

PHILIPPIANS 3

CHAPTER GENERAL OUTLINE

- ❖ **WARNING AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS—vv1-3**
- ❖ **PAUL'S EXAMPLE—HIS PERSONAL TESTIMONY—vv4-14**
- ❖ **THREE EXHORTATIONS—vv15-17**
- ❖ **A WRONG PATTERN—NOT TO FOLLOW—vv18-19**
- ❖ **THE TRUE PERSPECTIVE—AS CHRIST-FOLLOWERS—vv20-21**

CHAPTER DETAILED OUTLINE

I. **WARNING AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS—vv1-3**

1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; 3 for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh

1. Reminder—v1
 - To rejoice
 - To consider your safety
2. Three-fold Warning—v2
 - Dogs
 - Evil workers
 - False circumcision
3. Contrast—True Circumcision—v3

II. **PAUL'S EXAMPLE—vv4-14**

- ❖ His Old Way of Life—vv4-6
- ❖ His Renunciation of the Past—v7
- ❖ His New and Present Way of Life—vv8-11
- ❖ His Future Hope—vv12-14

A. HIS OLD WAY OF LIFE—vv4-6

4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

1. Confidence in the flesh—v4
2. Basis for confidence—Jewish heritage—v5
3. Wrong attitudes—v6
 - a. Misplaced zeal—for persecution—v6a
 - b. Legalistic self-righteousness—6b

B. HIS RENUNCIATION OF THE PAST AND HIS NEW/PRESENT WAY OF LIFE—vv7-11

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

1. Losing everything—to gain Christ—v8
2. Justified by Christ's righteousness—through faith—v9
3. Knowing Christ [fully]—v10
 - a. The condition—being conformed to His death
 - b. The results
 - o Power of His resurrection
 - o Fellowship of His sufferings

C. HIS FUTURE HOPE—vv12-14

12 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as

having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

1. Action—two word pictures—**vv12-13**
 - a. Pressing on [ahead]—to lay hold of—**v12**
 - b. Forgetting what’s behind—to reach forward—**v13**
2. Goal—**v14**
 - a. Prize—heavenly call of God
 - b. Source/location—in Christ

III. THREE EXHORTATIONS—**vv15-17**

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; **16** however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained. **17** Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

- A. Unified Attitude—**v15**
- B. Consistent Conduct—**v16**
- C. Follow the Right Pattern—**v17**

Last point implies there is a *wrong* pattern—which Paul warns against next

IV. A WRONG PATTERN NOT TO FOLLOW [FALSE TEACHERS]—**vv18-19**

18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ, **19** whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

- A. Identity = enemies of the cross—**v18**
- B. Destiny = destruction—**v19**
- C. Heresies—**v19**
 1. Making a god of—their ‘appetite’ [legalistic dietary code]

2. Glorifying in—the ‘shame’ [false circumcision]

D. Focus = worldliness—**v19**

Last point implies there is a right perspective—which Paul describes next

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; **21** who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

V. **THE TRUE PERSPECTIVE—AS CHRIST-FOLLOWERS—vv20-21**

A. Identity = Heavenly [not earthly] Citizenship—**v20**

B. Expectation/Hope = Christ’s return as Savior—**v20**

C. Ultimate Result = our glorification—**v 21**

EXPLANATION OF TEXT

I. **WARNING AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS—vv1-3**

¹Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things [again] is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. ²Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; ³for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh

A. OUTLINE OF SECTION

1. Reminder—**v1**

- To rejoice
- To consider your safety

2. Three-fold Warning—**v2**

- Dogs
- Evil workers
- False circumcision

3. Contrast—True Circumcision—**v3**

B. EXPLANATION

Verse 1—Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things [again] is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

1. “Finally”

- a. Could mean two things:
 1. The **last thing**—this is the end of the letter
 2. To/**toward the rest**—as we move toward the end
 - o Either—“as we move toward the end of the letter”
 - o Or—“as we consider conclusions”— from all we have been saying
- b. Obviously, it means ‘**to/toward the rest**’
 1. Because this is *not* the end of the letter
 2. And Paul uses this word again in **4:8**
- c. Probable meaning
 - o As we move toward the end of the letter
 - o Remember—you must rejoice (!)
 - o This is a logical conclusion of everything I have said so far
 - o And it is especially important—in light of what I am about to write
 - o You are about to face difficulties that can rob this joy

2. “rejoice”

- a. So far—Paul has referred to joy seven times
 1. Paul rejoiced—and shared his joy
 - **1:18**—that the gospel is preached—regardless of circumstances
 - **2:17**—that he has not run in vain—and is ready to be poured out
 - **2:17**—he shares this joy with the Philippians
 2. Paul urged Philippians—to rejoice and share their joy—[**3 imperatives**]
 - **2:2**—make my joy complete—**imperative #1**
 - **2:18**—rejoice like me [at being poured out]—and share your joy with me
 - ❖ I urge you—**rejoice (!)** in the same way—**imperative #2**

❖ **Share your joy (!) with me—imperative #3**

3. Paul expects Philippians to experience joy
 - **2:28**—when Epaphroditus returns to them
 - b. Here—Paul again *commands* them to rejoice (!)
 - o Fourth imperative [of 5 in the letter] to rejoice
 - o Final imperative still to come—**4:4**—*Rejoice in the Lord always . . .*
 - c. They should rejoice even in the face of coming difficulties
 - d. And the source of their unity and strength is in the Lord—“rejoice *in the Lord*”
3. [rejoice] “**in the Lord**”
- a. The **source** of this joy is the Lord—not within yourselves
 - b. *Only* the **Lord’s joy** can sustain you—in face of coming difficulties
 1. Keeping you focused—when others preach another gospel [as Paul faced in chapter 1]
 2. Keeping you unified—with the same mind of humility—like Christ [chapter 2]
 3. Keeping you faithful—not running in vain—to the end—being poured out [chapter 2]
4. “**To write the same things [again] is no trouble for me, and it is a safeguard for you**”
- a. Could refer to two things
 1. His exhortation—to rejoice—that he has just mentioned—in **verse 1**
 - i.e. I am telling you again—Rejoice!
 2. His warning—about what follows—in **verse 2**
 - b. Probably does **not** refer to ‘rejoice’
 1. The command—‘rejoice’—*might* be seen as a ‘safeguard’
 2. But it makes little sense—when followed by “is no trouble to me”
 - c. Likely—it **does** refer to following **warning**
 1. Because Paul says it “**is no trouble for me**”
 - a. “trouble” = **οκνησος** = slothful/lazy—delaying—[from verb ‘to delay’]

- b. Paul’s meaning
 - I am *not* being slothful/lazy
 - I am doing my **duty**—I am fulfilling my **responsibility**

2. “**It is a safeguard**”

- a. “safeguard” = **ασφαλις** = firm—certain—secure—something that confirms
 - **Like “asphalt”**— from verb **ασφαλιζω** = make firm/secure

b. Obvious implication

1. Paul is fulfilling his duty to the Philippians
2. To provide a safeguard against a coming problem
3. Which he will *identify* in **verse 2**
4. He will provide the ‘safeguard’ explanation—in the rest of chapter 3—**vv3-21**

d. “**To write the same things [again]**”

1. Original text does not have “again” in it
 - o This is supplied as understood
 - o It should read—“to write the same things”
 - o These ‘same things’ may have been mentioned in one of three contexts
2. [Context 1]—Could mean he was writing what he had **said** to them before
 - o Possibly when he had been with them before—and talked face to face with them
 - o If so—this does not refer to anything already written in this letter
3. [Context 2]—Could refer to another letter he wrote—that has not been preserved
4. [Context 3]—Could refer to *this* letter—**verse 1:28**
 - a. Paul warned them—do not be terrified by the threat of ‘adversaries’
 - b. Opponents who might have been a source of disunity among them
 - c. And—hence—Paul’s urging unity at the beginning of chapter 2

Verse 2— Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision

1. “Beware”

- a. **βλεπω** = to look—perceive—discover—discern
- b. Most commonly—means simply “to see”
- c. In some contexts it is emphatic—“Keep your eyes open!”—“Be on the lookout!”
 - o Jesus told disciples, **Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees . . . Mk 8:15**
 - o Jesus said, **Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in flowing robes Mk 12:38**
 - o Jesus said, **Take heed**—regarding false Christs and coming tribulation **Mk 13:23,33**
- d. Beware—three dangers
 - o Dogs
 - o Evil Workers
 - o The False Circumcision

2. “**dogs . . . evil workers . . . the false circumcision**”

- a. Three descriptions of the same thing—**false teachers**
- b. **Dogs**
 1. In Paul’s day—his culture generally despised dogs
 - They were ‘scavengers’
 - Contaminated by contact with ‘unclean’ carcasses
 2. A term used *by Jews for Gentiles*—
 3. Irony—Paul but uses it for *Jews* here!
 4. Allusion is to a pack of dogs
 - Like scavengers
 - Possibly—those who feed on the weak and helpless
 - Taking advantage of those—who were not well-grounded in their faith
- c. **Evil Workers**
 1. **τους κακους εργατας**

- a. Either ‘workers of evil’—i.e. workers who produce evil
- b. Or ‘evil type workers’ = i.e. workers whose very nature is evil

2. Irony—implied

- a. [Implied]—they consider themselves righteous and blameless
- b. Because they are circumcised
- c. But—in reality—this is a ‘false circumcision’!

3. They are like Paul once was—hence his self-description that follows

d. **False Circumcision**

a. **κατατομή** = ‘the cutting up’—‘the chopping up’

1. Not the word normally used for circumcision

- **περιτομή** = to ‘cut around’

2. *This* word means to ‘cut up’—to chop like a butcher

3. It is the noun—the *result* of the verb [**κατα** + **τεμνο**]

4. More accurately = “**the butchering!**”

b. Different translations

1. KJV—focuses on the act/result itself—“the concision”

2. Other versions—link it to those persons (dogs/workers) who do the action

- o **NIV** = “those mutilators of the flesh’
- o **NASB** = ‘the false circumcision’
- o **ESV/RSV** = ‘those who mutilate the flesh’
- o **The Message** = knife-happy circumcisers

c. The obvious meaning

1. False teachers take pride in circumcision—[who “**glory in their shame**” **3:19**]

2. Contrasted with the ‘true circumcision’—Paul speaks of this in **verse 3**

3. Legalism: the basic problem Paul was addressing

- a. The False Circumcision—the specific and obvious sign of legalism
 - 1. Just one form of early Christian legalism—but a potent force among Jewish Christians
 - 2. Legalists who required becoming a Jew first—in order to become a Christian
 - 3. The most important act of initiation—to convert to Judaism—three acts required
 - o Circumcision
 - o Baptism
 - o Making offering at Temple
- b. Paul was also warning against **legalism in general**
 - Which took different forms in the early church
 - Such as following Jewish dietary codes—and eating meat offered to idols
 - Warning today—don't confuse conformity to codes with true devotion/piety
 - Warning today—don't confuse our cultural trappings with the substance of faith

4. Lessons from Christian history

- a. Three huge problems have challenged the church regarding sound doctrine
 - **Ignorance**
 - **Legalism**
 - **Rejection of the law**
- b. **Ignorance—of true doctrine**
 - Due to lack of Bible study
 - Due to lack of proper discipleship/training
 - **Jesus' criticism of Sadducees**

Mk 12:24—*Are you not in error because you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?*
- c. **Legalism**
 - 1. Rigid adherence to legalistic rules made by men—as with the Pharisees
 - 2. **Positive motive**—to protect the law and doctrine—Pharisees

3. **Negative motive**—to be in control—authoritarianism
4. Often—these motives cannot be separated!

d. Rejection of the law

1. May begin as a good-faith effort to combat legalism
2. But it results in **antinomianism**—rejection of the law itself
3. Two negative types
 - a. Out of moral disobedience—**libertinism**
 - b. In the guise of protecting individual ‘freedom’—**libertarianism**
4. One positive type
 - o Out of a sense of love and devotion to Christ over the law
 - o Emphasis is on—genuine piety and self-denial (asceticism)

Verse 3— *For we are the {true} circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.*

A. BACKGROUND—THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL—Acts 15

1. The early dispute—about the requirement for circumcision

- a. Situation in Antioch
 1. Jewish Christians from Judea had gone to Antioch
 - They said circumcision was required for salvation—**Acts 15:1**
 2. Response—**Acts 15:2**
 - a. Paul and Barnabas disputed with them—rejecting this requirement
 - b. Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to consult with apostles and elders about problem
- b. Situation in Jerusalem
 1. A sect of ‘Judaizers’ had arisen in Jerusalem—**Acts 15:5**
 2. Their requirements—to become Christians
 - a. Circumcision
 - b. Adherence to Mosaic law

c. Jerusalem Council—[Acts 15:6-35](#)

1. Apostles and elders of Jerusalem convened to deliberate matter
2. Peter gave his testimony—[vv7-11](#)
 - a. Gave account of his visit with Cornelius—[without mentioning Cornelius by name]
 - b. Explained how they had been saved—three aspects:
 1. They **believed**—[v7](#)
 - Here nothing is mentioned of circumcision
 2. They **received the Holy Spirit**—[v8](#)
 3. God purified their hearts **by faith**—[v9](#)
 - So God re-made them just like Peter and the rest

c. Peter's conclusion

1. Do not put any more burdens upon them!
 - To do so—would be tempting God—[v10](#)
 2. Even Jews *themselves* had been unable to keep the Law—[v 10](#)
 3. Gentiles and Jews alike will be saved by God's grace—[v11](#)
 - Implication—keeping the Law does not save a person
3. Paul and Barnabas spoke—[v 12](#)
- Gave account of miracles done by them among Gentiles
4. James— leader of Jerusalem Church—gave decision of Council—[vv 19-20](#)
 - a. We will “*trouble them not*”
 - Meaning—not require circumcision or adherence to Mosaic law
 - b. Only required that Gentiles [and everyone] abstain from these things:
 1. Things contaminated by idols
 2. Fornication
 3. Strangled animals

4. [Food with] blood
- c. NOTE: ‘things contaminated by idols’
 1. Possibly a concession by the Jews to Gentiles
 2. Jews could eat this food—as long as it was kosher
 3. But Gentiles would be offended by eating it—a symbol of their idolatrous past
5. Delegation and letter—**vv22-35**
 - a. Council sent a delegation to Antioch
 1. Paul and Barnabas
 2. Judas Barsabas and Silas—who were ‘prophets’
 - b. Sent letter confirming decision to Antioch—and to greater area of Syria and Cilicia
 - c. Outlined requirements—**vv28-29**
 1. The same as those in **v20**
 2. Clarifies “*things contaminated by idols*” = “*things* [food] *offered to idols*”
 - d. After delegation took message to Antioch
 - Silas remained there—then joined Paul on his second missionary journey

B. NATURE AND RESULTS OF TRUE CIRCUMCISION

1. Nature—what is ‘true circumcision’?

- a. Paul warns Jews—known as ‘the circumcision’
 1. Watch out!
 - External circumcision—is powerless without keeping the law
 2. Explains relationship between keeping the law—and circumcision
 - a. Principle
 - It is better to keep the Law *without* circumcision
 - Rather than *not* keeping it *with* circumcision
 - b. Scriptural basis

Rom 2:25-27—**25** *For indeed circumcision is of value, if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26 So, if therefore the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 And will not he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law?*

3. Defines a ‘real Jew’—as one with **true circumcision**

- a. This is *inward* circumcision—of the *heart* and *Spirit*—not of the letter
- b. Scriptural basis

Rom 2:8-29—**28** *For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.*

b. Principle: there is no difference between Jew and Gentile who are truly saved

1. This does not nullify the Law
2. Instead—it *establishes* [the purpose of] the Law

Rom 3:29-31—*Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one. Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.*

c. Principle: justification [righteousness] comes not by works—but by faith—as with Abraham

- **Hab 2:4**—*But the righteous will live by his faith.*
- **Rom 1:16-7**—*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."*
- **Gal 3:6-9**—*Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying ‘All the nations will be blessed in you.’ So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.*
- **Rom 4:1-12**—**1** *What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” [Gen 15:6] 4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. 5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness*

apart from works: [Ps 32:1-2] → 7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. 8 Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.” 9 Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, “Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness.” 10 How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; 11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, 12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

Note: the sequence of events in Abraham’s life

- Abraham received God’s promise of an heir—and then believed—**Gen 15:1-5**
- After Abraham believed—God accounted it righteousness—**Gen 15:6**
- The covenant of circumcision was not established—until later—**Gen 17:1-14**
- So Abraham was justified *before* and *apart* from circumcision!

d. This is *spiritual* circumcision of the *heart*—prophesied in the Old Testament

- Jeremiah spoke of the new covenant—see **Jer 41:31-34**

Jer 31:33—I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

- Ezekiel also prophesied about it—**Ez 36**

Ez 36:26-7—Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

e. Prophecy fulfilled by Christ—and our being buried with Him in baptism

Col 2:11-14—*and in Him you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

2. Results—of true circumcision—Phil 3:3b

a. Three results attend true circumcision

1. **Worship** in the Spirit of God
2. **Glory** in Christ Jesus
3. **No confidence** put in the flesh

b. **Worship**—in the Spirit of God

1. ‘worship’ = λατρευω [not προσκυνεω]
 - a. Work of a menial servant
 - b. Usually associated with temple service—to minister or serve as a priest
 - c. To give homage—worship
 - d. But emphasis is on the *servicing* action
 - e. Same word used in **Rom 12:1**—*which is your reasonable service (of worship)*
2. ‘in the Spirit of God’
 - α. This is—spiritual worship—not merely a perfunctory, legal duty
 - β. Even such actions usually taken to be liturgical—ministerial service of priests
 - χ. Now they take on a clearer spiritual function—like προσκυνεω

Note: Jesus’ words to the Samaritan woman—where He used προσκυνεω

Jn 4:23-4—*But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*

c. **Glory**—in Christ Jesus

1. ‘glory’ = καυχηομαι—to boast (noun means ‘a boast’)—or—to praise
2. Contrasts—**not** ‘boasting’ in other things—seen in **other passages** [below]
 - a. Boasting in works
 - o **Eph 2:9**—*not of works, lest any man should boast*
 - b. Boasting in the Law
 - o **Rom 2:23**—*You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?*
 - c. Boasting in men

- o **I Cor 3:21-3**—*So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God.*

3. What we *should* ‘boast’ in:

a. In the Lord

- o **I Cor 1:31**—*Let him who boast, boast in the Lord.*

b. Tribulations

- o **Rom 5:3**—*And not only this, but we also boast in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance . . .*

c. Other Christians—Paul wrote to the Thessalonians

- o **II Th 1:4**—*Therefore, we ourselves boast proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.*

d. Infirmities

- o **II Cor 12:9**—*And he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my infirmities [weaknesses], so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.*

e. The cross of Christ—[Paul was again repudiating glory in the flesh of circumcision]

- o **Gal 6:14**—*But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

d. **No confidence**—put in the flesh

1. Here is the contrast **in this passage**—with boasting in Christ

- a. **vv 3-4**—Paul rejects his own natural right to put **confidence** in the flesh
- b. ‘confidence’ = **πειθω**—to trust, to have confidence in—to rely upon—
 - o In **v3**—and in the second usage of **v4**—it is the verb
 - o In the first usage of **v4** it is the noun

2. Stark—‘either/or’ contrast—we *either* boast in Christ *or* in the [things of] the flesh

⁴ *although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:* ⁵ *circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of*

the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

II. PAUL'S EXAMPLE—HIS PERSONAL TESTIMONY—vv4-14

4 *Although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: **5** circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. **7** But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. **8** More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, **9** and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, **10** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; **11** in order that I may attain the resurrection from the dead. **12** Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. **13** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind, and reaching forward to what lies ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

A. INTRODUCTION ABOUT PAUL'S TESTIMONY

1. Importance of Paul's example

- a. If anyone has reason to boast in human reasons for salvation—it is Paul
- b. If Paul cannot boast of these—then nobody can justify other ways to be saved

2. Paul's seven credentials are divided into two types—heredity and accomplishments

a. Heredity—the first four points

1. Circumcised
2. Of the nation of Israel
3. Tribe of Benjamin
4. Hebrew of Hebrews

b. Accomplishments—next three points

1. Introducing each accomplishment on the list [v5]—'according to'—**κατα**

- a. This type of introduction is used for things of merit—measured by a standard

- b. The following three things each follow a 'kata'
2. The three accomplishments—with three standards
 - a. Pharisee—according to the standard of the Law
 - b. Persecutor—according to the standard of zeal [for Judaism]
 - c. Blameless—according to the righteousness of the Law

B. PAULS OLD WAY OF LIFE [His credentials explained]

1. His [former] Confidence in the Flesh—**verse 4**

- If anyone could boast this way—certainly Paul far outdid them
- He had many things to *boast* about—referring back to **verse 3**
- This contrasts his *former* boasting—with his *current* lack of confidence (boasting)

2. Basis for former confidence—**verse 5**

- Jewish heritage
- Personal accomplishments

3. Jewish heritage—and heredity—**verse 5a**

a. Two distinct categories—each one introduced by an indefinite article

1. 'an eighth day person'
2. 'a Hebrew of Hebrews'

b. 'An **eighth day person**'

1. He was a true Jew by birth—an properly circumcised on the 8th day according to the Law
2. This made him a full-Jew—not just a God-fearer—though he was from Tarsus, not Jerusalem
3. This made him superior [in some Jews' eyes] to full-converts, who became Jews as adults

c. A **Hebrew of Hebrews**

1. Described in two ways

- a. Of the **nation of Israel** itself—by birth, with a place in one of the tribes
- b. The tribe of **Benjamin**—his bloodline showed his place in the nation

2. Could also mean—of the 'Hebrew' party

a. Not a full-Jew who had been Hellenized

1. This might have been expected since He was from Tarsus

2. Compare this with the three other political parties

- o Jews/Hebrews
- o Greeks/Hellenists
- o Herodians
- o Zealots

b. Rather, a ‘Jew’ who spoke Aramaic and could read Hebrew

4. Paul’s former accomplishments—**verse 5b**

a. These were the results of his volition—his will/choice—not just birth

b. He went the extra mile beyond Jewishness—in the Law, zeal for the nation, and righteousness

c. The three accomplishments

1. A **Pharisee** [by the standard of the Law]

a. Compare this with the other three ethnic/religious parties

- o Pharisees
- o Sadducees
- o Samaritans
- o Essenes

b. His pedigree as a Pharisee was impeccable

1. See Acts 22:3—*I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city [Jerusalem], educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.*

2. See Acts 26:4-5—*So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem; since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.*

2. His zeal for the nation of Israel—a **persecutor** of Christians

a. His motives were genuine—for the purification of Israel by eradicating a heresy

b. Evidence of his persecution

1. Luke’s testimony—Acts 9:1-2—*Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.*

2. Paul’s testimony before the Jews in Jerusalem—Acts 22:4-5—*I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons, as also the high priest*

and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.

3. **Blameless**—righteous—according to the Law

a. He did not mean that he had been absolutely perfect—only God is perfect

b. But he had been externally without blame

1. He had never been accused of breaking the Law

2. Publicly, he was blameless

o This is no small feat

o Who can claim that they have never broken a public rule or law?

c. Contrast this with what he knew of himself inwardly

1. Under the law—as a Jew

*Rom 7:7-12—What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’ But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the law sin is dead. I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and **I died**; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in **death for me**; for **sin taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me**. So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.*

- This makes it clear that Saul, as a Jew, knew that inwardly he was a sinner

2. Even as a Christian

Rom 7:14-8:4—For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which swells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. Therefore there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of

the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did; sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin. He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

- Even after conversion, Paul knew he was not perfect but struggled with sin

C. HIS RENUNCIATION OF THE PAST AND HIS NEW/PRESENT WAY OF LIFE—[verses 7-11](#)

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

A. PAUL'S LIFE SHOWS CONTRAST BETWEEN FALSE AND TRUE VALUES

1. He *had been* of the circumcision—that had no power to save
2. He *has become* legitimate—unlike the dogs and evil workers who have twisted the truth (v2)
3. But he still uses himself as an example of contrast—the old Saul vs the new Paul
4. This shows the contrast between v2 (false circumcision) and v3 (true circumcision)

B. PAUL'S LOSS FOR CHRIST—THE OLD SAUL VS. THE NEW PAUL

1. Three statements of loss
 - a. The three statements
 - o **v7**—whatever things were gain to me . . . I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ
 - o **v8**—I count all things to be loss
 - o **v8**—for whom I have suffered the loss of all things
 - b. Superlative degree—used in each case to emphasize his point
2. Three contrasts—the pattern
 - a. Each *present negative* is contrasted with a *previous positive*
 - b. Each negative resulted in a better situation—the positive objective
 - c. Tense progression
 1. Past and perfect tenses—what **were** gain I **have counted** as loss—[verse 7](#)

- The old gain is gone permanently—were gain (past tense)
- Paul *continues* to count them loss—have counted (perfect tense)

2. Present tense—I **count** all things to be loss in view . . . of **knowing**—**verse 8a**

- present action—I [still] count at this point in time all things loss
- leads to continuous confidence—on-going knowing of Christ

3. Perfect and Present tenses with subjunctive conditional result—**verse 8b**

- I have suffered = I did suffer and continue suffering loss of all things
- I presently count them as rubbish
- So that—I may gain Christ

4. **v7** was *past* action—**v8** *twice* affirms his *continued* assurance he has done the right thing

3. The three **contrasts** and three **objectives**

[Note: each present ‘loss’ is actually a ‘gain’—and each previous ‘gain’ was really a ‘loss’]

a. gain (+) → loss (-) → for [the sake of]—Christ **verse 7**

‘advantage’ κερδος	‘damage/loss’ ζημια	on account of—Christ δια
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b. all things (+) → loss (-) → knowing Christ Jesus my Lord **verse 8a**

all πασ	‘damage/loss’ ζημια	understanding of γνωσις
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c. all things (+) → suffer loss (-) count as rubbish (-) → gain Christ **verse 8b**

all πασ	verb form of ‘damage/loss’ ζημιωω	acquire, get gain επικερδαινω verb form of ‘gain’ in verse 7
	refuse, garbage, dregs, excrement σκυβαλον	

C. PAUL’S NEW/PRESENT WAY OF LIFE—[Paul’s Gain]—**verses 8c—9a**

1. The object of gain = Christ (vv 8c—9a)

8c so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him

a. To gain Christ (**v8**)

1. To “gain” [**επικερδαινω**] is the verb form of noun [**κερδος**] in verse 7

2. Contrast:

- o Christ is the present, permanent advantage
- o And He replaces what once had been Paul’s worldly advantage

b. What does it mean—to be found in Him—“in Christ?”

1. Our **nature** changes: we are made wise—righteous—sanctified—and redeemed

I Cor 1:30—*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*

2. We are made **anew**

a. Alive—no longer dead

I Cor 15:22—*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

b. New creatures—the old has passed away

II Cor 5:17—*Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

- Like the contrast between new ‘gain’ in Christ—vs—old gain that was loss

3. We are made **free**

a. From **condemnation**—of sin and death

Rom 8:1-2—*1 [There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

b. From the **law**—especially the legalism of circumcision

Gal 2:4—*But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage.*

- Galatians situation was fighting false circumcision—just as here in Philippians
- Points back to **verse 3**—glorying in **Christ**—and not confident in the flesh

4. **Examples** of others in Christ—**Romans 16**

Verse 3—Priscilla and Aquila

Verse 7—Andronicus and Junius

Verse 9—Urbane

Verse 10—Apelles

5. **Unified** in one body—the church

Rom 12:5—*So we, [being] many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of*

another.

Examples: churches in Judea and in Corinth

a. In Corinth

I Cor 1:2—*Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified **in Christ** Jesus, called [to be] saints, with all that **in** every place call upon the name of Jesus **Christ** our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

b. In Judea

Gal 4:22—*And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were **in Christ**:*

D. WHAT BEING ‘FOUND IN CHRIST’ ENCOMPASSES—**verses 9-11**

9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

1. Being ‘found in Christ’ does **NOT** mean

- a. NOT having our ‘own’ righteousness—from keeping the law
- b. This is like a ‘good conduct medal’ approach—one of merit
 - We are not ‘non-commissioned’ followers of Christ—[who get good conduct medals!]
 - This is not about meeting the minimum standards of conduct
 - Rather about going beyond standards of conduct—and serving Him fully
 - We are ‘commissioned’ to go beyond good conduct—to bear fruit and make disciples
- c. This is not a ‘status’ thing—but a measure of the fullness of our relationship with God
- d. And the fullest possible relationship with the Father—is to be found ‘in Christ’ His on

2. Being ‘found in Christ’ **does** mean—five ‘**thats**’

- a. First ‘that’—**BASIS** of relationship ‘in Christ’ = **righteousness** [relationship]
 1. Which is through **faith in Christ**
 2. Which comes **from God**—on the basis of that faith
- b. Second → Fourth ‘that’s’—**OPERATION** of being ‘in Christ’—**how we live** ‘in Christ’
 1. That I may know Him—really **know** Christ—personally—existentially—intimately
 2. [That I may know] power of His **resurrection**—new lives of hope, no longer dead/enslaved

3. [That I may know] fellowship of His **sufferings**—go wherever and do whatever He says

- Without any fear!
- Growing through adversity and trial
- Being molded and shaped into a true servant
- Experiencing genuine fellowship with Christ as a result

c. Fifth ‘that’—ultimate **GOAL** of being ‘in Christ’—**resurrection** from the dead

1. Physical consummation to spiritual resurrection we have already experienced

2. Not yet have attained this—**see verse 12**

3. Not just a *place* [heaven]—but being like Christ—actually with the Father

E. THREE SAVING RESULTS OF BEING FOUND IN CHRIST—**verses 9b—11**

- ❖ **Justification**
- ❖ **Sanctification**
- ❖ **Glorification**

1. **Justification**—**verses 9b-9c**

not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

a. Justification = being made righteous/right

b. The nature of this righteousness

1. Not from the law—but through faith

- Not faith in anything else—before Paul had trusted the law
- Only the faith in/of Christ

2. Not from oneself—but from God

- By the grace of God
- Through (based on) faith

3. Two possible readings—**through faith in Christ**

a. Faith directed to Christ—our faith **in** Christ

b. Faithfulness of Christ

1. Genitive construction can be ‘faith **of** Christ’—or ‘Christ’s faith’

2. This would fit the meaning of **Ephesians 2:8-9**

- i.e. faith that is ‘not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God’

3. When faith is associated with God/Christ—it often means ‘faithfulness’

4. ‘Faithfulness of Christ’ is likely—a stronger contrast to ‘righteousness of my own’

2. Sanctification/consecration—**verse 10**

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death

a. Sanctification = being made holy—being made in God’s likeness—becoming like Christ

- o Really ‘knowing’ Him
- o Being conformed to Him (His death)

b. Evidence of becoming like Christ

1. Knowing Him

a. Understanding Him and learning His ways fully

b. Same verb [**γινώσκω**] as **verse 8**

1. This *explains* how one has that surpassing value of knowing Christ

2. There are three aspects of fully knowing Christ—for whom Paul suffered loss of everything

c. Notice in the three following phrases—**His** is reiterated in each situation

- These are not general examples of resurrection, suffering, and conforming
- They are specifically and exactly like those of Christ
- The possessive pronoun is repeated for emphasis

2. Evidence of knowing Christ fully—three things:

a. Knowing the power of His resurrection

δυναμις = dynamic power used by God in miracles

1. **His** resurrection—which was unique—unlike earlier temporary ones

2. Knowing—understanding/believing that the Lord Himself was raised

3. Experiencing the same power—being made anew—spiritually reborn

4. Anticipating actual raising from the dead at the end of our mortal life

I Cor 6:14—*Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.*

b. Knowing the fellowship of His sufferings

κοινωνια = intimate communion

παθημα = affliction, misfortune, calamity

1. Becoming one with Christ, and through Him, one with the Father—**John 17**

2. Community fellowship like that between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

3. Result of being one with Christ = suffering His afflictions

a. We cannot know power of His resurrection—without suffering His afflictions

b. Not just a metaphor—but this means *real* suffering

c. Paul's example of suffering

II Cor 15: 23-29—*Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was ship-wrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren,; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches. Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?*

b. But such suffering **with Christ** is bearable and for a purpose

II Cor 4:7-12—*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us, but life in you.*

c. This suffering is temporary—and points to that which is eternal glory

II Cor 4:16-18—*Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

c. Being conformed to His death

σμορφιζω = having the same form

a. There can be no new life without the pain of death

b. Dying to self—not just once but continuously—daily—**Lk 9:23**

c. This is necessary for sin and its bondage to be put to death

Rom 6:4-7—*Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.*

3. **Glorification**—**verse 11**

in order that I may attain the resurrection from the dead

a. This points to the final resurrection and glorification

b. It will be at the return of Christ—the great general resurrection

- **I Thess 4: 13-18**
- **Rev 20: 4-6**

c. It will also be when we die individually

I Cor 15: 22-23—*For as in Adam all die, so all in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming.*

d. The following passage (**vv12-14**) suggests Paul means the individual resurrection—glorification

e. The individual resurrection fits with Paul's desire "to depart and be with the Lord"—**1:23**

f. Yearning to be with the Lord—other texts:

1. See **1:21**—*For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*

2. See **1:23**—*But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is much better*
3. **II Cor 5:8**—*we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord*
4. **II Tim 4:6-8**—*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

g. Certainty of heavenly promise

1. Read **I Cor 15: 12-19**—especially verse 19—*If we have hope in Christ in this life only, we are of all me most to be pitied.*
2. **I Cor 6:14**—*Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.*
3. **Heb 11:19**—*He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.*
4. **Lk 9:51**—[Jesus was convinced of His own ascension]—*When the days were approaching for His ascension, He was determined to go to Jerusalem [He set his face toward Jerusalem].*
5. **Rom 4:21**—[Abraham]—*and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.*

12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. **13** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind, and reaching forward to what lies ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. **15** Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; **16** however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

A. STRUCTURE (3 Nots—5 Buts—1 Therefore—1 However)

1. Three things that have NOT yet happened (past to present action)
 - a. Not obtained 'it' (v12)
 - b. Not already become perfect (v12)
 - c. Not having laid hold of 'it' (v13)
2. Five things—BUT are happening (present to future action)

- a. I press on—*so that* (purpose/motivation) (v12)
 - b. I may lay hold of (v12)
 - c. Forgetting what lies behind (v13)—this one thing—includes the following two actions↓
 - d. Reaching forward to what lies ahead (v13)
 - e. I press on—*toward* (goal/objective) (v14)
3. Therefore (v15)
- a. Certain ones of us—as many as are perfect
 - Have this attitude
 - b. Others who do not have this attitude
 - God will reveal it to you
4. However (v16)

Keep living by that which we have attained

B. CONTEXT

1. Athletic imagery—word picture

- Press on (v12)
- Reaching forward (v13)
- Press on toward the goal (v14)
- The prize (v14)

2. Very popular with everyone in Greece and Macedonia

a. Greek games

- Olympic games conducted every four years at Elis in Western Greece
- Had begun at least by 8th century BC
- Honored the gods Hera and Zeus
- Continued until conversion to Christianity—Theodosius banned them in 393 AD
- Therefore conducted regularly every four years for 1000 years

b. Roman games

- Philippi—a Roman colony—had a forum near its center
- It was laid out in two terraces on both sides of the main road
- Constructed in several phases between reigns of Claudius and Antoninus Pius (mid-1st to mid-2nd centuries)
- Nearby, the theater (built during the time of Philip of Macedon—4th century BC) was enlarged and expanded in order to hold Roman gladiatorial and animal games

C. EXPOSITION

1. **v 12a**—*Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect*

a. ‘obtained’

- To take with the hand
- To take that which is one’s own
- To take with intention of not letting go—grabbing hold of—seized

b. ‘it’—not in the Greek text—understood

- What is understood—‘the resurrection from the dead’ (v11)

c. [not that I have already] ‘become perfect’

- To be complete—finished
- To accomplish the goal
- Important note: this is the **verb**—this *action* has not yet been completed
- So—Paul has not yet been **made perfect**—the process is not yet finished
- As long as Paul is *alive*—the *process* is not complete

2. **v 12b**—*but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ*

a. ‘press on’

- Run swiftly in order to catch—race after
- Derived from the word ‘to flee’—therefore: to take flight after
- Seek after eagerly

b. ‘lay hold’

1. Definition

- Same word in 12a (obtained = lambano)—plus a prefix (kata = down/through) to intensify
- To take possession of—to take captive
- ‘**may** lay hold of’ = subjunctive mood
 - Wishful mood one step removed from actuality
 - This does not mean he is not certain of the outcome
 - But not presumptuous—not assuming it to the point of taking it for granted

2. Examples

a. Negative

- **Jn 1:5**—*The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it* [i.e. did not seize or take it captive]

- o **I Th 5:4**—*But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you [i.e. seize or take you captive] like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day.*

b. Positive

- o **I Cor 9:24**—*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives [i.e. seizes, captures] the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.*

c. [that for which] ‘I am laid hold of’ [by Christ]

- Same word used earlier in this verse (katalambano)—seized—taken captive
- Passive—emphasizes submission of Paul to Christ
 - o Giving over of one’s will and mind
- ‘taken captive by Christ’ = prompted and governed by Him

3. **v 13a**—*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet*

a. [do not] ‘regard myself’ (logizomai)

- To reckon—calculate—compute—to reckon
- Cognate word = logic

b. ‘having laid hold of’ [= to have laid hold of]

- Same word as in last verse (katalambano)—to seize—to take captive
- But here it is perfect tense—continuing action
- This suggests that Paul is still *continuing* to pursue it, though
- It is the indicative mood—it is actual—not a wish

4. **v 13b**—*but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind*

a. One thing

- One thing (forgetting) with two applications (reaching and pressing)
- One thing—denotes certainty—intensive focus [If there is **one** thing I **will** do . . .]

b. Forgetting what lies behind

1. Definition

- o Neglecting—putting something behind you that you want to forget
- o Not caring about anymore—of little consequence to him anymore

2. Application

- o Putting behind past failures behind you—not weighed down with failures and guilt
- o To run a race, you must stay focused ahead
 - Passing the baton
 - *Both* persons—in front and behind—must keep looking ahead
 - If the front person looks behind, he might stumble

- o Not remembering all that Paul counted as loss for Christ—3:7-8
 - They are permanently gone

5. v 13c—and reaching forward to what lies ahead

a. Reaching forward = stretching forward

- Imagery: stretching one’s chest to break the tape at the finish line

b. What lies ahead = that which is in sight

- Keeping one’s focus on the finish line once it comes into view

6. v 14—I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus

a. ‘I press on’

1. This is the second part of the one thing (forgetting the past) he does—i.e. he (1) reaches forward and (2) presses on

2. This is the same verb used in verse 12—to run swiftly, with eagerness

- o He repeats this verb because he *continues* doing what he was doing in verse 12—*keeps on racing*
- o This is because he is still in pursuit of the same thing as in verse 12—“to lay hold of that for which he was laid hold of by Christ Jesus”

3. He also keeps on racing because it is not enough just to be “reaching forward”—both actions are part of *one synchronized motion* necessary to finish the race

- o One cannot finish the race simply by lunging forward—it is necessary to keep your footing and keep driving to the finish
- o It also implies to other things
 - Staying focused on the goal—mentally and visually
 - Finishing strong—physically
- o This is a coordinated activity of the entire being—heart, soul, mind, and strength

b. ‘toward the goal’ [σκοπος]

1. Used only here in the New Testament

2. Meaning: the distant end in sight

3. Derived from word meaning ‘hidden’—perhaps far enough away that it is barely seen

4. Probably two meanings

- a. The immediate activity/process—of finishing the race—the goal is to finish

- b. The ultimate objective—goes beyond just finishing—it is *how* we finish
 - o The goal is to become perfect (v 12)—i.e. all God has created us to be
 - o This end product is to be like Christ: justified, sanctified, glorified (vv 9-11)
- c. The means of reaching both (finishing and how we finish) is to be like Christ now
 - o How does one do this? The hint is in the next verse—have this ‘attitude’
 - o This ‘attitude’ is the attitude of Christ
 - o Living with a Christ-like attitude is the goal
- c. ‘for the prize’
 - 1. The meaning:
 - o That which is given by the arbiter/judge of the games
 - o Award given to the victor in the games
 - 2. *After* reaching the *goal*—and *only* then—one receives the prize
 - o The prize itself is defined in the next part of the verse↓
- d. the upward call of God in Christ Jesus—*this* is the prize
 - 1. ‘upward call’
 - a. KJV ‘high’ calling—makes it sound like a noble calling—but this is probably not accurate
 - b. ‘high’ (**αυτο**) = means ‘above’ or ‘heavenward’
 - o Jn 8:23—[Jesus said]—*I am from **above**, you are of this world; I am not of this world*
 - o Col 3:1-2—*Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things **above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things **above**, not on the things that are on earth.*
 - c. ‘call’ = calling or invitation (as to a feast)
 - o This is not just a vocation/calling that we fulfill in this life
 - o It is what lies ahead—at the *end* of the race
 - o It is the invitation given in Mt 22—the Parable of the Wedding Feast
 - Like the invitation given in Mt 22—the Parable of the Wedding Feast
 - Verse 14—*Many are called, but few are chosen*

- o It is finally accomplished through the resurrection—at the end of the race
2. ‘of God’—i.e. God’s call
 - Genitive subjective—God is the subject that produces this call—He extends the invitation
 3. ‘in Christ Jesus’
 - a. The call has been issued by Jesus Christ—the offer of salvation
 - b. The call has been fulfilled by Jesus Christ Himself—His resurrection and glorification
 - c. Its promise resides in Christ, who holds the prize—at the right hand of the Father

7. **v 15a**—*Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude*

- a. ‘as many as are perfect’
 1. This is not a contradiction with **v 12**—Paul says that he has not already become perfect
 - o Verse 12 uses the verb—to be made perfect—God making us what He want us to be
 - o God is not yet finished with anyone in this life—so none of us is perfectly finished
 2. But this is the adjective—a ‘perfect’ kind of person = ‘mature’
 - o The kind of person whom God is making perfect—making fully mature
 - o This is not perfectionism—but living as God intends us to live—as mature Christians
 - o Mt 5:48—we are to be perfect like our Father is perfect
 - Context: we are to love as our heavenly Father loves—perfectly
 - See vv 44-5—*But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven*
- b. ‘have this attitude’
 1. Obviously—have the same attitude as that of Christ—all together
 2. Referring back to chapter 2—two themes recalled
 - a. Unity among believers
 - **2:2**—all having the same mind (attitude)—being like-minded
 - b. Having the same attitude as Christ
 - **2:5-8**—have the same attitude as Christ—humility, servanthood, obedience

8. **v 15b**—*and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you*
- a. Background: there is some dissension in the body
 1. Hinted at in chapter 2—verse 2 urges them to remain united
 2. Warned against in chapter 3—verse 2—the possible influence of false teachers
 3. Urged harmony (probably reconciliation) in chapter 4—verse 2—Euodia and Syntyche
 - b. Paul’s remedy
 1. If you have the right attitude—unity will be the result
 2. If you do not have the right attitude—God will sort it out
 - a. Paul has dealt with the *detailed* issues—and they must be considered
 - b. But only God can deal with the *attitudes* at the core of the problems
 - c. If we let God fix the attitudes, then the issues will be resolved in the unity of Christ’s spirit
9. **v 16**—*However, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained*
- a. ‘let us keep on living’ = let us keep living up to
 - o An orderly walk—a disciplined walk
 - o Word picture—to walk in the same row as a soldier
 - b. ‘by that same standard’
 1. standard is ‘canon’ [**κανων**] = rule—measuring rod—carpenter’s line or tape
 2. ‘that same’ = the same mind—likeminded [all holding it together]
 3. Interpretation: by the standard of measurement we all have held together
 - c. ‘to which we have attained’
 1. that which we have arrived at—that we have reached
 2. what we have all come to hold and to live by
 - o This is not a ‘status’ to be attained
 - o It is a lifestyle they all affirm—by which they have been living
 - d. Summary: keep on living by the standard we have all adopted and have all been living by

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into the conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

vv 17-21 Contrast between true followers and false teachers

A. BACKGROUND—CONTEXT

1. Basic message:

Paul compares true believers, who follow the true pattern of Christ, with those who oppose Christ.

2. Literary style:

a. Same as 3:1-16—contrasting examples

b. In 3:1-16—he used **single** contrasts—between himself with the false teachers

c. Here he uses **plural** contrasts—between true followers (church) and the false teachers

3. Subject: false teachers are probably the same ones as 3:2—of the ‘false circumcision’

B. STRUCTURE

v17 Follow this example

Paul’s example (continues singular example he described in verses 4-14)
A pattern you have in us (shifts to plural pattern)

vv18-19 The other example [implied: do not follow it]—false teachers

Enemies of the cross:

Whose end is destruction
Whose god is their appetite
Whose glory is their shame
Who set their mind on earthly things

vv20 The contrasting example—true followers

Identity: whose citizenship is in heaven
Hope: from which we eagerly wait for a Savior
Source of hope: the Lord Jesus Christ
Promise: he will change our bodies
 From their humble state
 Into conformity with His glorious body
How: by the power He has to subject all things to Himself

C. COMMENTARY

1. Follow this example (v17)

- a. Before—he had told them to follow Christ’s example—to have His attitude (2:5-8)
- b. Now Paul tells them to look at his own example

1. A bold claim to make

One must have an example worthy of following in order to say this

2. But this fits the context—he has been giving his *personal* testimony

- o Of how *not* to be—**vv 2-6**
- o Of how he had changed—**vv 7-11**
- o Of how he was continuing toward the goal—**vv 12-16**

3. It also fits other places where Paul has said the same thing

- a. **I Cor 4:16**—*Therefore, I exhort you, be imitators of me.* (μιμητες)

1. Paul wrote to the Corinthians as ‘your father through the gospel’
2. We may have many ‘tutors’ in Christ—but not many fathers!
3. The implication—be very careful about whose example you emulate!
4. Also—“*For this reason, I have sent you Timothy*”

- a. There is a heritage/lineage of teaching—that we should respect!

- b. What better confirmation that our example is worthy of following!

- That we can confidently commend one of our followers as teacher of others

- b. **I Cor 11:1**—*Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.* (μιμητες)

1. The real test of our leadership—to be imitated—is the pattern we follow
2. If we are to be imitated—we must be imitators of Christ
3. For example—consider the often quoted command

Heb 13:17-18—*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.*

- a. This must be read in context of previous **verses 7-8**

Heb 13:7-8—*Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, **imitate** their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

- b. So—we obey/submit to those leaders [and imitate those] who do the following:

1. Speak the word of God
2. Give evidence they are following the word—by the “result of their conduct”
3. Who, themselves, imitate the changeless Christ

- a. The example of Christ—given in **verse 12**—the Suffering Servant

Heb 12:12—*Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.*

- b. Leaders give evidence of imitating Christ—in the following manner

1. The very minimum expected of *all* believers—sacrificial praise

Heb 12:15-16—*Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

2. And more specifically—*leaders* [like Paul]—behave honorably

Heb 12:18—*Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.*

- c. **II Thess 3:7-9**—*For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our **example**, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, nor did we eat anyone’s bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you; not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a **model** for you, so that you would follow our **example**.*

1. Parallels to Philippians 3:17

- ‘follow our example’ = **μιμεομαι** (used for ‘example’ in Phil 3:17)
- ‘model’ = **τυπικος** (used for ‘pattern’ in Phil 3:17)

2. An example worthy to follow

- a. Is hard-working—laboring even in hardship—[without complaint!]
 - b. Disciplined—i.e. one who is *not* disorderly—out of step with the cohort/ranks
 - c. Not presumptuous—assuming others will carry the load
- c. This is not just **one** ‘example’ but a ‘pattern’ followed by many people
- 1. ‘join in following my example’—the singular example of Paul
 - a. Two words
 - 1. **γίνομαι** = to become
 - 2. **συμμιμητής** (sum + mimitās) = with + imitate (mimic)
 - b. Meaning = become imitators of me
 - c. Form = present, middle, imperative = you yourselves become! Imitating! (commanded)
 - 1. Intentsive = you yourselves do this to yourselves
 - 2. Imperative = commanded—there is not option if you are truly a Christian
 - 2. ‘observe those who walk of according to the pattern’—the **common pattern** of the whole body
 - a. ‘observe’ (**σκοπεω**) = fix your eyes upon
 - 1. Verb-cognate of noun in **verse 14**—the ‘goal’ **σκοπος**—on which you focus in a race
 - 2. Same verb as in **2:4**—do not look (focus) on your own interests, but those of others
 - b. ‘those who walk’ (**περιπατεω**) = to walk around—peri + pateo
 - 1. ‘peripatetic’ = one who walks around, strolls
 - 2. Term used to describe followers of Aristotle—who ‘walked about’ as he taught
 - c. ‘pattern’ (**τυπικωσ**-taken from **τυπος**)
 - 1. Word from which we get ‘type’ or ‘typical’
 - 2. An example that is the basis for imitation
 - 3. The teaching that embodies the sum and substance of religious beliefs
 - d. Paul is just one example of this overall pattern that is imitated by many followers
2. The other pattern—[implied—do not follow this one] (**vv18-19**):

18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

- a. “of whom I often told you”
 1. We don’t know when/how Paul told them beforehand
 2. Possibly on *other* occasions not mentioned here—maybe face-to-face?
 3. And probably includes those he has just mentioned at the beginning of **chapter 3**
- b. Paul’s deep grief about this
 1. κλαίω—weeping, mourning, wailing
 - The only place Paul ever uses this word for himself
 2. But similar to the emotion Paul expressed in Romans
 - When Paul lamented rejection of the gospel by Jews
 - **Romans 9:1-3**—*I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh . . .*
 3. Why does he have such deep grief?
 - a. Because of harm they might do to the church and Christ’s cause
 - b. But also because Paul is concerned *even* for them—for their own salvation
 - c. So—here we might be showing the same kind of mercy he felt for wayward Jews!
- c. Who are these people?
 1. ‘For many walk’ = walk about—περιπατεω
 - a. Same verb used in previous verse—[v17—those walking according to *right* pattern]
 - b. Used here to show **contrast**—these walking the *opposite* way—the *wrong* pattern
 - c. But also possibly—another meaning
 - They may be ‘walking about’—following Paul—hounding him
 - Or ‘walking about’—among the Philippians—trying to mislead them

2. Enemies of the cross of Christ'
 - a. This is *not* just a passive refusal to accept the message of the cross
 - b. It is active—hostile opposition—to *undermine* and *defeat* the gospel
 - c. They are actual *enemies*
 1. **εχθρος** = one who is hostile—who shows *hatred*—one who *hates* the cross
 2. Other Pauline usage
 - a. Once *we also* were like these ‘enemies’—before we were reconciled [and saved]
 - **Rom 5:10**—*For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*
 - Implication—there is still hope for even these enemies of the cross to be reconciled!
 - b. The Colossians—a good example—illustrating **two points** about such ‘enemies’
 - **Col 1:21-23**—*21 And although you were formerly alienated and enemies in mind, engaged in evil deeds, 22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— 23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.*
 - The two points:
 1. The Colossians—as we all—were once enemies of the cross [**v21**]—who were reconciled
 2. The Colossians—had to be careful—to remain steadfast to the gospel—and not to deviate from it
 - Implication—Philippians must be careful—not to lured away by these enemies—who wish to alienate them from the gospel
 - c. Death is just such an ‘enemy’
 - **I Cor 15:25-26**—*For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. he last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*
 - Implication—those who oppose the cross—are agents of death—not life!
 - d. This is yet another reason Paul is so distraught—to the point of tears

- At the center of Paul’s whole theology—is the cross
- Preaching of the cross is the power of God—I Cor 1:18
- ‘Theology of the Cross’—contrasted with—‘Theology of Glory’
- The [shame of the] cross—contrasts with “*whose glory is their shame*”—verse 19

d. What are these people like?—verse 19 d

1. Four equations describe them

- ❖ Whose **end** = **destruction**
- ❖ Whose **god** = their **appetite**
- ❖ Whose **glory** = their **shame**
- ❖ Whose **minds** = set on **earthly things**

1. Their end—is **destruction**

a. Meaning

1. ‘destruction’ = utter ruin—perdition—perishing as in hell
2. Not the loss of existence [obliteration]—but enduring misery and ruination
3. Used by Jesus—in describing the narrow and broad ways

Mt 7:13—*Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to **destruction**, and there are many who enter through it.*

b. Paul contrasted this ‘destruction’ with ‘salvation’

Phil 1:28—*in no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a sign of **destruction** for them, but of **salvation** for you, and that too, from God.*

2. Next two characteristics belong together—**appetite—glory**

a. Linked by relative pronoun ‘whose’

b. Refer to false teachers

- Those coming from Jewish context
- Probably not Gentile libertines

c. Both refer to what Paul has *already* discussed/IMPLIED from Jewish background

1. **Appetite**—this is their ‘god’

- Excessive devotion to Jewish kosher **dietary laws**

- o Which Jesus rejected in **Mark 7**
2. **Glory**—this is their ‘shame’
- o Pride in their **circumcision**
 - o Which identified them biologically—as descendants of Abraham
 - o But not spiritually as God’s children!
- a. Why ‘shame’?—because it is a *false* circumcision—see **3:2**
- b. Also possibly because it refers to genitals—which should not be publicly discussed
3. Their **minds**—are on **earthly** things
- a. Meaning
1. Their mind is on *terrestrial*—not *celestial* (heavenly) things
 2. They have ‘worldly minds’
- b. Contrast
1. ‘have mind’ (**ἠπονεω**) = same word used elsewhere in Philippians
 2. It means to be ‘like-minded’—in unity—and following Christ’s example

1:7—*For it is only right for me to **feel** this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.*

2:2—*make my joy complete by being of the **same mind**, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.*

2:5—*Have this **attitude** in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus*

3:15—*Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this **attitude**; and if in anything you have a different **attitude**, God will reveal that also to you*

3:16—*however, **let us keep** living by that same standard to which we have attained*
- c. So ‘*minds on earthly things*’ means
- o To be like-minded with the world
 - o *Implication*—to be an enemy of the cross—is to be a friend of the world

James 4:4—*You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.*

1. Parallel passage

I Cor 1:7—*so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ*

2. The Savior for whom we wait = the Lord Jesus Christ

3. The Savior is in heaven now—at the right hand of God

a. The Gospel evidence of this

Mk 16:19—*So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.*

a. This had been predicted by Jesus—when being tried before the Sanhedrin

Lk 22:69—*But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God*

b. Jesus' prediction was a reference to **Ps 110:1**—*The Lord says to my Lord: Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.*

b. Stephen saw the Jesus (Son of Man) standing at the right hand of God—Acts 7:55-56

c. Other NT references say Christ is at the right hand of God

- o Rom 8:34
- o Eph 1:20
- o Col 3:1
- o Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2

4. This suggests that something about salvation is not yet complete!

d. Our completion of salvation—**v21**

1. What will be done—our earthly bodies will be transformed

a. This is what Paul has been pointing toward throughout this passage

1. The power of the resurrection—not just the power to *be* resurrected, but also the *result* of the resurrection—i.e. having a resurrected body—3:10 and 3:11

2. Becoming perfect (which He had not done yet)—3:12

b. Transformed = change the appearance of **μετασχηματιζω** (meta + schema)

c. From humble body = 'low' or 'abased'

- o The body that is made of flesh—that one cannot put confidence in—3:3

d. Will be in conformity = will be (**γίνομαι**) + in the same form (**συμ + μορφοσ**)

e. The body of His glory (δοξα)

1. Like His heavenly body
2. What kind of body is this—answered in I Cor 15

I Cor 15:42-3, 49—*So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power . . . Just as we have borne the image of the earthly, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.*

2. How this will be done

a. By the exercise of the power that He has

1. The exercise of = energizing (ενεργεια)
2. power He has = (verb) to have the power (is able to)—δυναμαι
 - o The same root word for dynamite and the power to work miracles
 - o So the energizing of His ability to perform the miraculous

b. What is this powerful ability?

1. To subject everything to Himself
2. His power over all things referred to elsewhere by Paul
 - o **I Cor 15:28**—*When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.*
 - o **Eph 1:20-23**—*which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*
 - o **Phil 2:9-11**—the exaltation of Jesus above all things