

The General Electric Power Company Series

Galatians | Ephesians | **Philippians** | Colossians

Lesson #15 – Philippians 3

Main Idea

Philippians 3 is a personal and motivational chapter where Paul urges believers to put no confidence in human achievements or religious rituals. He warns against legalism and shares his own impressive Jewish heritage background, which he now considers worthless compared to knowing Christ. Paul emphasizes that true righteousness comes through faith in Jesus, not by works. His ultimate goal is to know Christ fully, experience the power of His resurrection, and share in His sufferings. Acknowledging that he hasn't yet reached perfection, Paul presses forward with determination, keeping his focus on the heavenly prize. He encourages believers to adopt the same mindset, reminding them that their true citizenship is in heaven. This chapter challenges readers to live with eternal purpose and humility.

Overview of Chapter 3

Verses 1–14 No confidence in the flesh

Verses 15–21 Following Paul's Example

Questions for Consideration

1. In verses 2 and 3 why does Paul warn the Philippians to "beware of the dogs" and those who put confidence in the flesh?
2. What does Paul list as his religious credentials in verses 4 through 7, and why does he ultimately count them as "loss"?
3. Verse 8 discusses knowing Christ Jesus as Lord. What does Paul say is the surpassing value compared to all his past achievements?
4. How does Paul describe his goal in verses 10–14, and what does it teach us about spiritual growth and perseverance?
5. Verses 18–21 discuss being earthly-minded living versus a heavenly focus. What contrast does Paul make between those who live as "enemies of the cross" and those who live as "citizens of Heaven"?

Homework: Read Philippians 4, looking specifically at verse 6 that talks about not being anxious. How does being anxious negatively impact our lives and specifically our ability to be generous?



Philippians 3 (NIV)

No Confidence in the Flesh

3 Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. ² Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. ³ For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— ⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

⁷ But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in ¹⁰ Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Following Paul's Example

¹⁵ All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. ¹⁶ Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

¹⁷ Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. ¹⁸ For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Footnotes

- a. [Philippians 3:9](#) Or *through the faithfulness of*

