

Study of Philippians – Philippians 3:1-21  
 Bellevue Church of Christ – Winter 2011 / 2012

Previous correspondence or earlier part of this letter? (1:27-30)

(I) The Accountant  
 "I Count" (1-11)

Paul uses 3 terms/phrases to characterize both the opponents and Philippians (2-3).

**Finally**  
 \*Most likely means "additionally" or "furthermore" in this context.

**Dogs**  
 \*Almost always a term of reproach in scripture  
 \*Deut 23:18  
 \*I Sam 17:43; 24:14  
 \*Prov 26:11  
 \*Isa 56:10, 11  
 \*Matt 7:6  
 \*Jews often used this term for Gentiles... Paul turns the tables.

Confidence in the flesh is worthless

**Be found in Him...**  
 \*Something that the works of the law will never accomplish  
 \*Rom 3:19-26  
 \*Gal 3:10,11  
 \*James 2:10

**Mutilate the flesh**  
 \*To be physically circumcised without the inward change.  
 \*Gal 5:2-12

**The true circumcision**  
 \*of the heart  
 \*Rom 2:25-29  
 \*Col 2:11-13  
 \*Lev 26:41  
 \*Deut 10:16; 30:6  
 \*Jer 4:4  
 \*Ezek 44:7

**Paul can stand on equal footing with ANY Judaizer**  
 \*II Cor 11:21-12:13  
 [1]-Physical circumcision (Gen 17:12)  
 [2]-Tribe of Benjamin (Acts 13:21; Rom 11:1)  
 [3]-Hebrew of Hebrews  
 [4]-Pharisee (Acts 22:3)  
 [5]-Persecutor (Acts 9:13,21)  
 [6]-Blameless

**Share in His sufferings...**  
 \*Rom 8:16-17  
 \*II Tim 1:8-14

**Death**  
 \*Rom 6:1-11

1 **Finally**, my brothers, **rejoice** in the Lord. *To write the same things* to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

2 Look out for the <sup>(1)</sup>**dogs**, look out for the <sup>(2)</sup>**evildoers**, look out for those who <sup>(3)</sup>**mutilate the flesh**.

3 For **we are the circumcision**, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no **confidence in the flesh**—

4 though 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:

5 **circumcised** on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of **Benjamin**, a **Hebrew of Hebrews**; as to the law, a **Pharisee**;

6 as to zeal, a **persecutor** of the church; as to righteousness under the law, **blameless**.

7 But whatever *gain I had*, **I counted as loss** for the sake of Christ.

8 Indeed, **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 **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—

10 that I may **know him** and the power of his resurrection, and may *share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death*,

11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

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(II) The Athlete  
"I Press" (12-16)

*The Christian Walk  
is never complete  
in this life..*

*Running metaphor*

\*3:16  
\*II Tim 2:5; 4:7  
\*I Cor 9:24-27  
\*Heb 12:1

<sup>12</sup> Not 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.

<sup>13</sup> **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*,

<sup>14</sup> *I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

<sup>15</sup> Let those of us who are **mature** think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

<sup>16</sup> *Only let us hold true to what we have attained.* ←  
<sup>17</sup> **Brothers, join in imitating me**, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

*We are all at  
different levels of  
maturity, and must  
be faithful  
according to our  
current level of  
understanding.*

(III) The Alien  
"We Await" (17-21)

*Imitating me..*

\*4:9  
\*I Cor 11:1

<sup>18</sup> For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as **enemies of the cross of Christ**.

**Enemies of the Cross**  
\*Rom 16:17-18  
\*2 Peter 2:10-22

<sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

<sup>20</sup> → **But our citizenship** is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

<sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

*Provides a sharp  
contrast with the  
"enemies of the cross"*

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Write the Same Things

**Philippians 1:27-30 (ESV)**

<sup>27</sup> Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, <sup>28</sup> and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. <sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, <sup>30</sup> engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Dogs

**Deuteronomy 23:18 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> You shall not bring the fee of a prostitute or the wages of a dog into the house of the Lord your God in payment for any vow, for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God.

**1 Samuel 17:43 (ESV)**

<sup>43</sup> And the Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

**1 Samuel 24:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea!

**Proverbs 26:11 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.

**Isaiah 56:10-11 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> His watchmen are blind; they are all without knowledge; they are all silent dogs; they cannot bark, dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber. <sup>11</sup> The dogs have a mighty appetite; they never have enough. But they are shepherds who have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each to his own gain, one and all.

**Matthew 7:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

Mutilate the Flesh

**Galatians 5:2-12 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. <sup>3</sup> I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. <sup>4</sup> You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup> For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. <sup>6</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. <sup>7</sup> You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? <sup>8</sup> This persuasion is not from him who calls you. <sup>9</sup> A little leaven leavens the whole lump. <sup>10</sup> I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view than mine, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. <sup>11</sup> But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. <sup>12</sup> I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

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Circumcision of the Heart

**Romans 2:25-29 (ESV)**

<sup>25</sup> For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. <sup>26</sup> So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? <sup>27</sup> Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. <sup>28</sup> For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

**Colossians 2:11-13 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, <sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup> And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

**Leviticus 26:41 (ESV)**

<sup>41</sup> so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies—if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity,

**Deuteronomy 10:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.

**Deuteronomy 30:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

**Jeremiah 4:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> Circumcise yourselves to the Lord; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.”

**Ezekiel 44:7 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> in admitting foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to be in my sanctuary, profaning my temple, when you offer to me my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant, in addition to all your abominations.

Paul’s “Confidence in the Flesh”

**2 Corinthians 11:21-33 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that! But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. <sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. <sup>23</sup> Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. <sup>24</sup> Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; <sup>26</sup> on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; <sup>27</sup> in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup> And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. <sup>29</sup> Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? <sup>30</sup> If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. <sup>31</sup> The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. <sup>32</sup> At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding

**Study of Philippians – Philippians 3:1-21**  
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the city of Damascus in order to seize me, <sup>33</sup> but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

**2 Corinthians 12:1-13 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. <sup>2</sup> I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. <sup>3</sup> And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— <sup>4</sup> and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. <sup>5</sup> On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. <sup>6</sup> Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. <sup>7</sup> So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. <sup>8</sup> Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. <sup>11</sup> I have been a fool! You forced me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing. <sup>12</sup> The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works. <sup>13</sup> For in what were you less favored than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

**Genesis 17:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring,

**Acts 13:21 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

**Romans 11:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

**Acts 22:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day.

**Acts 9:13, 21 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem

<sup>21</sup> And all who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?”

Be Found in Him

**Romans 3:19-26 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup> For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. <sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to

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be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.<sup>26</sup> It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

**Galatians 3:10-11 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."<sup>11</sup> Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith."

**James 2:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.

Sufferings

**Romans 8:16-17 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,<sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

**2 Timothy 1:8-14 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,<sup>9</sup> who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,<sup>10</sup> and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,<sup>11</sup> for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher,<sup>12</sup> which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.<sup>13</sup> Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.<sup>14</sup> By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

Death

**Romans 6:1-11 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?<sup>2</sup> By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?<sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.<sup>6</sup> We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.<sup>7</sup> For one who has died has been set free from sin.<sup>8</sup> Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.<sup>9</sup> We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.<sup>10</sup> For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.<sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Imitating Paul

**Philippians 4:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

**1 Corinthians 11:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

**Study of Philippians – Philippians 3:1-21**  
**Bellevue Church of Christ – Winter 2011 / 2012**

Enemies of the Cross

**Romans 16:17-18 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. <sup>18</sup> For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

**2 Peter 2:10-22 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, <sup>11</sup> whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. <sup>12</sup> But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, <sup>13</sup> suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. <sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! <sup>15</sup> Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, <sup>16</sup> but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. <sup>17</sup> These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. <sup>18</sup> For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. <sup>19</sup> They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. <sup>20</sup> For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. <sup>21</sup> For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. <sup>22</sup> What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."