CHARIS YOUTH

# Series: If You're Happy and You Know It

## Lesson 3: Live for Jesus: Philippians 3

### About This Lesson

Philippians 3 shows the keys to joy are living for Jesus, moving forward, and knowing that you are a citizen of heaven. Young people today often focus on temporal, momentary pleasures. This lesson will help them see that living for Jesus is better than anything the world offers.

**Key Takeaway:** You are a citizen of heaven, so act differently than your peers. Live for Jesus and keep moving forward in your God-given purpose.

**Key Verse:** Psalm 144:15 *Happy are the people whose God is the LORD!*

### Teaching Outline:

I. REVIEW OF PHILIPPIANS 2

A. Unity brings joy.
   1. Believers in Jesus are on the same team and have the same supernatural source of joy—Jesus.

B. Paul gave a few tips on fulfilling the supernatural joy that God gave you: be a team player, look to Jesus, live with purpose, and remember that God will give men to you! You are not alone!

II. LIVE FOR JESUS: PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

*Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.*
*[2] Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! [3] For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, [4] though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: [5] circumcised the eighth*

*day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; [6] concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*
*[7] But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. [8] Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ [9] and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; [10] that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, [11] if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

A. Rejoice in the Lord (verse 1).
    1. It's a lot easier to rejoice in the Lord than outside the Lord. If you're trying to be happy with your own strength, emotion, or will-power, you'll run out of gas!
    2. Don't let anyone steal your joy!

B. Beware of three things (v. 2).
    1. Beware of dogs. If someone is constantly biting at you, keep your distance!
    2. Beware of evil workers.
    Psalm 119:115 *Depart from me, you evildoers, for I will keep the commandments of my God.*
    3. Beware of the mutilation (circumcision).
        a. Religious Jews required circumcision, which was a way of trying to please God through their own works! Paul pointed out that if you try to please God through your own performance, your faith will be mutilated.
        b. Beware of trying to do what God has called you to do in your own strength! If you're trying to follow God's call and plan for your life on your own, you will end up feeling mutilated.

C. We are the circumcision (v. 3).
    1. Paul is speaking of the heart and gives three keys for keeping a pure and upright heart:
        a. Worship God in the Spirit as opposed to in the flesh, which is based on your own performance, law-keeping, and rule-following. True worship isn't about you and your sacrifice—it's about Jesus and His sacrifice!
    John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

b. Rejoice in Christ Jesus. It's okay to rejoice because we know that Jesus is taking care of things. He's working things out!
c. Have no confidence in the flesh—your flesh or other people's flesh. Don't boast in yourself, but boast in who God is and what He has done for you.
Psalm 20:7 *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.*

D. Know Jesus (vv. 8–11).
1. Experience the power of His resurrection.
2. Fellowship with Him. You will be like Him and one with Him in everything: life, death, and everything in between.
3. Eternal life – attain the resurrection from the dead.
John 17:3 *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

## III. KEEP MOVING FORWARD: PHILIPPIANS 3:12-16

*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. [13] Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, [14] I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*
*[15] Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. [16] Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.*

A. Press on (v. 12).
1. It is hard to move forward if you think you know it all and think you're always right! Some believers won't go to church because they know more than every pastor, or won't build friendships because they think they're better than everyone else.
2. When life knocks you down, keep getting up!
Proverbs 24:16 *For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again.*
3. Resilience is a sign of righteousness. Keep going to work because great things happen when you keep going to work!
4. You will have opportunities to be discouraged but strengthen yourself in the LORD!

B. Look forward, not back (v. 13).

1. The worst thing you can do when running a race is to look back. Don't worry about what other people are doing. Run your race!
2. Don't worry about your past! Jesus took care of that. Your past is not a part of your track record.
3. Don't look at your own failures. Look at God's supernatural forgiveness demonstrated through Jesus on the cross!

IV. KNOW THAT YOU'RE A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN: PHILIPPIANS 3:17-21

*Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. [18] For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: [19] whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. [20] For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*

A. Follow Paul's example (v. 17).
   1. Find a good role model and follow their example: parents, teachers, and pastors. Don't try to do everything on your own. Learn from them.

B. You're a citizen of heaven (vv. 20–21).
   1. As a citizen, you have certain rights and privileges!
   2. You're in the world but not of the world!
      1 Peter 2:9 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*
   3. As a citizen of heaven, you act a little differently (unique culture), talk a little differently (language of faith), and financially do things a little differently (heavenly economy where you give and it comes back increased).

**Bottom Line:**
Rejoice and keep pressing forward because you are a citizen of heaven!

## Small Group Time:

1. Jesus had more joy than any human who has ever walked on the face of the earth because His joy was not natural! It was supernatural! We can tap into His joy! He is

our great High Priest, and He is pouring out on you the anointing of His joy. (Take the opportunity to invite each person in your small group to ask Jesus into their life through receiving forgiveness of their sins right now to begin receiving His joy and salvation.)

- What is one way Jesus was joyful when He was on the earth?
- What other people in the Bible do you see as joyful?

2. Paul writes to the Philippian Christians about not looking back. He was there when Stephen was martyred. He persecuted and killed Christians. Paul had the choice to look at his own failure or look at God's supernatural forgiveness. He wasn't blameless, but he was forgiven.

- How would Paul's life have been different if he had constantly looked back?
- Do you tend to look back on failures? How does that keep you from going forward?
- How does Paul's life and this chapter help you to look forward and not backward?

## Declaration:

"I choose to live for Jesus and keep moving forward in my God-given purpose."

## Youth Weekly Journal:

Handout, Email, or Download

- **Question:** How are you living for Jesus and moving forward this week?
- **Pray:** Ask God to reveal any thoughts that keep you looking back and keep you from moving forward in living for Him.
- **Read:** Read Philippians 3 each day and write down new revelations the Holy Spirit shows you.
- **Live It:** Each day, choose an aspect of Jesus' life and intentionally put that into practice by doing it. Get in the habit of thinking about living like Jesus so that you live for Jesus.
- **Create:** Continue making a collage of key words, verses, thoughts, or examples of living out Philippians 3. Make a habit of thinking about and applying God's Word to your life.

## EXTENDING THE LESSON

**Icebreaker Question:** What person from your childhood brought the most joy into your life, and why?

**Opening Activity Suggestion:** Have the young people share their views about what it means to be a citizen of your country. Then, play the music video, "Citizen of Heaven." Talk about the similarities and differences of being a citizen of a country versus a citizen of heaven.

**Opening Affirmation:** "I choose to be thankful and bold as I live rejoicing at all times in unity with other believers. I live for Jesus and keep moving forward."

**Giving Time:** Nehemiah 8:10 *Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."*

Nehemiah had led the Jewish people back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and the temple. He told them to celebrate with eating and drinking, and then they were to send portions from the celebration to others who hadn't celebrated with them. He was telling them to give from what they were blessed with. When you give to the Lord, you have the added blessing that the joy of the Lord will be your strength.

## BEYOND – ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FOR CHURCH OR HOME

**Challenge:** At the end of each day, before going to sleep, write down one way that you lived for Jesus. Think about a way someone might have seen Jesus through your words or actions. Be prepared next week to share one of the ways you intentionally lived for Jesus by being like Jesus!

**Biblical Worldview:** A biblical worldview uses the Bible as a guidebook to live life like Jesus. As young people daily choose to live for Jesus, they stand out from others who live for themselves and live like everyone else with a secular worldview. Challenge the young people to want to live like Jesus because they can see that is the life that will

bring them joy and help them avoid much of the pain and disaster their peers experience.

**Outreach/Missions:** When missionaries go to other countries, they go to a place where they are not citizens and are not treated as citizens with all their privileges. Take time to pray for your church-sponsored missionaries. Also, pray for the youth to have a heart for the lost and commit to praying for friends and family members who are not yet citizens of heaven.