

**Running the Race: Joy
in Endurance
A Study in Paul's Letter
to Philippi
Philippians 3:1-21
First Church of Squantum •
July 3, 2017
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**I. Welcome and
Introductions**

**II. Teaser: When you
were a kid, what was one
thing you could do that
set you apart?**

III. Prayer

**IV. Introduction to
Philippians**

A. Philippi

- 1. City in modern-day Greece (the Roman province of Macedonia)**
- 2. Named after King Philip II, Alexander the Great's dad.**

B. Paul

**1. Passionate for God—
initially persecutes
Christians, then Jesus
appears to him**

**2. Great starter—helps
found or encourage new
churches mostly in
Mediterranean**

**3. Great letter writer—
wants to stay in touch
with the churches, to
help them grow, inside
and out**

C. Christians in Philippi

**1. Paul's vision of a
Macedonian man and
founding of church (Acts
16 on flip-side)**

**2. Lydia the God-fearer
(successful business
woman, not a Jew, but
lives like one)**

**3. Not large enough
Jewish population to
have a synagogue (takes
10 men)**

**4. Experienced
persecution**

V. Things to Watch for

A. Connections between enduring and joy!

B. Connections between first and last paragraphs

C. Watch the outline

VI. Notes on

Philippians 3:1–21

brothers. a generic use of the word, meant to

encompass women as well. should probably be better translated brothers and sisters.

dogs. Jews called Gentiles dogs. Paul turns the terminology on its head, calling out those who require circumcision

**for Christians. (See
circumcision below.)
circumcision. In the
early church, a faction
believed that one had to
be Jewish (and keep the
Law) in order to be
Christian. This faction
was called “the
circumcision.” One of the**

physical signs of God's covenant with the children of Abraham. Abraham and all his household are required by God to be circumcised in Genesis 15. Women did not have an equivalent, but participated in the covenant through

intercourse and the bearing of children. But early on—Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6—Moses talked about the importance of “circumcising your heart,” that our hearts might have the indelible mark of God that would

**lead to delighted
obedience and a deeper,
more complete love for
God. (See also Jeremiah
4:4.)**

**we are the
circumcision... Paul
identifies how we know
the “real” circumcision.**

flesh. Greek sarx = worldly, fleshly, sinful, natural (hence, unredeemed).

tribe of Benjamin. The tribe of Benjamin was the smallest of the tribes of Israel (size and number), a very exclusive “club.” (Why so small? One of the

**horrifying stories of the OT can be found at the end of Judges, proving the need for additional guidance from God!)
righteousness.
relational term. Lit. being in a right relationship with God.**

rubbish. Rubbish is not a strong enough word. A better translation would be a cruder term for manure, something you throw on the trash heap.

VII. Questions for Discussion

A. What are the worldly qualifications Paul has for confidence? For confidence in the church?

B. What does Paul think makes for true circumcision? Is this an outward thing or an inward thing?

C. Why do you think Paul considers the fleshly qualifications “rubbish?”

- D. Do you think Paul's point here ties in with the circumcision comments in the first paragraph? If so, how? If not, why not?**
- E. What is Paul's ultimate goal? How is Paul going to get there?**

VIII. Conclusions

- **How do we know we are “ok” with God? Are they what the world thinks make us ok with God?**
- **Humility, obedience and Godly living.**
- **Pressing on toward the goal!**

**Next Week: Last Bible
Study of the summer!
Philippians 4.**