

Ds. Arjan van Groos (1962 - 2014)  
Tekst: Filippenzen 3, 7 – 9a  
Avonddienst – Engelse dienst

Evening service

- 1. Singing: Psalm 22: 12 and 13**
- 2. Prayer for blessing on the opening of God's Word**
- 3. Scripture Reading: Philippians 3: 1-21**
- 4. Singing: Psalm 5: 9 and 10 (for those who delight in God shelter)**
- 5. Text: Philippians 3: 7 - 9a**
- 6. Singing: Psalm 63: 2 and 3 (God's love as the highest good)**
- 7. Confession of faith by the singing of Gezang 179b (Gz 4)**
- 8. Thanksgiving and intercession**
- 9. Final Song: Gezang 161: 1 and 3 (NG 82)**

**Beloved community of our Lord Jesus Christ, brothers and sisters,**

Are you happy, brothers and sisters? Are you happy, boys and girls? "Well at this moment not because it does not enjoy my work." "Well at this moment not because my health is not." "Well at this moment not because it is not so good in my marriage. "" You have at least one marriage. I wish I could say. "Another might say:" How can you be happy when you see how bad it is with nature? The seas are fished out, the climate is beaten hollow, animals and plants die off. "And what about God? Are you happy with him? "Yeah, I'm glad I believe in God." But why is that there is a little timid from? "You say that you are happy, but I frankly I can not really see you. You are here and I have no bad word to say. You also pay your faith FVO. There I will say nothing bad. But are you happy? Or let me be more precise questions: make you feel welcome? Do you feel joy in your heart? Or is it in your heart but a bit of a dead thing? Not too many emotions, because we are fasting Dutch right? It is even in the Bible. Paul writes to Timotheüs and the municipality of Thessalonica. "

Yes, brothers and sisters, what about it with our emotions? And how to relate to God and our faith? Several Psalms that today we will sing about our joy in the Lord. Joy, joy, your heart that rim. Your head is full but that of God. Is full of happiness that God wants to give.

I served you today the Word of God under the following subjects:

The conversion of Paul to Christ and his sense of happiness.

What is happiness for you? How do you define happiness? To answer that question, you should check for yourself what you are striving for in this life. Is lucky for you a nice house, nice things and a nice car? Is lucky for you look good, so much attention of the opposite sex? Is lucky for you that makes you a good career? Is lucky for you that people look up to you? What is happiness for you? What is happiness for you? The answer to this question shows what is important to you. Where you attach importance to and where not.

When we talk about conversion, we often talk about a radical change. The word radical is derived from the Latin word radix, which means root. And we must not think that orange vegetables, or math, but if the roots of plants or trees. In Gorinchem where we lived, stood by us in the near huge chestnut and beech. When it stormed, then you saw the branches of the trees on all sides to move. But the tree was not the point. As he finds his roots in the ground was. A radical conversion means that you, as it were, is uprooted. You are like a tree with roots and all excavation and re-planted. Put in new soil. In a new place.

Conversion is not just that you no longer do certain sins. Or at least seriously fighting against. Conversion goes much deeper. Conversion affects your whole being. Your values and standards. Conversion is a change in your thinking. As Paul writes about the town in Rome. Romans 12.2 "and is not similar to this world, but is reformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may recognize what the will of God is good, and completely welgevallige. A renewal of your thinking. That means that you have a different view of the world will get on your own life.

What that means in practice we see in our beautifully illustrated text. "What was my profit, because I am of Christ as a loss to consider." What was that old profit of Paul? What was so valuable to him? And where he was so proud of? That he has previously listed in the chapter? He was circumcised on the eighth day. He was included in the covenant that God with his people Israel had closed. Extremely valuable and expensive still. Similar to the baptism of our children. He was among the chosen people of God of heaven and earth. The people that God had his eye on and that he in his heart was closed. Allah a history of many centuries it has. And Paul was also the best part of the people. He belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin were the two tribes rich. The government in Jerusalem that the Lord should continue. In contrast to the strains of the ten strains empire that was to serve God in the calves in Dan and Hole were prepared. Furthermore, he was born a Jew. That means that he is young, are made familiar with the language of the Old Testament. In a world where many Jews were scattered around the world, was not any Jew the Hebrew of the Old Testament master. They spoke Greek or Aramaic or Latin. But Paul controlled Hebrew. All things to be proud of. Things you may thank the Lord. Because not every man receive such beautiful birth papers.

Furthermore, Paul is still in its own merits to this beautiful list. He had the legal concept of a Pharisee. He was someone whom the law of God very seriously. Not only in terms of learning are concerned. Also with regard to compliance concerns. He played all his religious duties with great zeal and precision. If a dedicated child of God. And his zeal for the name of the Lord went where he was not afraid to love for the Lord to make dirty hands. He has even sued the town fanatic. Paul ends in verse 6 with the conclusion that he is what the law on justice is fully satisfactory. He lived entirely for the Lord. A man who so diligently and precisely for the Lord liveth, which certainly deserves a place in heaven with God. Since he was convinced. There were many people and he was convinced his zeal and precision praised by the pharisees and other people from the people. He was proud to walk in Jerusalem. And he did too. If his life would be preceded by so, then he proudly at the end of his life may look back on his life and the people would have promoted him as an example to follow.

But all these fine things, such as fine papers and birth as much zeal for God's law and the cause of zeal is something beautiful, Paul now sees as a loss. At the end of verse 8, he uses a stronger expression. As he says: "I have all thrown away as waste," Why would these things Paul discarded as waste. Things that, apart from the prosecution of the town of Jesus Christ, to consider it as his. The answer is because he has found something else: namely Jesus Christ. And Paul wants only one thing: Christ and a win him. In verse 10 Paul is what he will mean. "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection experienced, I want to share in his suffering and equal to him in his death, hoping perhaps also from the dead to rise." The use of the word "maybe" the suggestion would be confusing, that Paul is uncertain over. "Maybe 'will happen. The basic text, the word is not. Paul expresses himself in this verse very carefully. But that is not motivated by uncertainty, but by desire and look wonderful. "That I may still come. That would be really great and wonderful incomprehensible. Unbelievable that this proportion would fall to me. "

Paul was named as the person from the parable of Matthew 13.44 ff. That person was shot in a field. He sold out to the field to buy. Or if the purchase-man was looking for

precious pearls. Who, when he took the pearl which he so passionately looking for was sold to a single pearl buying.

Paul as it were, many precious belongings, but he throws them away as waste, because he has found Christ and Christ the treasure of his life. What lies behind it is history and no longer of value, but Christ is and He alone. Is this sensible? Is it not a bit exaggerated now, all those good things from the past as a waste to do? You can still do a bit of both. No, says Paul. Everything in me the way to grow in Christ, I consider waste. And the beautiful birth of my own paper and provide services only for that I am not entirely, by and living with Jesus Christ. Nothing of what I have, I feel that I've earned it. It's all grace. The love and grace of Jesus Christ must shine and rays. As Paul also in verse 8 and 9 said. "I wanted to win and one with Christ Him - not by my own justice because I am the law enforceable, but that of God, the justice that is through faith in Christ."

Not I, but Christ must be central. Not on me, but on Christ, the light traps. That is repentance. This is really radical. That you do not put yourself center, but Christ. That you do not find that life you need to run, but you will find that life (including your and your life) to Christ running. He must rays. He must shine. He should receive credit. If that happens, then you get completely different in life. Then you have other land under your feet. Then you think totally changed. Then your life if it were inside out. And you then more and more are fighting against sin, is a consequence of this change of thinking. Is due to the fact that you breathe another spirit and other values have been given. Is the result that you are looking for happiness in Christ now, not in the things of this world. You can and should enjoy the things of this life, but not when your relationship with Christ in the way.

And how does it continue with joy and repentance? Is there life after conversion still-ple to experience pleasure? Or is it a matter of boring but now you do duties? Young people still want that picture. Now it is certainly true that a Christian struggle and grief are also known. The sin is also in the life of a converted man is always the role of joy. If you converted man ontkom not the sorrow of your sins. But it is not that Paul toilsome and depressed by life. Although he humanly speaking or reason. Because if he wrote this letter he is in prison and his life is in danger. But Paul is not depressed in a corner. For Christ is his joy and all that Christ gives to his mercy, love and pity.

This letter calls on the town of Paul Filippi to be happy. In Chapter 4 verse 4, he writes: Let your joy to the Lord, I say again: Be always happy. Paul gives to the town so the command to always be welcome. But is it mental? The Lord is pleased to report members of heart? Yeah, sure. But not if we in the sorrow hanging. Because God gives members report of heart salvation and new life in Christ as they seek their salvation. God gives much. He gives us the child shelf. He gives us his Son. He gives us eternal life. He gives us resurrection from the dead. How are we to God? That is the least that we welcome Christ and his gifts. Suppose someone you've given a great gift. A gift of a very difficult for've done. All the other to a great pleasure to do. And other than that if you give the gift that says: "Oh, thank you." Then you wonder is he really happy. And then ask you just the same: "Do you do it?" And the other says: "Sure, I find it beautiful. Thank you hear. "But the face of the other does not light, shows no joy or enthusiasm. It works like a cold shower. You wanted to make someone happy, but that person is not happy. You feel a bit off. Are you so wrong? Would the Lord is sometimes not so we feel? I realize that I am equally human way the Lord speaking. But is not it? What would the Lord want us to see, now he blesses us so? That is happiness and joy. No superficial happiness, but the joy that Paul speaks about. The joy of knowing Christ. "To know Christ Jesus, my Lord surpasses everything."

And if we know little about the happiness to know Jesus Christ and his treasures, what is the reason? There are several possible explanations. Many grief, leaving little for good shelf-space. There may be depression. But sometimes it is not this? Christ that we do not take possession of our hearts. That we, as it were betting on two horses. We want eternal life, but we do not want Christ throughout our life. Or that we do not dare to Christ to surrender. Rather a kind of victim stuck because of our sins. "I'm not worth it, that Christ in me would want to live." And you are right in there. But that is all the intention. Paul has also not on his dignity. What people might see as a value, which he now regards as garbage. Because it is not about Paul. It is for that Christ mercy and love shine in the fact that Christ Paul has chosen this to him to live. Everything that you feel that you are worthy to make Christ in your heart to receive, you must continue as trash. Because it is the glory and honor of Christ in the way.

Set the doors of your heart but open to Christ. The Holy Spirit would you like to help pen. Let Christ without ifs and buts. Believe what He, his Father and the Holy Spirit you

promised in your baptism. And you have to honor Christ joy about love and mercy of God in Christ. More can you honor God with your heart than to be provided by his love. Because then the joy of what He has given to you and, as a source of living water well up in your heart. Be visible in your face and eyes. Audible by the words that speak. By tangible acts of love for God that you and your family do. Let the Lord your joy and is maintained. I tell you again: Be always happy in Christ.

Amen