

MAKE THE CHOICE TO REJOICE!

PHIL 4:4

“The Super Thing”
Philippians 3:1-11
Sunday, February 10, 2019

1. Sunday Summary: This morning we continued our sermon series on the book of Philippians that we are calling *“Make the Choice to Rejoice”*, and today we looked at the role that righteousness plays with respect to our joy in our lives. The fact is our joy will stand or fall based on this one little word. It is the Super Thing that is the secret to life. Our righteousness is the thing that we think will get us right with other people, God, and even ourselves. Righteousness is the thing we put our confidence in to help us to know that we’re “ok.” And this morning we saw that righteousness is our most fundamental need, our single most profound problem, and therefore it’s the most astonishing gift we could ever receive.

- 1) Righteousness is our most fundamental need – we all need to feel like our lives are worth something. So, in order to know our worth we measure ourselves. And the way we most often do that is by looking at our credentials, or our accomplishments - what we called this morning our resumé. Resumés open doors for us with respect to our work, but metaphorically speaking our world operates on this principle. In order to be accepted we have to have a really great resumé. We’ll even “close the door” on ourselves if we don’t live up to our own standards.
- 2) Righteousness is our single most profound problem – since our whole world uses this resumé system to be accepted, we think that it will also work with God. That’s what the Apostle Paul used to do, too. He followed God’s Law as perfectly as possible. He was the cream of the crop in terms of his religiosity. But he discovered that none of it is worth anything. Even before he became a Christian he knew his sins were wrong, but after meeting Jesus he began to repent of his righteousness, or using his resumé to try to get in good with God. This is our problem, too.
- 3) Righteousness is the most astonishing gift we could ever receive – the fact is we don’t need to worry about our resumé (at least not as far as our eternal security is concerned) because through faith and trust in Christ, God gives us the perfect resumé - Christ’s. It’s on the basis of Jesus’ resumé, which is perfect, that God accepts us, and loves us. When we know this and live like it’s true, it’s like a bullet-proof vest (breastplate of righteousness – Eph 6:14) for us.

2. Connecting Questions: (Interactive, life sharing, thought & feeling type stuff)

- What’s on your resumé? What are the things that you use to “get in with,” or be accepted by others? By God? By yourself? What is the thing that you put your confidence in?
- What are the circumstances under which you will beat yourself up for not living up to your own standards?
- How do you feel about the idea of repenting of the good things you do? Does that make sense to you? Talk about it.

- Does knowing that you have the “bulletproof vest” of Christ’s righteousness help you to stop relying on your own righteousness? Why or why not?
- Have you still not ordered your T-Shirt? Why not?
- What insights from today’s message were most helpful for you?

3. Truth Questions: (What does the Bible say?)

- Think together about some other passages that deal with the topic of righteousness. Can you think of any? What might they add to the conversation?
- Read Matthew 5:20 (You can read verses 17-20 for context if you like). What does Jesus mean by “your righteousness must surpass that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law?” Are we doomed from the start? How does what we learned today help you in understanding this passage? How could it help you to live with joy? If we have Christ’s righteousness, does it mean that we’re off the hook in doing the rest of what Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount?
- Read Matthew 6:33. What do you understand Jesus to be saying in this passage? How do we seek “his righteousness?”

4. Formation Questions: (Taking it further, How does the Truth change the way I live?)

- What concrete steps can you make to sink the gospel truth that we dealt with today deeper into your life throughout this week? What will you do about the message you heard today?
- What will you do to remind yourself to live in the righteousness of Christ rather than your own?
- How will you “Make the Choice to Rejoice,” this week? What will you do? Make a list of things you will think, say, do that will help you to choose the joy that Jesus gives this week.

5. Resources for Further Study:

1. Mason, Mike. *Champagne for the Soul: Rediscovering God’s Gift of Joy*. (Regent College Publishing, Vancouver, BC. 2003).
2. Keller, Timothy J. *The Prodigal God: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith*. (Riverhead Books, New York, NY. 2008).

