

“On a Joy Ride: A Trip Through Philipppians”

Philipppians 3

Read Philipppians 3. Open with prayer.

1) This chapter is Paul’s presentation of what really matters. It is notable that he makes a sudden shift in tone from verse 1 to verse 2, from “rejoice” (a theme woven throughout the book) to “watch out.”. Who is he warning the Philipppians to watch out for? What might be the modern day equivalent?

2) In verses 4-14, Paul gives a brief testimony. He mentions all of the things that once gave him confidence- his pedigree, his privileges and his attainments-which he later describes as “rubbish” compared to knowing Jesus. Even as Christians, it is easy to rely on similar things when we present ourselves to others because they are cultural values. What “credentials” do you rely on for value? What might it mean to have your identity and confidence, in Christ alone?

3) Rather than yearning for some distant future, Paul focuses on his ongoing daily experience with God to give life meaning and purpose. In verses 8-19, he emphasizes three significant aspects of this daily experience: Knowing Christ (v.8); Having righteousness (v.9); and Resurrection power (v. 10). What helps you deepen your friendship with Jesus? What does righteousness look like? What is resurrection power (see Romans 8:11) and how does it function in the Christian life?

4) Paul uses the imagery of a race (v.12-14) to describe the urgency and perseverance of the spiritual journey with key words: “Forgetting what is behind,” “straining toward,” “pressing on,” “winning the prize.” Which of these is most difficult for you? Which energizes you?

5) Read verses 20 & 21 over several times (or as a group lectio). Share a word or phrase that particularly catches your attention?