

Philippians 3:1

- 1) Paul's command—3:1a ¹ *Finally* (for the rest), *my brothers*, rejoice in the Lord.
 - a) Paul's limitations concerning joy
 - i) Paul's use of "my brothers" and "in the Lord" indicates he is referring only to those who have placed faith in Christ for salvation.
 - b) Paul's uses of the word for "joy" [*chairō*]
 - i) Paul uses this verb a total of 9x in this book (1:18 [2x]; 2:17, 18, 28; 3:1; 4:4 [2x], 10). There are an additional 2 uses of *sugchairō* (2:17, 18)
 - ii) Paul had previously demonstrated joy (1:18; 2:17) and will repeat his demonstration later (4:10)
 - iii) Paul had previously commanded them to rejoice (2:18) and will repeat his command later (4:4)
 - iv) Paul's intent in sending Epaphroditus was that they might rejoice (2:28)
 - c) Paul's meaning of joy (cf. Gal. 5:22)
 - i) Taking pleasure due to the awareness of one's well being that is rooted in God-centered optimism and confidence.
 - d) Paul's circumstances as he commands them to rejoice
 - i) He is still imprisoned in Rome. In other words, he is not writing from a comfortable situation, telling them to do something that is easy for him to do.
- 2) Paul's explanation—3:1b *To write the same things to you^{pl} ...*
 - a) What are "the same things"? (there are a variety of interpretations)
 - i) This seems to be a reference to additional examples of a Christ-like mindset. In 3:1-6 he uses a negative example before using himself in 3:7-14 as positive example (in addition to Timothy and Epaphroditus).
 - ii) Others see this as previous topics: joy, a letter, warnings about opponents, etc.
 - b) Stated negatively—*is not, on the one hand, bothersome for me* (emphatic),
 - i) Used of reluctance/hesitance (Matt. 25:26; Rom. 12:11)
 - c) Stated positively—*but, on the other hand, it is a safeguard for you^{pl}*
 - i) Remember three illustrations based on related words:
 - (1) The tomb of Jesus (Matt. 27:64-65); Paul and Silas were made secure in the prison in Philippi (Acts 16:23-24); and the anchor of our soul in the presence of God (Heb. 6:19)
 - ii) The repetitious hearing/reading of the Word of God provides safety and security for our souls.
- 3) Things for us to remember
 - a) Godward rejoicing is a choice to obey God's command, even in the face of difficult circumstances that He allows in His infinite sovereignty, wisdom, and love.
 - i) The grounds for our joy are not based in circumstances, which are often beyond our control, but rather in the person and work of Jesus Christ. (Harmon)
 - b) Godward rejoicing is only possible for those who have been declared righteous before God through their positive response to the gospel.