**Chapter 3: The Spiritual Mind (How To Experience Joy in Spite of Earthly Things)**

**3.1 Paul’s Past (The Accountant) I Count** **(New Values) (3:1-11)**

**3.1.1 Righteousness by Works (The exhortation 3:1-3)**

Finally,

my brothers,

rejoice in the Lord.

To write the same things to you

is no trouble to me

and is safe for you.

Who is Paul talking about here?

How are they like dogs?

Why are they evildoers?

What is he referring to here?

2Look out for the dogs,

look out for the evildoers,

look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

3For we are the circumcision,

who worship by the Spirit of God

and glory in Christ Jesus

and put no confidence in the flesh—

**3.1.2 Righteousness by Works (The example 3:4-6)**

4though I myself have reason for confidence

 in the flesh also.

If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence

in the flesh,

I have more:

5circumcised on the eighth day, [he was “righteous” from birth]

of the people of Israel, [a descendent through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob]

of the tribe of Benjamin, [Jacob’s youngest son – from Rachel, the tribe of Benjamin produced king Saul, and supported David during the rebellion]

a Hebrew of Hebrews; [a model Jew]

as to the law,

a Pharisee; [considered the most righteous Jewish sect, studied under Gamaliel]

6as to zeal,

a persecutor of the church; [a zeal demonstrated by actions]

as to righteousness under the law

blameless. [outward righteousness – consider similarity to the rich young ruler]

**Questions**

1. What was Paul’s ultimate downfall? See Romans 7:7-11

**3.1.3 Righteousness by Faith (Paul’s Losses 3:7)**

7But whatever gain I had,

I counted as loss

for the sake of Christ.

8Indeed,

I count everything as loss

because of the surpassing worth

**of knowing Christ Jesus** my Lord.

For his sake

I have suffered the loss of

all things

and count them as rubbish,

in order that I may **gain Christ** 9

**Questions:**

1. What does it mean to know Christ?
2. Why is that important?
3. What things has Paul suffered?
4. What is his perspective on suffering?

**Additional Reading:**

*The Life of God in the Soul of Man, by Henry Scougal*

 **(Paul’s Gains 3:8-11)**

and be found in him,

not having a righteousness of my own

that comes from the law,

but that which comes

through faith in Christ,

the righteousness from God

that depends on faith.

**Question:**

1. What basic doctrine is Paul talking about here? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10that I may

know him [see Colossians 1:27]

and the power of his resurrection [see Colossians 1:29]

 and may share his sufferings,

becoming like him in his death,

11that by any means possible

I may attain

the resurrection from the dead.

**Question:**

1. What does Paul mean by the phrase “becoming like him in his death?”

**3.2 Paul’s Present (The Athlete) I Press (New Goals) (3:12-16)**

**3.2.1 Paul’s Dissatisfaction (3:12)**

12Not that I have already obtained this

 or am already perfect,

but

I press on

to make it my own,

because Christ Jesus

has made me his own.

**3.2.2 Paul’s Determination (3:13-14)** [see also Hebrews 12 :1-2]

Brothers, I do not consider

That I have made it my own

But **one thing** I do:

forgetting

what lies behind

and straining forward

to what lies ahead,

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

**3.2.5 Paul’s Discipline (3:14-15)**

15Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. 6Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

**3.3 Paul’s Future (The Alien) I Look (New Focus) (3:17-21)**

**3.3.1 The Present World (3:17) Good examples**

17Brothers,

join in imitating me,

and keep your eyes

on those who walk

according to the example

you have in us.

**Additional Reading:**

*The Life and Diary of David Brainerd by David Brainerd and Jonathan Edwards*

*Shadow of the Almighty (the diary of Jim Elliot) by Elizabeth Elliot*

**3.3.2 The Past World (3:18-19) Bad examples**

18For many,

of whom I have often told you

and now tell you

even with tears,

walk as enemies

of the cross of Christ. 1

9Their end

is destruction,

their god

is their belly,

and they glory

in their shame,

with minds

set

**on earthly things.**

**3.3.3. The Future World (3:20-21) Heavenly examples**

But

our citizenship

is in heaven,

and from it

we await

a Savior,

the Lord Jesus Christ,

21who will transform

our lowly body

to be like his glorious body,

by the power

that enables him

even to subject

all things

to himself.

**Additional Reading:**

*The Weight of Glory by C.S. Lewis*

*Transposition by C.S. Lewis*

**Reinforcing the Passage**

“Dr. Minirth and I are convinced that many people do choose happiness, but still do not obtain it. The reason for this is that even though they choose to be happy, they seek for inner peace and joy in the wrong places. They seek for happiness in materialism and do not find it. They seek for joy in sexual prowness but end up with fleeting pleasures and bitter long-term disappointments. They seek inner fulfillment by obtaining positions of power in corporations, in government, or even in their own families (by exercising excessive control), but they remain unfulfilled. I have had millionaire businessmen come to my office and tell me they have big houses, yachts, condominiums in Colorado, nice children, a beautiful mistress, and unsuspecting wife, secure corporate positions – and suicidal tendencies. They have everything this world has to offer except one thing – inner peace and joy. They come to my office as a last resort, begging me to help them conquer the urge to kill themselves. Why? The answers are not simple. The human mind and emotions are a very complex, dynamic system. But ultimately, they do not have Christ.” Paul Meier

“I may, I suppose, regard myself, or pass for being, as a relatively successful man. People occasionally stare at me in the streets – that’s fame. I can fairly easily earn enough to qualify for admission to the higher slopes of the Internal Revenue – that’s success. Furnished with money and a little fame even the elderly, if they care to, may partake of trendy diversions – that’s pleasure. It might happen once in a while that something I said or wrote was sufficiently heeded for me to persuade myself that it represented a serious impact on our time – that’s fulfillment. Yet I say to you – and I beg you to believe me – multiply these tiny triumphs by a million, add them all together, and they are nothing, less than nothing, a positive impediment – measured against one draught of that living water Christ offers to the spiritually thirsty, irrespective of who or what they are.” Malcom Muggeridge

“Most of us have stumbled across the path of someone who provokes in us an uncomfortable sense of feeling small and behind schedule, someone who talks about Christ with the warm familiarity of intimate friendship, someone who has endured loneliness and heartbreak with uncomplaining sadness, accepting pain as a difficult privilege that opens the door to richer closeness with Christ. Some of course, speak with a richness that is more show than substance, and they provoke in others pressure and guilt rather than a thirst to know God. But the few who truly know God entice us to sacrifice whatever we must in order to gain their knowledge. Most of these people are older and reluctant to talk about themselves. They’re easy to pass by. We tend to dismiss them as too old and out of touch, not aware of the psychological struggles of modern life, stuck in a narrow theology that gives insufficient room for the human spirit to breathe and stretch, too preoccupied with ideas that don’t apply to life on the street. But we should listen to these men and women whose passion for God has loosened their attachment to everything here on earth. Exposure to people like this creates a holy covetousness, a desperate desire to know God. If we are to ultimately model the character of Christ, we must become this kind of person.” Larry Crabb

**Music Selections**

1. Who Am I (Casting Growns)
2. Where It Not For Grace (Larnelle Harris)
3. For The Sake of the Call (Steven Curtis Chapman)
4. I Will Rise (Chris Tomlin)
5. Imagine (Casting Crowns)

**Movie Selections**

1. Chariots of Fire (PG)
2. Field of Dreams (PG)
3. Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (G) – the Frank Capra version
4. The Count of Monte Cristo (PG-13)
5. Walk the Line (PG-13)
6. Mr. Holland’s Opus (PG)