

# WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE GARBAGE?

## Philippians 3:1-9

### What's the basis of authentic spiritual life?

*Is it about trying to be good enough to please God?*

**Basilica de Guadalupe** –annual pilgrimage, people crawl miles to earn points to be acceptable to God.

Other religions:

people make pilgrimages

=> to Mecca,

=> or to wash selves in the Ganges River.

People participate in processions, give alms to poor, or other good deeds

=> to make themselves **acceptable to God**

In **Paul's day**, it was religious rituals of Pharisees, & imitation of such rituals proposed by Judaizers

### ***Is that authentic spiritual life?***

*Is it about **US** being **good enough** to be acceptable?*

Or, is it about **God's** work in us?

People still believe godliness is doing our best & becoming **good enough**.

In **Phil. 3**, Paul responds to people seeking to please God by living by rules.

### **Instruction concerning true spirituality 3:1-21**

**JUDAIZERS** are stirring up problems at Philippi.

Main cause of **DIVISION**

### **3 kinds of Judaizers:**

1) Originally: Salvation

– For whom? Acts 10-11

[PETER's struggle!]

2) Then: Salvation–How? Acts 15

3) Sanctification–How?

Gal., Col., **Phil. 3 ++**

***How can we please God?***

**They're preaching: spirituality is achieved by living by rules**

(keeping Mosaic law).

They codified law into 365 *neg.* commands (1 for each day of yr!)

***Plus*** 250 *pos.* commands.

They missed pt.: God's more concerned about what's on inside, than about legalistic rules!

**4<sup>th</sup> generation “Judaizers” –found in churches TODAY!**

**=> “Live by our rules!”**

**God boils it down to 2: Jesus says:**

**Love Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind & strength**

**Love your neighbor as yourself.**

**Focus isn't on legalism**

**–it's on *attitude on inside!***

**Do we become spiritual . . .**

**... by living by rules?**

**... by keeping law?**

*Is that way to spirituality?*

**Paul focuses on *nature of true spirituality.***

Begins with **summary** of what he's about to show us: ]

**3:1a** “Finally, my brothers,

**REJOICE IN THE LORD!**

Theme of our celebration is **GOD** & what **HE**'s done

–“Rejoice in the Lord!”

It's not about US!

Dealing with Judaizers, he's dealing with system that sets *Christ* aside & places focus on US.

Authentic godly living isn't about US; it's about JESUS

Rejoicing isn't in *ourselves*.

Our rejoicing isn't in our *accomplishments* or our *circumstances*.

Our rejoicing's in the LORD! –HE provides cause to celebrate—even *in hard times!*

We don't celebrate because *WE've arrived!*

We celebrate because of what *HE's* done!

[In contrast with summary,

Paul warns of **DANGER** posed by Judaizers & their teaching.

They try to take our focus off Jesus & what *He's* done.

They want us to focus on *ourselves*; on *OUR* efforts to live by rules.

### **WARNING AGAINST LEGALISTS 3:1b-2**

His language is severe! **3:1b-2** “*It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, & it's a safeguard for you. <sup>2</sup>Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.*”

“dogs” => homeless, scavenger dogs that roam st.

Contrasts Judaizers' view of spirituality with biblical view

### **WHAT AUTHENTIC SPIRITUALITY IS ABOUT:**

**3:3** “*For we're the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God & glory in Christ Jesus & put no confidence in the flesh.*”

## CHARACTERISTICS OF *TRUE* SPIRITUALITY 3:3

Here's what *real* circumcision is like. **It's about . . .**

### **Serving God by the Spirit**

– **NOT by letter of law**

*We “worship by Spirit of God”*

Spiritual people serve God ***in spirit***, not by letter.

It's not result of a legalistic attempt to live by rules & be good enough to make God happy.

True spirituality is produced by H.S. at work in us.

2<sup>nd</sup> *We... “glory in Christ Jesus*

### **Boasting about Christ**

– **what HE has done**

– **NOT about ourselves & what we do.**

We get excited about what ***Jesus*** has done

– **NOT** our accomplishments.

Finally, We... ***“put no confidence in the flesh”***

### **Not trusting our efforts**

–Not Confiding in what WE accomplish!

Authentic spirituality under-stands that we can't trust *our* efforts to produce fruit pleasing to God.

This isn't just “sour grapes!”

He doesn't say this because *he* doesn't measure up to *their* standard!

*“You want to compare credentials”*

*“Let me show you MINE!”*

**CAPACITY TO TRUST THE FLESH 3:4-6** *“Though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If anyone else thinks **he** has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, **I have more**:<sup>5</sup>circumcised*

*on the 8<sup>th</sup> day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup>as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.”*

**Paul isn't speaking as an outsider, jealous of their accomplishments.**

**If *anyone* could boast of performance, Paul could.**

Yet, he realizes his weakness (failures).

He could *never* satisfy **God** this way!—nor can **WE!**

### **ATTITUDE CONCERNING ACCOMPLISHMENTS 7-9**

**Paul's loss 7-9** *“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup>What's more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I've lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>& be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God & is by faith.”*

**His achievements are worthless compared with Jesus' righteousness applied to his account.**

Bookkeeping concept – profit & loss statement–

My "profits" (2x) I "account for" (3x) as "losses" (3x)

His achievements end up on wrong side of ledger!

What he has accomplished, => liabilities/negative!

This isn't illogical accounting – he has a purpose.

He has higher category of assets!

They make *these* assets meaningless.

Less productive assets get in way of higher "profits"

They drag down total picture

[Pentecost in NY]

–like ***eating left overs***–

Old ones are still "assets"

–NOT liabilities!

Things that used to have value–old assets–have lost their value [earthquake]. Previous value's been lost.

### **What are Paul's *most significant assets*?**

He doesn't replace 1 religious system, & its achievements, with ***another religious system!***

He has no religious accomplishments to present!

He left religion & reputation –he has something *better*

**New, better assets:**

(1) **To gain Christ 7-8**

(2) **To be righteous in Christ 9**

### **Inadequate righteousness – "NOT having..."**

Source: My righteousness

Basis: Keeping law

Results: Won't make it!

### **Adequate righteousness**

–that which has real value.

Source: God's righteousness

Basis: "faith-in-Christ righteousness"

Results: Leads to life.

### **WHAT ARE IMPLICATIONS FOR US?**

If PAUL'S accomplishments aren't good enough, how can WE hope to make it?

If *anyone* could make it, surely Paul could!

He knew better than to trust *his* efforts.

**We need God's righteous-ness; kind that comes from trusting Jesus.**

**True spirituality isn't the result of our efforts; it's result of H.S.' work in us.**

We get messed up when we try to "*perform*" for God!

Only **God** can produce godly fruit in us.

**We must stop trying to do it ourselves; trust *Him* to produce *His* fruit in us.**