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## REVIEW OF CHAPTER THREE

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Happy Week Seven! We've been in Philippians for a while now, and I pray that it has been a blessing as you've opened God's word. There is so much to glean in four short chapters.

**Take a moment to read through Chapter 3.**

**What stands out to you most in this chapter? Is there anything that has particularly impacted you?**

Paul begins this chapter with,

"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."

I can understand Paul's meaning here. We have spent the past couple weeks in Ch. 3 seeing Paul's exhortation to the church and have seen the admonitions to beware of false teachers, to beware of the sin nature, to beware of following after the wrong things, but on the flip side, he has gone into detail of the potential they have because they are in Christ. No wonder they can rejoice. No wonder WE can rejoice! If we gained nothing else except salvation from an eternity from the domain of darkness that was ours, we would have all we need to rejoice over.

**How are you doing in the area of joy?**

It seems that when we are looking at a certain point, or an attribute we should be living by, that it is then that we most often encounter things that would remove, in this case, our joy. I truly think it is God's way of bringing the lesson home. Reminding us of where our joy comes from. What our joy is in. It's not in our circumstances, but rather the joy of being in Christ. There is no other place of true joy. Every other hint of joy is temporary and perishable, but not in Christ.

As we think about the aspects of joy we looked at in Week 6, we recognize that joy comes from having a relaxed mental attitude that knows and claims the promises of God. We saw the equation that

Joy comes from being at peace,  
and being at peace comes from faith,  
Faith comes from knowing and trusting His word.

Knowing His word requires study, so we can know that anytime we are missing His joy we should be heading straight to the book. Repent and renew our joy by reading and trusting the truths of our God. He is faithful. You can trust Him.

His word = Faith = peace = joy.

**How are you doing in regards to legalism?**

We know that we cannot produce anything good on our own. We looked at how legalism (do-goodism) doesn't produce joy, if anything it produces more anxiety as we realize no matter how hard we try we can never measure up. Paul knows that trap of trying to live by the law. The law was never a means of salvation but rather pointed out just how short they fell from perfection. It pointed to their sin and their need of a Savior.

**What does Philippians 3:3 say about believers?**

We could probably say we are good with that, but I want us to stop and think about how often do we put confidence in our own flesh to accomplish something? Probably much too often!

For those of us who are do-gooders and people pleasers, we can really get messed up doing things for the wrong motives. For those who are lascivious by nature, rebels, well, our flesh can be a real problem of misplaced confidence, as if we don't need God to do anything for us. Either way, Paul says, we are to

"put no confidence in the flesh."

When we recognize that Christ did it all for us that changes our perspective and we are able to worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus. Rejoicing just becomes a natural by-product of our life in Him.

**Read Ephesians 2:11-13.**

Do you see that list? Do you feel the weight of it? We were once separate from Christ, we were excluded, we were strangers, having no hope (ever felt hopeless?), without God, we were far off.... But then what happened?

Oh what joy His word brings. What hope and peace we can have. Paul so wants these beloved brothers and sisters to get it, spiritual maturity provides JOY for the taking. It comes with the resident Spirit of God abiding in those who belong to Him.

Spiritual Maturity is, in fact, the goal. Paul's teachings are all about growing spiritually mature, not for the sake of knowledge, or status, but for their well-being. Everything he is pointing out to them is for their growth in trusting the Lord, why?

Because faith equals peace, and peace equals joy.

If you haven't noticed yet, Paul is all about the joy.

He teaches that our unique position in Christ provides all we need to live the righteous life God designed for us. Remember that blueprint we talked about? To be in Christ means that we have everything we need to live holy. The potential we have is empowered by a Holy Spirit that belongs to God. There is no higher power, Dear One. So why do we fail? We fail because we give control to our old sin nature rather than live in the perfection of Christ under the power of His Spirit. Plain and simple. We sin because we have believed the lies of this world that it will be better. It will be more fun. It will satisfy us. But it never does.

Paul, sitting in a jail cell, can write about rejoicing because He knows the truths of God's word. He knows that God is with Him and Christ is being proclaimed, and apart from that, his comfort does not matter one bit. Christ proclaimed is his goal. And so, he presses on.

He recognizes his citizenship is in heaven. As patriotic as we may be as Americans, this world is not our home. We are left as ambassadors of Christ to a dying world. If we are going to represent Him clearly we must be growing spiritually. Maturing in Him.

Our position in Christ has made us uniquely capable to live in victory over our sin nature. There is never a battle that we must lose. If we lived to our potential our testimony would be amazing. We would stop living like the world, stop responding as the world. He would be proclaimed and we would have peace, and joy.

Rejoice, again I say rejoice, for we have hope, we have potential because of the very unique position of being IN Christ. And someday, someday, He is coming again. So Rejoice!

**In your own words, what stood out to you in Chapter three?**