

Welcome to Hope Sabbath School—an in-depth interactive study of the Word of God. We are continuing our series on Inspired Letters from Prison. Today's topic from Philippians: CONFIDENCE ONLY IN CHRIST.

1) Beware of the dogs

- a. What impression do you get when you read Philippians 3:1?
- b. Philippians 3:2 Who were the dogs the Philippian Christians needed to beware of?
- c. Were the dogs, the evil workers, and the mutilation, three different groups or three descriptions of the same group?
- d. What were these enemies of the gospel teaching?
- e. Are these same enemies of the gospel active today?
- f. Philippians 3:3 Why is worshiping God, rejoicing in Jesus Christ, and having no confidence in the flesh our best defense against enemies of the gospel?

2) Trust fully in Christ, not in your own accomplishments

- a. Philippians 3:4-6 What reasons did Saul (later called Paul) have to be proud from a human perspective? (see also Acts 22:3, 26:4-5)
- b. What are your thoughts about Paul's claim that before meeting Christ he was blameless concerning righteousness which is in the law?
- c. Paul also claimed that, before becoming a follower of Jesus, he was zealous in persecuting Christians. What examples can we find in the Book of Acts of Saul persecuting the church?
Acts 7:57-8:3, 9:1-2

- d. What was Paul's own testimony about persecuting Christians before he became a follower of Jesus? Acts 26:9-11
- e. How is it possible that Saul thought he was doing the will of God by persecuting followers of Jesus? Note the prophecy of Jesus recorded in John 16:1-2
- f. How did Paul's attitude about his past religious accomplishments change after he became a follower of Jesus? Philippians 3:7-11, 1 Timothy 1:15
- g. What does it mean to be found "in Christ"? 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Ephesians 1:7-14
- h. When did you come to realize that your only hope of salvation was found through faith in Jesus Christ?

3) Press on toward the goal

- a. Philippians 3:12-14 What (or Who) is the goal the Apostle Paul was striving toward? (see also Philippians 3:10-11)
- b. What was Paul's confession at the end of his earthly life? 2 Timothy 4:7-8
- c. How can we keep our attention focused on the Jesus? Hebrews 12:1-2
- d. Who has helped you to keep your eyes fixed on Jesus? (the Holy Spirit, a spiritual friend, etc.)

