



**Reaching,
Restoring,
Raising Up**

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L.I.F.E. Group Questions—(Phil 1:21)

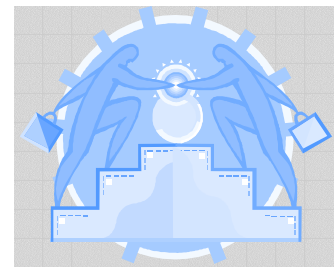
Our L.I.F.E. Groups that meet in homes use the following questions from the sermon for discussion and application. To find a group pick up a L.I.F.E. Group brochure in the Welcome Center.

1. Talk with the group about your favorite thing about Easter growing up. When did you become aware that the Christ's resurrection was the main thing about it?
2. How personal is your relationship with Christ—is it more like an authority figure, a parent, a friend, or some other relationship in your life? How could it become more intimate?
3. On a scale of 1-10 (with 10 being the most) how much do you access the power of the resurrected Christ on a daily basis? Why do you think this is true (high or low)?
4. In your walk with Christ, what stage are you presently in—easy, difficult, impossible or exciting? How are you handling this?
5. If Christ was the purpose of your life, how would it look in your family or marriage, in your work, in your social life, in your church life, or in your personal life? What would it take to move toward that goal?
6. Talk about anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.

**You Can Join an ABF Anytime — Find
Yours Below and Join Us!**

Adult Bible Fellowships

Locations, Times, Descriptions



**ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIPS
- CONNECTING AROUND THE WORD -**

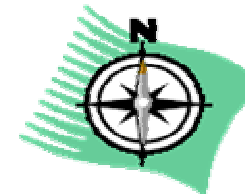
	9:00		10:45
Rm104	30s-50s—Waller-Crary	Rm 104	Open—Hixson-Sturgill-Bower
Rm 112	Small Group Leaders Training	Rm 112	Women—Byrum
Rm 201	30s-40s—Sims-Fendley	Rm 201	20s—Jones-Norwood
Rm 202	Master Your Money (April 18)—Lux	Rm 202	30s—Miller-Tripp
Rm 203	Young Singles—Franklin	Rm 203	Singles—Bentzel
Rm 204	Making Peace with Your Past	Rm 204	Blessings in Disguise
Rm 205	40s&Up—Christensen-Hasler	Rm 205	30s—Heritier-Sharp
Rm 206		Rm 206	Engaged/Newly Married
Rm 207	40s-50s—McBrayer-Wicks	Rm 207	20s—Alexy
Rm 208	Women—Knox-Anderson	Rm 208	Open—Regis-Hubbard-Anderson- Robertson
		Gym-3rd fl	College Ayres-Getchell-Hopkins

April 11, 2004

Enjoy the Rest of Your Life

Discover principles for happy living from the book of Philippians

Celebration Fellowship



Volume 2, Issue 36

April 11, 2004

Inside this issue:

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"Nothin' But a Hound Dog"

A preview of Philippians 3:1-11

Like Elvis' hound dog, who never caught a rabbit like he was supposed to, those who make promises, but never follow through, are not your friends. This is the contrast presented in Philippians 3 by Paul. The Jewish legalists, whom he calls "dogs" (sounds like Elvis), promised that their approach would give favor with God, but this approach failed to deliver. These carnivorous "dogs", evil workers, and mutilators, as Paul described them, destroyed life. But Paul presented the approach that really worked. It is not through

human righteousness that we become right with God, but rather worship in the Spirit of God that is focused on Christ's glory that results in His favor. This approach is based on the righteousness of God (not man) that comes by faith. Paul knew the truth of this firsthand: he had tried to gain God's favor through a meticulous "religiosity", having attained everything humanly possible in a religious sense. But he counted all of that as worthless trash compared to having a relationship with Christ. From Paul's perspective



**The secret of happiness
is found in Christ!**

the only thing worth having in life was Christ Himself. He wanted to know Him and the power of His resurrection, and share in the fellowship of His sufferings. This is the only way that delivers the life worth living, and the only way to experience true joy in life.

The Great Escape

(1 Corinthians 15)

In the classic movie, "The Great Escape", the American prisoners literally dug their way out of prison. In a sense this is exactly what Paul presents in 1 Corinthians 15—one day all of us, who are imprisoned by the flesh, and by death itself, are going to bust out of the dirt into freedom. The resurrection is the linchpin of our faith, for without it all for which we stand and live is pointless—and this is what Paul devotes an entire chapter in the Bible to demonstrate. He first begins in 1 Corinthians 15 by showing that the resurrection is one of the 3 basic elements of the gospel that he preached to them, the other 2 being the death and burial of Christ. Each of these is essential for the gospel to fulfill its definition as "good news". Christ's death is good news because it paid the penalty for our sins—His death on the cross satisfied God's righteous demand for justice due to our sin. But, Jesus' burial is also

necessary for the "good news" because it demonstrates the fact that He truly died, being in the grave for 3 days. Had He not been buried people could have forever thought that He only passed out, and then revived when His strength returned. But the burial shows that He really died, allowing the resurrection to occur. Finally, Jesus had to be resurrected for the gospel to be good news. He not only heroically died for our sins, but the Father Himself accepted this sacrifice as sufficient penalty for our sins, and He declared this by raising Jesus from the dead (Romans 1:4). In addition, the resurrection underscored that every word Jesus had spoken was true—it was the sign He gave that He was a true prophet (Matt 12:39-40). So, the resurrection validates Jesus' offer of abundant and eternal life to all who place their faith in Him. Paul then shows that the resurrection was a credible historical

event. Jesus appeared to Cephas (Peter), the disciples, 500 at one time, James (probably His half brother), all the apostles, and lastly to Paul. Since many of those were still alive when he Paul wrote this, this was a provable fact. In addition, Paul himself had witnessed the risen Christ with his own eyes. Finally, the fact that the Corinthians themselves had responded to the resurrection message that was preached to them provides further evidence of its validity. Today, the very existence of millions of believers in Christ throughout the ages is ample evidence of the truth of the resurrection. So, it is important to believe that resurrection itself has and will occur. One reason is that if resurrection doesn't occur, then Christ has not been raised, and we have already seen how that would nullify the gospel. Also, if there were no resurrection, then the apostles were false witnesses, and

(Continued on page 2)

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- Worship—You were planned for God's pleasure
- Fellowship—You were formed for God's family
- Discipleship—You were created to become like Christ
- Ministry—You were shaped for serving God
- Evangelism—You were made for a mission

1 Corinthians 15 (continued from pg 1)

shouldn't be listened to (meaning the New Testament isn't true). Finally, no resurrection would mean that those who have already died are gone forever—never to be heard from again. Again, if Christ were not raised, then the preaching of the apostles and the faith of believers is worthless, and we are all still captive to sin. Also, if we have hoped in Christ only for the present life, and not for eternity, we are to be pitied; since we have lived based on a historical fact that really didn't happen, we have sacrificed our lives for nothing, and they have been wasted. But Christ, indeed, was raised. He is the "first fruits" of the resurrection, meaning Jesus is the first of God's "harvest" of believers to life, and the guarantee that they, being the rest of the harvest, will also be resurrected. After Him comes the resurrection of those who are Christ's at the 2nd coming (believers who have died already), then the final resurrection of everyone when the "end" of time comes. Once Jesus has fulfilled His purpose of abolishing all His enemies, the last being death, He will hand the kingdom over to His Father, that God might be all in all. This shows that the whole plan of redeeming fallen mankind from the curse of sin and death is so that

God will ultimately be shown to be all that anyone or anything needs. Paul then returns to showing how the Christian life would be pointless if the resurrection had not occurred. There would be no point in people becoming Christians and being baptized when Christians they know die for their faith. There would be no point in suffering for the Lord if it weren't true. It would be better just to "live it up", if the resurrection hadn't occurred. The reason, though, that some believe the resurrection hasn't occurred is the influence of "bad company", or unbelievers. Also, this lack of belief in the resurrection will lead to sin, because it eliminates ultimate accountability before God. Nevertheless, the resurrection will occur, and though

we die as perishable, dishonorable, weak and physical beings—all because of the consequences of sin—we will be raised as eternal, glorious, powerful and spiritual beings, as Christ was. This is something to live for and look forward to—that we, who have been in the fallen image of Adam, will have the glorious image of the resurrected Christ restored in us. Not all of us will die, however; those who are alive at Christ's coming will simply be changed into this glorious body, in a moment, when He returns. But all Christians, alive or dead, will be changed into glorified bodies made in His life-giving image. The ultimate result of this is that death, and the sting that causes it, sin, will be swallowed up in the victory of the resurrection of believers. Practically, what this all means to us is that we who believe in Christ will experience the ultimate victory over death and sin because of Him; therefore, we should now be steadfast and unmovable in our faith. We should also allow our work "in the Lord" to be abundant, since we know that our work in Him is not in vain. It will mean something because the resurrection is true, and our resurrection to eternal life is certain. We will make the "great escape" into eternal life.

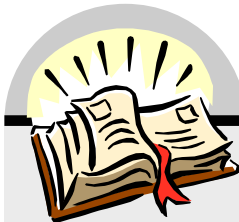


"We who believe in Christ will experience the ultimate victory over death and sin because of Him."

Study Questions for Philippians 3:1-11

We must believe in the true good news of Christ if we are to walk in joy.

1. Read Philippians 3:1-2. What command does Paul reiterate (v1), and what would carrying out this command do for them (v1)? Why is that true?
2. What 3 phrases does Paul use to describe those Jews who were trying to get the Philippians to come back under the Jewish law (v2)? Why are these 3 expressions appropriate for "legalists" like this?
3. What 3 activities characterize those who, according to v3, are the "true" circumcision (or a true Jew)? Why are each of these important to really live the Christian life, and to experience the joy that results?



"All Christians, alive or dead, will be changed into glorified bodies made in His life-giving image."

4. Look at 3:4-6. List the reasons Paul had to have "confidence" in his flesh. How does this show that we need not be overly impressed with those who are very religious? What is the real issue (v8)?

5. In 3:7-8 how does Paul evaluate his life before Christ (v7), and why does he say this (7)? Personalize this—in your own words how would you say what Paul said as it pertains to your own life?

6. What, according to v8, was Paul's current approach to evaluating everything in his life? What was the highest value for him?

7. From 3:8 what was Paul's ultimate purpose in life? What do you think he meant by this, and how does this happen (see John 14:23; Revelation 3:20)?

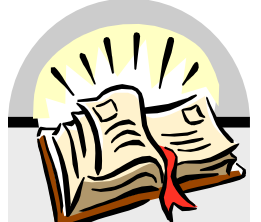
8. What does 3:9 say about the wrong approach to gaining Christ? What does it say the right approach is? Where does true righteousness come from?

9. Look at 3:10-11. What are the 3 results of "gaining Christ" (v10)?

10. What do each of the things listed in v10 mean? How do you think they relate to each other?

11. How can we become "conformed" to Christ's death, and what does this lead to (v11)? What does Paul mean by "that I might attain to the resurrection of the dead" (see 1 Corinthians 15:50-58)?

12. Summarize the right kind of beliefs that lead to joy in the Christian life from Philippians 3:1-11. Why does living with faith in these truths lead to joy?



Memory Verse

"I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord..."
Philippians 3:8