**PHILIPPIANS**

Leader Notes - 3:1-11

1. 3:1 – “Write…again.” What is the value of repetition?

**Paul is saying, “it is not annoying to me,” or, “I am not reluctant to write to you the same message.” Why not? Because it has the tendency to confirm them in the truth, to make them firm in the faith, so that they would be less apt to fall.**

**Throughout the OT, God continually warned Israel about forgetting His Word and admonished them to remember it. Reminders of the truth provide safety against the constant assault of falsehood.**

1. 3:2 With a three-fold “watch out” Paul warns against the threat to the Philippians’ spiritual safety. He uses the teaching style of repeating something, he hopes to impress upon his readers

All three of these warnings refer to the same enemies, who are commonly called Judaizers. Judaizers were Jews or Gentile converts to Christianity who claimed to believe in Jesus as their Savior, but they also taught that in addition to believing in Jesus, it was necessary to keep certain ceremonial laws that God had given to the OT Israelites. Why you suppose Paul spoke so strongly?

**The Philippian congregation was a fine congregation, but danger was threatening. Perhaps fresh news concerning the activity of certain false teachers in their area had just reached the apostle. At any rate he used very forceful and vigorous language here to condemn them. There is a vehemence here which is uncharacteristic of the rest of this primarily cheerful epistle. This does not surprise us. Paul always became excited when the gospel was at stake. This shows his deep love and concern for the souls of the believers whose spiritual needs he served.**

1. “dogs” This is a harsh word for Paul’s opponents. It shows their aggressive opposition to the gospel and the seriousness of their error and destructive results. Why do you suppose Paul used this term?

**Dogs were a fairly despised animal in biblical times because they prayed on the sick, dying, or dead (e.g. dogs devoured Jezebel after she was thrown from her window, 2 Kings 9:36).**

1. “men who do evil” These people were workers who pretended to teach the Word of God and so made believe that they labored in the Word and doctrine. How does that make them even more dangerous?

**They seem so much like the other Christians. Therefore, they can more easily deceive the Philippian Christians.**

1. “mutilators” Again a strong, painfully vivid term, the false teachers have so distorted the meaning of circumcision that it has become nothing more than a useless cutting of the body.

**He calls them the “concision,” sarcastically alluding to “circumcision,” which they demanded of their hearers in their preaching. The Apostle here makes a pun to render the insistence upon circumcision as ludicrous and useless. The people upon whom the Philippians were to fix their eyes with caution were Judaistic legalists, who tried to force Christians to be circumcised. Such workers he called “evil-workers,” not because they did not work hard, but because their work was of an evil nature, designed to destroy faith in Christ.**

Who might similar enemies be in our society? What are their approaches? How can we best fend them off?

**The responses may vary. But, included in the answers given should be groups like Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons which call themselves Christian organizations.**

**Their approaches are very zealous as they come to our doors. They also have well-polished media presentations.**

**The best way to defend yourself is to know your Bible well. My wife and I ask Jehovah’s Witness how they see John 1:1. They omit “Word was God.”**

1. 3:3 Why should we not put confidence in any human invention of salvation?

**Everyone is a “boaster,” either in Christ or in himself. Our flesh is not worthy for us to put our confidence; it cannot save.**

1. 3:4-6 Why does Paul have reason to be confident?

**Paul was born a Jew and was not a proselyte. His Jewish roots are deep and very clear. In language, attitudes and life-style, Paul was a true Jew.**

**Very probably these Judaistic false teachers had originally been Jewish proselytes, with whom the Apostle contrasts himself as a native Jew. That is why he also stresses his circumcision on the eighth day.**

1. 3:7-8 He uses the word “loss” three different times in these two verses. The Greek of that word means “damage or disadvantage.” In what way are our works damaging or a disadvantage?

**Our works can have us feeling that we are working our way to heaven. They can make us proud and forgetting that we are saved only through the blood of Jesus.**

1. 3:9 What does “be found in Him” mean?

**This is a union with Christ —not simply an experience in the past, but a present, continuing relationship.**

1. 3:10-11 List the benefits of being “found in Him.” What do these do for your day to day living?

**V – 10 We will know Him. This knowledge is not merely factual. It includes having**

 **Him with us all of the time we are on earth as our best friend.**

**V – 10 The power of resurrection will also raise us from the dead one day.**

**Romans 6:3-4 “3 Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”**

**V – 10 Our sufferings are more bearable because Christ suffered even more in order to save us for eternity. Suffering for sake of one’s faith is a great honor.**

**Acts 5:41 “The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.”**

**Romans 5:3-5 “3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”**

**V – 11 Resurrection - The resurrection of the dead is the hope of every Christian.**

**Whoever believes already has that new life. And in, and with Christ he passes through suffering and death on to the resurrection of the dead. For him this means beginning of eternal life.**