

Do You Know the Secret to Joy?

1) Philippians 3: 1 – 8 NKJV

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

1. What are we not to have confidence in? Why?
2. What does the Apostle Paul call the flesh?
3. Why did Paul count all things as rubbish to gain Christ? What does that mean for us?

2) Philippians 3: 8 – 11

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.

1. Why would being found in Him having our own righteousness keep us from knowing Christ and His righteousness more intimately?
2. Why is it important to know Christ's righteousness?
3. Do you think that experiencing the free gift of Christ's righteousness and knowing His resurrection life give us joy?

3) Philippians 3: 12 – 14

¹² 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.

1. What does it mean that Jesus Christ has a hold on us?
2. Why is it important for followers of Jesus to better grasp how Jesus has a hold on us?
3. What is the one thing that Paul said he does? What does that mean for us?
4. If we already have the gift of Jesus' resurrection life why should we press toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus?
5. If we are already complete in Christ Jesus (Col 2:10) in our spirit, can the reality of Jesus manifest more and more in our souls and lives here on earth?