my feet for the Lord, but from this time on I will work for him to the best of my ability."

Reason for Alarm

Thomas Guthrie used to say: If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any table better than the Lord's table, any persons better than Christ, any indulgence better than the hope of Heaven—take alarm!

Scan for lesson series



NEXT LESSON:
Philippians 4 reveals how
Christians have a joyous
victory over
WORRY!

 **DALRAIDA**
CHURCH OF CHRIST

LESSON HANDOUT

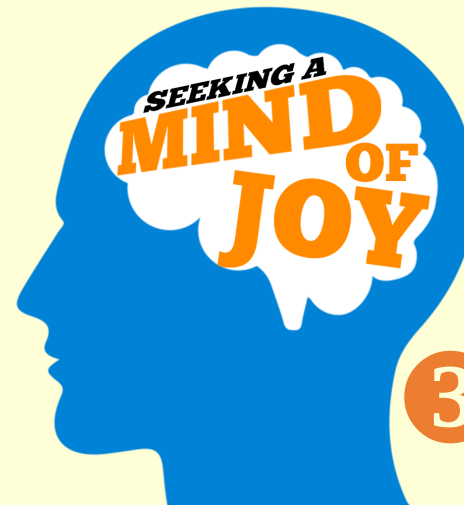
Paul has shown us how to rejoice when circumstances go against us (chapter 1), and how to be joyful when others in the Church irritate and abuse us (chapter 2). Now he instructs us how to survive the problem of worldliness. Perhaps many say that the reason joy is missing in their lives is because they lack things: "IF only...a newer car...a larger house...a better paying job...a position in society with more acclaim...more stylish clothing...ad nauseam." (Ecclesiastes 5:10; 10:19)

Diamond Rio, "Stuff," *"Stuff stack it on, stack it up, stack it on up...never gonna ever get enough (stuff)... Got to get a bigger place so I can move in more stuff, never get enough Stuff."*

Philippians 3 offers Inspiration's counsel as to how the Christian can survive the temptation of worldly possessions (covetousness). The quest for "things" (accomplishments, positions, wealth, etc.) robs many of true joy (1 Timothy 6:17).

The key concept is the word "count." The Greek ἡγεόμαι (hēgeōmai) is a term used to designate a leader's command. The figurative use in Philippians refers to a commanding decision that leads all decisions. Is "stuff" commanding your life?

A monumental decision (verse 8) is that most "things" are worthless—a "loss."



THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

with *John Kachelman Jr.*

**Joyous Victory over
WORLDLY THINGS**
(Philippians 3)

You must DECIDE to be Joyful! (Philippians 3:1-11)

What is really most valuable to you? What consumes your priorities of time and energy? What are you doing with the limited time God has given you on earth? The Christian must DECIDE to seize God's opportunities and find joy:

Decide what things only give the appearance of joy (verses 1-6).

- ⇒ Association with others focused on "things" is detrimental (verse 2).
- ⇒ Confidence in the "flesh" (verse 3). They live for the "perpendicular pronoun"!
- ⇒ Racial and regional heritage (verse 5)
- ⇒ Mechanical religion (verse 5)
- ⇒ Education (verse 5)
- ⇒ Morality (verse 6)
- ⇒ Zeal (verse 6; Romans 10:1-2)
- ⇒ Decide what will result in true joy (verses 7-11).

What will give us true joy? The answer is stated in verses 7-8. All of the things which the world counts as great, Paul gave up financial stability, physical comfort, and reputation. WHY? Because of the superiority of Christ Jesus (verse 8)!

You must RUN the race with joy! (Philippians 3:12-16)

The metaphorical figure used is the attitude of an athlete in a foot race (Hebrews 12:1, 2; 1 Cor 9:24; 2 Timothy 2:5).

Run toward the RIGHT GOAL (verse 12, 14).

- ⇒ Holiness (1 Thessalonians 4-7)
- ⇒ Usefulness (John 15:16)

Run with three REALIZATIONS (verses 12, 13a).

- ⇒ Realize you are not perfect (verse 12, 13a)
- ⇒ Realize you must press on (verse 12)
- ⇒ Realize Christ expects you to go on (verse 12)

Run the race after making THREE DECISIONS (verse 13).

- ⇒ Decide about PRIORITIES (verse 13)
- ⇒ Decide to FORGET (verse 13)
- ⇒ Decide to STRETCH FORWARD (verse 13)

Run the race with the proper ATTITUDES (verses 14-16).

- ⇒ A resolve to go forward regardless of the cost (verse 14)
- ⇒ A determined effort to mold our thinking as it should be (verse 15)
- ⇒ A desire to obey and change if necessary (verse 15b)
- ⇒ A steadfast daily living (verse 16)

Here is HOW you can run the race the WRONG way and lose joy.

The wrong way chooses to reject God's will (Acts 13:44-48).

- ⇒ *One who walks in the wrong way* makes their belly a god to them (verse 19; Romans 16:18).
- ⇒ *One who walks in the wrong way* will glory in their shame (v. 19).
- ⇒ *One who walks in the wrong way* possesses earthly attitudes and goals (v. 19).

The wrong way brings tragic results into life:

- ⇒ Such finds sorrow (verse 18; Job 8:12-15)
- ⇒ Such become an enemy of the cross (verse 18).
- ⇒ Such faces destruction (verse 19; Romans 6:21; Hebrews 6:8; 2 Corinthians 11:15).
- ⇒ Such must be "marked" (verse 18; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Romans 16:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6).

The PLEA of Paul to walk in the right way (Philippians 4:1)

The chapter division is unfortunate because it removes this grand conclusion from the body of exhortation. In view of the great contrast the readers are encouraged to stand fast in the right way!

Concluding Thoughts...

A great thief of joy in your life is love of the things of THIS world! (1 John 2:15-17; Luke 10:40; Mark 4:17-19). Do you possess your possessions OR do they possess you?

"(Y)ou are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's...what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:33, 36-37).

