

FOCUS GROUPS

FOCUS Groups are small group meetings that invite interaction and involvement within a pleasant and respectful environment. These groups meet to explore and understand the realities of this world in the light of God's love and truth.

Philippians Chapter 3

V1 ~ Paul now states what he has been longing to remind the Philippians of ... *rejoice!* But more than a mental attitude, Paul will now give instruction as to how one can truly rejoice; even in jail!

V2,3 ~ It appears that Paul is addressing Jewish teachers who were promoting 'additional' work to be right with God. God's word through Paul - *Beware, beware, beware.* New Testament Circumcision references: **Romans 2:25-29, 4:9-12, Colossian 2:11-14**

V4-6 ~ Paul now proceeds to compare with the intent to disprove the false teachers. He is not boasting in the sense of drawing attention to his accomplishments. He is merely comparing based on their logic of righteousness comes by human effort. If righteousness comes by human effort, then Paul would be most qualified according the standard of the law, but...

V7 ~ Paul's summary is all that he inherited, all that he was taught, and all that he did was of no value compared to knowing Jesus!

V8 ~ The gospel is free to you and me, but it does have a price. Paul *suffered the loss of all things.* He did pay a price for his devotion to Jesus, yet he knew that what he gained was of far greater value.

V9 ~ What liberty and joy to know that you are right with God because of God. Not my works, not my bloodline, by Him and Him alone!

V10 ~ Paul desired to grow closer to Jesus; through faith, to know the power of His resurrection, to have the fellowship of suffering, laying aside his own will to fully know God's.

V11 ~ I believe Paul is referring to resurrection life in this life. He knew of the life to come (**1:21-23**) yet he longed to be more surrendered, more submitted, more of a servant like Jesus. The reality is that the closer we get to Jesus the more clearly we see our need of more of Him. It is kind of simple; the more light, the easier it is to see the impurities. Paul did not recoil at the knowledge of his sin, he desired more of Jesus and less of self.

V12-14 ~ What a wonderful mindset: Honesty, determination, forward-looking, goal oriented with an understanding of strength.

Honesty: I am not there yet! This was not depressing to Paul rather motivating. To many of us honesty can be depressing, change the way you think if that is you!

Determination: **2 Corinthians 11:23-33** gives us a glimpse of what Paul went through while serving. This “drive” was fueled by the reality that is revealed in **2 Corinthians 5:14,15**.

Forward-looking: Learning, building from the past but looking to the future. Many Christians get caught in the past and can’t progress toward the goal.

Goal-Oriented: Not task driven or imbalanced. Paul was able to fix his eyes on a target and move towards it. It is clear from the context of this letter that Paul knew that his strength was in God and God alone. (**4:13, 3:10, 1:6**)

V15,16 ~ Paul realized that he was not competing nor comparing himself against other believers. Each of us must walk in the knowledge we have been given, with the desire to know more. (**2 Peter 3:18**)

V17 ~ There is a healthy side to comparing “with” other believers as revealed in this verse. Seeing someone mature and endure strengthens our faith when we see and hear of what God is doing.

V18,19 ~ Paul had seen many walk away from simplicity that is in Christ. Clearly this tugged at his heart, yet he had to “call it like it is” concerning false teaching and selfish motives. What would Paul have to say about many of the ministries today?

V20-21 ~ In contrast to an earthy perspective we are to remember who we are in Christ. This world is not our home and we should long for His return, for heaven, and for our new heavenly bodies. (**2 Corinthians 5:1-11**)

My Memory Verse for this week: _____

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ...”
PHILIPPIANS 1:6