

"JOY THAT GROWS"

UNSHACKLED: JOY BEYOND CIRCUMSTANCES | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON | PHILIPPIANS 3:10-4:3
FEBRUARY 3/4, 2018

"Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters." (Philippians 3:17)

Paul's Example of Growth (3:10-14)

- Knowing Christ fully, in His death and resurrection
- Forgetting the past and straining for what is ahead
- Unfinished but pressing on for the prize

The Right Mindset for Growth (3:15-21)

- The maturing mindset (3:15-16)
- Learning from good examples (3:17)
- Turning from bad examples (3:18-19)
- Looking for the Savior and His Kingdom (3:20-21)

The Right Relational Focus for Growth (4:1-3)

- Standing firm together
- Dealing with tension
- All for the sake of the gospel

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you experienced a plateau in your life, or felt as if you stalled out in some way? What would you say contributed to that?
2. Continuing our series "Unshackled: Joy Beyond Circumstances" this weekend, we turn our attention to Philippians 3:10-4:3. Take a moment to pray, asking God to grow you through His Word. Next, read that portion of Scripture aloud.
3. This section builds upon Paul's comments in the previous section about being focused on Jesus over the long haul of life (3:7-14). How would you summarize what Paul is trying to say to the Philippians in 3:15-16?
4. In verse 17 Paul encourages his readers to follow his example. He writes something similar in 1 Thessalonians 1:6 and 1 Corinthians 11:1. What sort of people do you look to as examples of life with Christ? Why?
5. In contrast with his life (3:7-14), Paul mentions those who live a form of discipleship devoid of Christ's cross in 3:18-19. What characterizes this sort of person?
6. What sort of hope infuses the person who is instead living out of their heavenly citizenship according to Paul in 3:20-21?
7. Stop and reflect for a moment on your own life. Would you say are living more in the Christ-centered mindset Paul lifts up or more in the mindset of earthly things?
8. Turning to the specifics of the local church in Philippi, Paul addresses the need for unity within the church in 4:1-3. His mention of a number of personal names in this regard is unique in his letters. What is the main challenge and what is the main encouragement here?
9. What is one thing you sense God is highlighting in your life through this study? If you are on your own, write it down and pray about it. If you are in a small group, take time to discuss this with one another before praying together.

FURTHER REFLECTION:

Make Philippians more meaningful in your life this week in some way:

- Pick a verse or two from Philippians 3:15-4:3 to read every day. Maybe you can share your thoughts online or with a friend throughout the week. Perhaps you could memorize it.
- Since joy flows through this entire letter of Philippians, consider taking time to read the letter in one setting, highlighting each use of 'joy' or 'rejoice' or writing down those verses for further consideration and prayer.
- Watch one or both of the videos from The Bible Project:
 Messiah: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8>
 Gospel of the Kingdom: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmFPS0f-kzs>