

PHILIPPIANS

A

STUDY OF

THE

JOYFUL

CHURCH

PASTOR

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AT

FREEDOM BAPTIST

FELLOWSHIP

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INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS

PLACE OF WRITING: Rome, the Mamertine Prison compare Chapter 1:13 and 4:22 these two verses confirm this.

DATE OF THE WRITING: A.D. 64

AUTHOR: The Apostle Paul a prisoner; Chapter 1:7, 13-14 but he expected to be released as seen in 1:19-20, 26 & 2:24.

PRIMARY RELIGION: Worship of Bacchus the god of Orgy; they also practiced emperor worship and the mystic religions.

BACKGROUND: The city is named after Philip of Macedon. It was founded in 358 BC. in 42 bc. Mark Anthony & Octavious defeated Brutus & Cassius nearby and transformed this Greek city into a Roman Colony.

In the early part of Paul's second mission trip the Lord denied him any direction except over into Macedonia landing at Philippe (Acts 16:9, 10). This event changed all of our history as the gospel moved over into Europe and began to affect our entire ancestor's. We know of two families in the church, there is Lydia the seller of purple and also the Philippian jailer and his family and also the girl who was possessed (Acts 16:16-19). We have also the name of the pastor Epaphroditus who at the time of the writing of this letter was with Paul in Rome and was gravely ill.

This letter is missing two words which make it a unique letter, those words are sin and sins, in there place we find the words joy and rejoice, these words are used 18 times in 4 chapters, however the word used most is Jesus Christ, some 40 times in 4 chapters.

The reason is this joy comes from being "in" Jesus. This letter speaks to us of how a Christian is to live, not how he or she is actually living. The letter shows us what true Christian experience is, the outward expression of the Christ-life within the believer in the poser of the Holy Spirit manifested in our daily walk.

After establishing the church by the riverside, as there was no Synagogue to start in. Paul met with the Jews by the river. When Paul leaves Luke stays to help the fledgling church (Acts 20:6). Now here Luke rejoins Paul in Rome.

This church was extremely loyal to Paul, they loved him and he loved them, they are one of the few that financially supported him (Acts 8:5; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; 11:8-9; Phil 4:15-18)

They had not been effected by the judaizers, because of their realizing there position as being "in" Christ. Paul however does warn them in 3:14.

CHAPTER ONE

Intro: Rejoicing in Christ is the principle of life.

Verse 1: Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Paul does not mention his apostleship as he had in the letters to Corinth and others. There mutual love precluded such titles. Therefore Paul can take his place as a servant of Jesus Christ.

Timothy is his son in the faith. Together they are “servants” or bond slave’s ones who are willingly to subordinate themselves wholly unto Jesus. They were his slaves and no one else’s. Jesus himself in Matthew 6:24 said no one can serve two masters. Notice he writes to “all the saints” at Philippi, he left no one out, so they could not use his words as reason for division or strife. We will see at the end of the letter there was a problem between two women.

The human family is comprised of two groups, the saints and the aint’s. If you are a saint you are set apart to Christ, you are a holy vessel and you are that because of your position “in” Christ. Ill. “the vessels in the temple had been used for generations they were beaten and may have not looked holy but they were. Why? The answer is this; because these vessels were wholly set aside for God’s use.

What does it mean to be saved? The phrase “in Christ Jesus” gives us the answer we are placed in Jesus. When you put your trust in Jesus the Holy Spirit baptizes you into the body of Christ. So the Holy Spirit places you in Christ and you are not involved, even the faith you exercise is given you by Christ.

The Philippian saints are in Christ, but they were “at” Philippi. Just as you and I are in Christ but we are at Madison. So we see the little phrase “in Christ” compromise the most important words in the New Testament.

“With the Bishop’s and Deacon’s the title Bishop represents the office, these men were guardians, the under shepherds not dictators (1 Pet. 5:1-4). The Deacons office refers to spiritual men who are performing a secular service (Acts 6).

VERSE 2: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace be unto you: grace is a Gentile term of greeting equal to our “have a good day” the difference lies in the fact that if someone says have a good day they really contribute nothing to whether I do or not. But God by His grace will see to my having a good eternity.

Peace is a Jewish greeting notice grace always comes before peace (Romans 5:1). This is peace with God that comes from His grace towards us. Notice it is grace and peace from the Father and the Son the Holy Spirit is not mentioned because He is already there.

VERSE 3: I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

Notice Paul expresses a personal relationship with God “**My God**”. Every time God brings to mind this congregation Paul would just thank Him for them. Their acceptance of the gospel and their love for Paul and their support of Paul. This is the way it should be between all of us.

VERSE 4: Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

“**Always**” not just sometimes but every time he went to prayer he prayed for these believers. Paul had no doubt a long prayer list as he prayed for all the churches and many individuals.

“**making request with joy**”: the power of this is realized when we consider where Paul was when he said “**with joy**” it is easy to have joy when all is going well; but to have that same joy when life is not perfect is a greater feat. Paul could have this joy because he was in Christ. Today we try to manufacture joy by external means. We hold a program and say “come and enjoy”. Real joy does not depend on outward circumstances, real joy can however be dampened by our circumstances

VERSE 5: For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

Here we have a very important word and must not just pass over it as it is used in and out of church. “Fellowship” means that which Christians can share of the things of Christ. It has three elements

1. Spiritual communication- sharing the things of Christ
2. Sympathetic Cooperation – working together for Christ
3. Sweet Communion – partners with Christ

Paul had enjoyed this fellowship from the time he first met Lydia down by the riverside.

**VERSE 6: Being confident of this very thing,
that he which hath begun a good work in you
will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:**

Paul is stating here that he was and is persuaded that what began in the past will continue to be so. He has no doubts about their salvation. Paul says in the second part that God's beginning the work is a pledge of His completing what He has begun (1 Sam. 3:12). This work has its beginning in regeneration (past) it's continued in sanctification (present) and it's finished in glorification (future).

In the past it is God's unchangeable purpose, in the present it is Gods unlimited power, and in the future there is Gods unbreakable promise. Salvation is all of God.

**VERSE 7: Even as it is meet for me to think this
of you all, because I have you in my heart;
inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the
defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all
are partakers of my grace.**

“Meet” means right, Paul gives the reason for his confidence it was right for Paul to feel this way. Why? Because Paul carried them in his heart, he loved them as his own soul. What a wonderful place to carry your friends.

Paul held them there even in his imprisonment and in his “defense” the clearing away of objections. Confirmation is the aggressive advancement of the gospel. Paul is not defending himself but clearing obstacles and spreading the gospel. The Philippians Paul knew were doing this very same thing and were living in the same grace he was.

**VERSE 8: For God is my record, how greatly I
long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.**

God was Paul's witness of how much Paul longed for (desire earnestly) these Philippian believers. He did this with the heart (bowels or vital organs) of Jesus or tender affections of Christ. This is a witness to us how we should feel towards other believers our feelings should come from deep within.

VERSE 9: And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

Paul continually prayed that the love they already had toward God, one another and all men would continue to overflow more and more. This love was to grow based on a precise knowledge gained by experience in Jesus Christ. There love was to grow in judgment this means “spiritual understanding”.

They were to abound with knowledge of the principles of love in Christ.

VERSE 10: That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.

Paul urged the Philippians to test that prove and recognize by examination those things that are best, for example to sift truth from error or to differentiate between the higher spiritual blessing and the lower material blessing. The testing criterion is always the word of God. “**Sincere**” means without wax or unmixed free from falsehood. God desires sterling Christians not just plated ones. “Without offense” having nothing in your life that anyone can strike against you. We are to be stepping stones not stumbling stones. How long you ask until Christ appears.

VERSE 11: Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

“**Being filled**” is to be filled to the full mark. This is a present result of a past action. What are we to be filled with the “fruits” of righteousness as in Gal. 5:22-23? This fruit doesn’t come by human effort but by Jesus. “Unto the glory and praise of God” this is the spiritual purpose of all Christian behavior.

VERSE 12: But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

When this church heard of Paul being imprisoned they sent a letter to try and cheer him up and comfort him for no longer being able to travel with the gospel.

Paul's reply was that the gospel was still going out and all that had happened had actually furthered the gospel.

VERSE 13: So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

Paul's bonds were a connection to Christ they bore witness for Christ. So much so that he and his bonds were well known; even in Caesars palace and all over Rome also. This came about by his being chained to guard's day in and day out.

VERSE 14: And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

The Roman church by and large was out witnessing because of Paul's boldness in chains brought courage to them. The word "**bold**" here means with greater zeal. "**To speak**" is the fact of speaking more than the substance of what was said. They dared fearlessly to proclaim God's word.

VERSE 15: Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

Some were doing it out of envy towards Paul and others and some because of strife these are very low reasons to proclaim the gospel. They are in contrast to those in fourteen and also to those in the last part of this verse. These men found pleasure in Paul and engaged supporting him.

This still goes on today; one of the solutions however is for every Christian to realize they have a gift. That gift is to be exercised in love (1 Cor. 3:4; 4:7). Envy says, "I do not think much of you, pride says, "what do you think of me".

VERSE 16: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

Paul elaborates on the first group as to their reason to preach. They did it to belittle Paul; they were envious but could find nothing against him. They would preach but while doing so, they would find time to belittle Paul.

**VERSE 17: But the other of love, knowing that
I am set for the defence of the gospel**

Now the others preached because they loved both Christ and Paul. Because they knew Paul was going to defend the gospel not himself. We see in these two verses, two types of preachers
They differ in heart- in one-contention rules in the other love
They differ in spirit- one has strife, one good will
They differ in source of strength- one is love of party, the other confidence in the Lord
They differ in aim – one to advance a sect, the other to advance Christ.
They differ in conviction – one wants to add affliction to Paul, the other knows Paul is to defend the gospel.

**VERSE 18: What then? notwithstanding, every
way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is
preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will
rejoice.**

What was important to Paul was not the motive, but that Christ was preached. We ought to rejoice that Christ is preached whether we agree with the person personally or not.

You see God's word once preached has a promise that it will not return void there will be results. You see God honors his word not the individual or the church.

**VERSE 19: For I know that this shall turn to my
salvation through your prayer, and the supply
of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,**

Paul fully expected their prayers to see him freed from prison. Through the prayers of God's people we are supplied with the Spirit.

**VERE 20: According to my earnest
expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I
shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as
always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified
in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.**

“**Earnest expectation**” is defined as head erect, outstretched – anxious anticipation. Paul is determined to not be ashamed of his witness while here in this life and the one to come as he appeared before Christ. Paul is utterly committed to magnifying Christ.

There are many saved people who are living today that will be ashamed at Jesus appearing. Paul says he doesn't want this for himself.

VERSE 21: For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

This one sentence sums up this chapter in a nutshell. This is to be the philosophy of Christian life "to live Christ; to die is gain" (Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:4). Dr. Pettingill said that "gain" is always more of the same. So to live is Christ then to die would be more of Christ. The most important thing we can have in our lives is Christ being our life. To die is gain, not dying in and of itself but what comes after (2 Cor. 5:8). Martyr to executioner "you take a life away from me I cannot keep and bestow a life upon me I cannot lose". This is when we will collect on our life investments for Christ.

VERSE 22: But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

If he continues in this body then he will see more fruit. Yet he does not yet know what his outcome will be life here or life there. This is a great way to live our lives. Gaining more fruit for Jesus here or gaining more Jesus there.

VERSE 23: For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

Paul was constrained pressed on both sides. One he wanted to go to heaven having already seen it. Paul was ready to have his tent pins pulled and his earthly tent folded up (2 Cor.5: 1). This Paul saw as being much better, George Whitfield often said, " I am often weary in the work, but never weary of it". Life has attractions death has advantage.

VERSE 24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

However Paul saw the need in staying here to help the believers. He wanted to properly finish the work (2 Tim. 4: 6-8). Bringing these believers to full spiritual maturity was Paul's only goal in life and one that every pastor ought to have as their goal also.

VERSE 25: And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

Paul has been previously persuaded and is still convinced that he again would be standing in the presence of this congregation you all he is staying to promote their growth in faith and the joy of it.

VERSE 26: That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

Paul say here that the reason for their rejoicing and its overflowing is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:31). They can rejoice even more when Paul arrives because Christ will be the one bringing him to them.

It would be a blessing if our lives brought such rejoicing when it was known we were going to be arriving at Church.

VERSE 27: Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Paul now begins to tell them what their chief purpose is to be. They are to keep on conducting their lives as citizens of heaven each one is commanded to live like it down here not by regulation but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Our daily life should reflect us as strangers down here and citizens of a different city (Heb. 11:10). They are to stand fast keep together on the foundation of the solid rock. Bickering, contention, self-seeking hinders the gospel witness. They are to strive or work together head to head shoulder-to-shoulder and heart to heart.

VERSE 28: And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

With everyone practicing verse twenty-seven they had nothing to fear from those who would attack them. There is no middle ground you are for Christ or against him (Matt 12:30). These adversaries' very actions are proof they are headed for hell. But to the Philippians it was proof of their salvation.

VERSE 29: For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

To those struggling, and striving it is granted for Christ sake not only to be saved but to suffer for Jesus (2 Tim 2:12; 3:12). God crowns us with suffering (Matt.5: 11-12; 2 Cor. 4:17). For those that give the full measure in their suffering there is the martyrs crown awaiting them?

VERSE 30: Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

The suffering they were facing they had seen Paul go through and even now they hear how he is still suffering. Paul was an encouragement and an example for these believers at Philippi and these words Paul has been sharing with them should be of great encouragement to those of us today whether we are facing suffering or not.

CHAPTER TWO

Intro: In this chapter we have one of the greatest theological statements made in scripture concerning Christ. This same statement has also created a equally great controversy that is what happened at Christ's incarnation did he empty himself of deity and become just a man or did he simply Vail His deity.

We start with a practical statement from Paul on the Christian life and that is the pattern Christ followed which is others first.

VERSE 1: *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,*

The “**if**” here in this verse is one of argument not condition Paul is saying very simply that since there is consolation (exhortation) and since there is love among the brethren (2 Cor. 5:14). Love that is unselfish, a sacrificial love as found in John 3:16. Since there is fellowship of the Spirit, you see that the Holy Spirit alone brings about these things and since there is a tender heart and mercy (compassionate yearnings and action). When these graces are present there will be peace and power and unity will prevail, differences dissolved, bickering will halt and betraying healed. Paul says with these graces working in the Philippians they could then.

VERSE 2: *Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

Fulfill Paul's joy by being like-minded that is thinking the same thing having a unity of affection towards one another having their soul's together (one accord) hearts beating in unison. Thinking one thing it is unity of heart, soul and mind.

VERSE THREE: *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than them.*

Most trouble in our churches is not doctrinal; rather it is because of strife and envy. Some folks are just prone to cause trouble. If you are doing

something through strife (trouble making) or to be recognized for what you have done then you are doing them for the wrong reasons.

Do Christians need to be recognized, complemented and commended for everything they do? Paul says rather let each of us esteem the other higher. If this were obeyed it would eliminate a lot of problems and especially in the music department. You know the attitude “why don’t they call on me to sing?” I have a much better voice.” It would eliminate power struggles among church officers.

VERSE 4: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

We need to keep an eye out for the good of others. We are to have our attention fixed on others to look out for their interests as if they are our own.

We should practice unselfishness and consideration (Mark 10:45). A man of the flesh “looks out for number one” but a man of the spirit lives in submission to Christ as Christ lives in submission to the Father.

Now he is going to tell us all about the mind of Christ.

VERSE 5: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

What type of mind should we want, one like Christ’s and what is the primary trait of Christ mind- humility (Eph. 4:1-2) that is the mind of Christ. You and I struggle with humility we want to stand on our own, have our say, we do not want to be offended or ignored we tend to develop hang ups.

We come now to that great statement about the emptying of Christ. However he did not empty Himself of His deity. What we have here are 14 steps Christ took, 7 down from glory and 7 back up. The first step down was leaving heaven itself and coming down to earth. It is beyond our comprehension to grasp what a step that was for our benefit.

VERSE 6: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

From the beginning whenever that was the Son was equal and eternal with God. “**Form**” this is the way He chose to express His divine essence

fully. To be able to give expression to deity one must possess deity. In (Matt. 7:1-2) Christ revealed a glimpse of His deity.

“**Thought it not robbery**” robbery has two distinct meanings; one a thing unlawfully seized; two a treasure to be clutched. Christ did not clutch His prerogatives of divine majesty he waived His rights to express deity, display divine attributes and demonstrate equality with God. Jesus saw His deity and equality something to be relinquished for the redemption of man. Now the second step down

VERSE 7: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

No “**reputation**”- means to empty- this is where the doctrinal theory Christ emptying himself of His deity to become just a man. This of course is an error (John 1: 1-3, 14). So what did He empty Himself of? It was the prerogatives of deity He never ceased to be God, however He clothed that in a mortal body.

The third step down is the second part of this verse. Jesus came as a servant. He was born into a working class family of the root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:10). Jesus grew up as a carpenter not a Caesar. Not only did He humble Himself to be human but He came as an everyday working man.

The fourth step he was made a man. Now we think being a human is a great thing however for Jesus it was a massive step down from His glory and position in heaven. To illustrate it would be no different than you or I becoming an ant.

The fifth step

VERSE 8: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Notice Jesus humbled Himself now we have from time to time had someone say to us something that humiliated us, but Christ did this to Himself.

III. With John Wesley as he started across a narrow bridge on the other end a liberal preacher also started across with no room to pass. The liberal said I never give way to a fool. Wesley started to back up and replied I always do. It is difficult to humble us; but Christ did.

The sixth step

“**He became obedient unto death**” death is not natural and is a very humiliating thing, as God did not create us to die. We die because of sin.

When Jesus came He did not come to live as we do when born He came to die and that willingly, obediently (John 10:15, 17, 18).

The seventh step down

“Even the death of the cross” Jesus came from the highest glory to hang on a cross that wasn’t even His own. Why did he do that one word **“others”** this is the mind of Christ.

Now we move to the mind of God and 7 steps up to the exaltation of Christ.

VERSE 9: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

The first step up is that God has highly exalted Jesus and His purpose is that Jesus be exalted today and everyday. What makes this planet and us important in this vast universe is that Jesus came and died here for us.

The second step

Is that God has given Jesus His name and it is above every name. The next time you or someone you hear takes His name in vain thinks about this it is your heavenly Father’s name that many use as a curse word. God has purposed that this name be above every name of every person who we call great even above all the angels. It is a name that will be first in the universe.

VERSE 10: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

Step three—Jesus means Saviour (Matt. 1:21-23), you cannot call yourself Jesus, as you cannot save anyone nor can I. He is Jesus, God with us because He came from outside to save a sinking mankind.

Step four – every thing in heaven must bow to His name.

Step five—everything on this planet will bow to Him.

Step six – everything in hell is going to bow to His lordship and that includes Satan and all his rebellious cohorts along with every sinner in hell.

VERSE 11: And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Step seven—notice it is not a confession of salvation but that of lordship. We must be careful in our use of Jesus is Lord as He made a statement

about this in Matt. 7: 21-23. You see we need to know Him as Saviour then when we are obedient we can call Him Lord. It is even dangerous to call Him friend because of His warning in John 15:14. We can only call Him friend if we do what He commands.

Now we move to the mind of Paul, which are the things of Christ. As we have looked at the mind of Christ we can see that it cannot be imitated the Spirit of God must impart it.

VERSE 12: Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

This is one of those verses that many try to use to teach that you must work for your salvation. You cannot work out something that is not inside you. Paul says wherefore or because of what He has just said they are to continue to obey as though he were there. You see there is a tendency to relax obedience when the leader is absent.

They are to allow the Holy Spirit to work outwardly that which He placed within you by faith as seen in the next verse. Salvation must be viewed in three tenses

1. Past – Justification
2. Present—Sanctification
3. Future – Glorification

We are to do this with “**fear**” and “**trembling**” these two words describe one who distrusts their own ability to meet all the requirements but do his or her best to discharge their duty. Now this is not about being a slave to fear but of having a serious caution; knowing that the heart is deceitful.

VERSE 13: For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

God works out that which He puts in; those who are saved are saved by faith plus nothing. But after salvation God works it out in your life for others to see. John Calvin had this to say “Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone”. James in his letter says it a little different in James 2:17-18. You see I cannot see someone’s saving faith but I can see their work. True faith doesn’t need a placard to identify it.

VERSE 14: Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

Now Paul says that this out working of one's salvation in whatever form or office that is; is to be done without whining or grumbling about it. These two things have wrecked more Christian work than anything else.

VERSE 15: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Here is why you are to live and work without grumbling and arguing. So that you can show a crooked wicked world that the Sons of God may be first blameless and second that we will shine like the stars of Heaven (Matt. 5:14-16; 2 Cor. 4:6)

VERSE 16: Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain.

Here is what verse 15's light is to reveal or show others. Paul rejoiced when he heard the Philippian believers were doing this; that is making known their faith by being lights to the word of life. Ill. "Picture an airport and its landing lights". Paul had many personal converts in this church and he could see his labor had not been in vain.

VERSE 17: Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

Paul is referring them back to Genesis 35:14 and to the drink offering of Leviticus. The offering was poured on the burnt offering it was never added to the sin or trespass offering. The drink offering had nothing to do with redemption. They would pour wine on the sacrifice and it would go up in steam. Here is the importance of this, Paul is saying I want my life poured out on Christ just like the drink offering. He wanted to be totally consumed so that Jesus was all that was seen.

Now that is the attitude we should all strive for.

VERSE 18: For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

Paul tells them and us "if" our lives commend the gospel then Paul's life is poured out as a drink offering and together we can rejoice. Only a person who has the mind of Christ could be so poured out.

We often rejoice over the wrong things we should rejoice over the fact Jesus died for us and we can serve Him. When we hear of people being

seed of God or a church on fire with souls being saved we should rejoice. We have too much strife and vain glory this is hurting the cause of Christ.

**VERSE 19: But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send
Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be
of good comfort, when I know your state.**

Paul now shifts to the mind of Timothy, Paul's spiritual son. He knows that his confidence in this minister will not be in vain. Timothy will relay this Church's true state.

**VERSE 20: For I have no man likeminded, who
will naturally care for your state.**

Here is Timothy's mind we find it is the same mindset as Paul's, who means Timothy, had the mind of Christ he also was characterized by humility. We do not need a national or world council of church's to bring men together. If men have the mind of Christ they will be together. Timothy was faithful to Paul. Sometimes a convert turns against the one who led them to the Lord. That is like a child rebelling against the Father. Paul was sending Timothy to this church because he had confidence in him. It is always a blessing to have like-minded men to work with.

**VERSE 21: For all seek there own, not the
things, which are Jesus Christ's.**

There were far and away more who were busy making a name for themselves. So much so that they cared little for the things of Christ and were interested in belittling Paul.

**VERSE 22: But ye know the proof of him, that,
as a son with the father, he hath served with me
in the gospel.**

People talk a lot about togetherness yet there can be no greater togetherness than two having the mind of Christ. For example when a Christian man and woman fall in love there is a togetherness that is not possible in just a sex driven relationship.

**VERSE 23-24: Him therefore I hope to send
presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go
with me. But I trust in the Lord that I also
myself shall come short**

It is Paul's desire that Timothy bring the message of whether he would be released which was his great desire or whether he would come to the end of this life at the hand of Nero.

VERSE 25: Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

We look now into the mind of Epaphroditus here is another man who is like-minded also. Paul could trust him also. Paul founded the church and Epaphroditus was its pastor. Notice Paul says Epaphroditus was his brother companion, a fellow soldier.

Epaphroditus was one to fight alongside of Paul. Paul never was concerned about getting knifed in the back. Epaphroditus stood shoulder to shoulder with Paul he took care of Paul while in Rome with him.

VERSE 26: For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

Epaphroditus had fallen ill in Rome when the Philippian church heard it they began to mourn for him and upon hearing this Epaphroditus had a relapse.

This is and should be a sign of the wonderful relationship between the church and its Pastor. The rejection of a Bible preaching Pastor is a deathblow to a church. The devil has changed tactics he doesn't spend as much time trying to destroy the KJV; no now he goes after the men who are willing to stand up and preach and teach it. This is happening all across America you see the real test of a church is its attitude toward the Pastor.

VERSE 27: For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

Here is a very contentious verse because it contradicts much common thought today. Epaphroditus was so sick he nearly died. Why didn't Paul heal him as he had others at the beginning of his ministry for that matter why didn't he heal himself of his eye problem or Timothy of his stomach problem?

Well here is the answer it will not be popular I dare say but it will be accurate and practical. Paul could heal at the beginning because he had no New Testament to work from or use to prove he was from God. The Jews always seek after a sign and as the Apostles were dealing mainly with Jews as seen in the first 10 chapters of the book of Acts, they were given special sign gifts so the Jew would have something for the eye to believe. Paul wrote one of the early books that were out there to read. So here is Epaphroditus near death and Paul gives God the glory for Epaphroditus recovery and mercy. At this time the emphasis is moving back to the great physician as opposed to signs, which were temporary for the Apostle's (1 Cor. 13).

VERSE 28: I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.

Paul is sending Epaphroditus back now in health so that the church could again rejoice because their mourning caused extra sorrow for him.

VERSE 29: Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:

How gracious Paul is he encourages them to rejoice for having this man of God and he is to be respected and loved. Our attention should be on the word and having the mind of Christ.

VERSE 30: Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

Epaphroditus was working for Christ so much so that he had fallen ill and this he did willingly not thinking of his own life in a brutal Roman empire. Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus had the mind of Christ and were using it, even in a time of great persecution

CHAPTER THREE

Intro: We have seen so far the philosophy of Christian living “For me to live is Christ” also the pattern for Christian living “Let this mind be in you”. Now we come to the prize for Christian living “ I press toward the mark” this is part of Paul’s personal testimony.

VERSE ONE: Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you *it is safe.*

“**Finally**” means Paul is moving from the doctrinal to the practical. Keep on rejoicing in Jesus we are to be joyful Christians. Rejoicing is more than rejoicing in His grace and gifts, more than rejoicing in our salvation and service it is all of the above and more. Paul wanted to go on giving good counsel because it was not a chore or troublesome but for us it was a means of safety.

VERSE TWO: Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

Paul warns them and us to be on guard, constantly watching. For what you ask? Well for those wild scavenging dogs without owners. Paul is referring to the false teachers who boasted in their religion trusted in works rather than grace. These followed Paul everywhere trying to disrupt the ministry.

“Evil works” the definition of this is deceitful workers 2 Cor. 11:13. These were wolves in sheep’s clothing deceiving deluding destroying the flock.

“**Concision**” we are to be wary of those of mutilation and not of the true circumcision Romans 2:28-29; Eph. 2:11. These were always trying to put men back under the Mosaic system they rested in rite over reality and sign without substance.

So Paul warns us to watch out for false teachers

VERSE 3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Paul presents the true of all believers. We have the circumcision of the heart and no longer have any confidence in the flesh. We practice priestly

service in spiritual ministry. This service is inspired, guided and supported by the Holy Spirit.

VERSE 4: Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

Now Paul is going to confront these men's religion by showing his own personal pedigree. He will use his background to prove he has more of a right to boast than any of them.

VERSE 5: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

He was circumcised on the eighth day (Lev. 12:3) not 13 years as Ishmaelite or adult gentiles.

He was not a proselyte as some but a true Israelite. He was born of the tribe of Benjamin, not a lost tribe but the tribe that produced the first King, which Paul was named after, which is Saul.

He was a full blood Jew who maintained the customs and characteristic of a Hebrew. Not a Hellenistic or Greek influenced Jew. The great teacher Gamaliel trained him

He was of the Pharisees as opposed to the Sadducees. Paul held to a strict interpretation of the Scriptures.

VERSE 6: Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul was a zealot of Judaism and against Christianity. He was the one who held the cloaks of Stephen's murderers. Paul observed the minutest detail of the law. He was blameless in his practice of it. He knew and practiced the rules of a Rabbi.

VERSE 7: But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

However all these fleshly assets, these that had profited him all his life he now knew they did not and could not save him, justify him or give him peace. They were now on the wrong side of the ledger, they had become worthless stock. Paul had "counted" them of value until Jesus met him on

the Damascus road there he found what was of infinite value, Christ crucified buried, risen again and glorified.

**VERSE 8: Yea doubtless, and I count all things
but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of
Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have
suffered the loss of all things, and do count
them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,**

Paul without doubt or hesitancy still counted all things loss for the surpassing superiority of his personal experiential knowledge of Christ. That is the priceless value of knowing Christ. Paul now counted all he had as a liability useless, refuse. Christ is the only thing on the credit side of his ledger.

**VERSE 9: And be found in him, not having
mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but
that which is through the faith of Christ, the
righteousness which is of God by faith:**

“**Be found in Him**” that is discovered to be in Christ united to Him such union is real, vital, fruit bearing. Paul said he wanted to be found not with his own righteousness, which he had already elaborated on, but rather the righteousness of Christ had by faith and that provided by God himself.

**VERSE 10: That I may know him, and the
power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of
his sufferings, being made conformable unto his
death;**

Paul was not interested in a debate about Christ; rather close personal knowledge of Him. Not just knowledge but the power of God that raised Jesus (Eph. 1:19-20) and is given by the indwelling of Christ. (Romans 6:6-8 Romans 6:4).

**VERSE 11: If by any means I might attain unto
the resurrection of the dead.**

Paul is not uncertain as to realizing the above, but by what means a martyrs death or non violent or rapture. Suffering doesn't hold him up and death doesn't terrorize him, they are but opportunities for a close walk with Jesus.

VERSE 12: Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Paul lets everyone know he is not perfect though he had made progress the ultimate goal was still out there. Paul is still pressing on encouraged as he pursues his goal. Paul says if I can get hold of what I was caught by Christ for. From Damascus until now Paul has been living to lay hold of Christ purpose for his life.

VERSE 13: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this one thing I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Paul says I have forgotten my pre Christ life and also all that has previously happened in my Christian life. Paul wants a fuller apprehension, appropriation and appreciation of Christ.

Paul says I have not yet grasped this but he had a single purpose in life, the past is gone, the present is fleeting, the future claims all his attention and he is reaching out like a runner trying to cross the line for the trophy.

VERSE 14: I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul was constantly headed for the goal. His goal was that upward calling from heaven, a call to be like Christ. This should be every Christian's goal to be like Christ here and then to be with Him in Heaven.

VERSE 15: Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Paul is not here speaking of sinless perfection but rather spiritual maturity those that were. Paul here urged them to press toward that calling of Christ likeness. Those that think they are but are not. God through prayer will reveal it so one may again move out onto the road to that high calling.

There were some immature believers in this church as there are today. Now being immature is not bad unless you have an attitude of low

attainment. Being immature in Christ becomes tragic when one stays that way to maintain one's view or opinion above learning new truth.

VERSE 16: Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

As we mature we must continue to walk the same straight path and be guided by the same divine truths and unchanging principles. We need to hold these and strive to go higher.

VERSE 17: Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

Paul asks them and us to follow his example of life (1 Cor. 11:1). He lived Christ and preached Christ; he encourages us to attentively follow his example and guide.

VERSE 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:

Paul had warned the church even to the point of tears about the enemies to their faith. Paul saw it as a duty to warn about every danger to the faith and so should every Pastor today though the cost is high. He is talking about false professor's those who wore the name Christian but were not. They were a law unto themselves they practiced loose living, license not liberty, and a freedom not from sin but to sin.

VERSE 19: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

Paul has described the enemies of Christ and now states their sad end, eternal separation from the presence of God. These men were gods unto themselves and lived to practice self-indulgence. They are shameless in conduct, they boast of liberty, yet are slaves to sin and self. They are those professing Christian's who live for this world they preach some form of social gospel; or a gospel that in some way feeds or satisfies the flesh.

VERSE 20: For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Paul reminds us that our citizenship is in heaven; we are only here on temporary assignment. Our government is from heaven our allegiance is to Jesus. We wait eagerly for His return this should be our normal attitude. This expecting should spur us on to higher and holier living 1 John 3:1-3.

**VERSE 21: Who shall change our vile body,
that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious
body, according to the working whereby he is
able even to subdue all things unto himself**

When Jesus appears He will fashion us a new body one suited for heaven not here. One just like His, He will use the same power to do this, that He will use to bring all of the world into subjection.

CHAPTER FOUR

Intro: We have seen the philosophy, pattern, and prize for living for Christ, now we come to the power for Christian living. The other three are useless without the power to accomplish them in our lives. We will see that joy is the source, prayer is the secret and contemplation of Christ is the sanctuary of power.

VERSE 1: Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

These saints were Paul's joy here as he won most for Christ. At the second coming Paul expected to receive the soul winners crown for his labors. Paul encourages them to keep standing firm in their faith, as it is easy to defect under persecution. He again calls them his dearly beloved, always thinking in terms of a father to a child.

VERSE 2: I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

Here we have two women mentioned by name and it is not in a good way. Euodias means prosperous journey, her counter part in this problem was a woman named Syntyche, which means pleasant acquaintance; sad to say they do not live up to their names as they are anything but prosperous or pleasant where the church is concerned. These two women are prominent leaders in this congregation who were at odds with each other. Paul admonishes them to resolve it and get back together with the mind of Christ as they were hurting the congregation. You see there cannot be the joy of the Lord when people are at odds with each other. Each thought they were right when their pride made them both at fault.

Leaders in a congregation need to learn to control their tongues to prevent these types of incidents.

VERSE 3: And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellowlabourers, whose names *are* in the book of life.

It is not known who this man Clemont was but he was well suited to work in harness with Paul. He encourages this person to help these two women settle their problem. They did not usurp (2 Tim. 2:12) but supplemented (Titus 2:3-4) Paul's ministry. Women have abilities that men do not have especially in reaching other women and children.

**VERSE 4: Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again
I say, Rejoice.**

We are not to be gloomy but glorious. Paul exhorts them to keep on rejoicing whether in prison or a palace; in prosperity and adversity; in health and sickness. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit and the result of peace with God (Romans 5:12) joy is contagious.

**VERSE 5: Let your moderation be known unto
all men. The Lord *is* at hand.**

Your moderation is seen in your forbearance, considerateness, graciousness, gentleness, and sweet reasonableness; over looking others faults and failures. This is the opposite of stubbornness and thoughtlessness. Why? Because Christ may come at any moment and then we will stand before Him in judgment not for salvation but for rewards.

**VERSE 6: Be careful for nothing; but in every
thing by prayer and supplication with
thanksgiving let your requests be made known
unto God.**

Paul says we are not to have the habit of worrying instead of tension, frustration, and failure, take it to the Lord in prayer. Prayer is the essence of worship and devotion supplication in entreating and pleading for our needs. Thanksgiving should accompany prayer; care as used here for worry or stress and prayers are always opposed. We should be anxious for nothing, prayerful for everything and thankful for anything. Peter said, "Casting all your care upon him; for He careth for you".

**VERSE 7: And the peace of God, which passeth
all understanding, shall keep your hearts and
minds through Christ Jesus.**

This is peace of God; not peace with God (Ro. 5:1). All Christians have peace with god and all can have the peace of God; that inward tranquility of soul grounded in God's presence, promise and power. This power of peace inside each Christian surpasses our understanding (Eph. 3:20; Is.

26:3). We can put everything in our lives into God's hands and let His peace rule in our heart (Col. 3:15). This peace will stand guard over our spirit as an armed sentry.

VERSE 8: Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

Now Paul begins to sum up all he has previously said. He chooses six adjectives that picture old-fashioned Christian ideology.

1. True—resting on reality and aiming at reality
2. Honest—honorable
3. Just—right relations between God and man
4. Pure-- stainless
5. Lovely – gracious, pleasing
6. Good report—fair speaking, of good reputation

If there be any virtue (moral excellence)

Of any praise – praise worthy or worthy of praise

Meditate or let your mind dwell on these not casually but logically (Pro. 23:7) says “**For as he thinketh in his heart so is he**” holy thinking produces Holy living. These are produced in us by the Holy Spirit.

VERSE 9: Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Paul has been an example an illustration of this high and holy thinking. Paul lived what he preached; he allowed his life to preach even more than his lips. He urges them to keep on practicing those things converting profession into performance. God will bring unity and harmony to you and through you to the church.

These next verses are very strong verses for missions

VERSE 10: But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

Paul is overjoyed that the Philippians had once again found opportunity to send to Paul the support money they had been collecting. Travel and communication was slow and there was persecution in that day especially for Christians; much as it is today in many countries around the world; these things can slow ones desire to help others

**VERSE 11: Not that I speak in respect of want:
for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am,
therewith to be content.**

Paul was not complaining about needing anything, he did not need a gift to rejoice. He had learned that joy is not dependant on outward circumstances but rather on Jesus. This was learned through experience that no matter his physical state he could be content. Paul was satisfied with Christ 2 Cor. 12:9. None the less he was grateful for their love and support towards him. I can assure you that, missionaries today that have labored to raise money to go to a field are extremely thankful for each gift they receive.

**VERSE 12: I know both how to be abased, and
I know how to abound: every where and in all
things I am instructed both to be full and to be
hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.**

Paul knew how to be humbled having little and how to live having more than enough. Paul had taken the advance course in living with difficulties. Paul was a victor over circumstances not a victim to any circumstance.

**VERSE 13: I can do all things through Christ
which strengtheneth me.**

In all of life's circumstances Paul could handle it because he was allowing Christ to continually pour power into him. What Christ wanted Paul to do Christ enabled him to do it. Paul understood that this power was not for self but for others. One other item to note Paul looked neither to the left nor to the right to see what others were doing only ahead towards his master.

**VERSE 14: Notwithstanding ye have well done,
that ye did communicate with my affliction.**

Paul commends them for their help in his present circumstance. They had avoided dangers such as the deceitfulness of riches; contentment in

their own circumstances; carelessness about others needs and being unfaithful in their obligation in stewardship. They became partners with Paul for the furtherance of the gospel.

VERSE 15: Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

In Paul's early mission work when he left Philippi no other church supported him and he proceeded on depending only upon God. Giving and receiving are book keeping terms. One can truly say that this church is a prime example of what a giving church should be!

VERSE 16: For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

Paul was in Thessalonica on two different occasions and both times the church at Philippi gave towards his need. This is remarkable considering that the Thessalonian's did not. Paul had to work at tent making while he ministered there to help meet his living need.

VERSE 17: Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

Paul wants to assure them he is not seeking another gift rather he is desirous of having fruit (souls) among them because they had given to him. Because they had been generous even in their own need. Paul is certain that they will be rewarded. God is a good book keeper and not only will he settle accounts but he pays big dividends'

VERSE 18: But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

Paul says I have all I need and more, I have been well supplied. The Philippians stewardship was a direct barometer to their spiritual condition. You can give without love, but you cannot love without giving. Their offering was sweet incense to the Lord; compare this with the following passage Gen. 8:20-21.

VERSE 19: But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

The church at Philippi had met Paul's need now God will meet their need by the riches of Christ. Paul could not repay their generosity but his God could and would. Notice it says shall, not can supply your needs. We have total supply for a total need because God's supply is inexhaustible. God uses the agency of man to meet our needs. We see great resources in these words "**riches in glory**".

VERSE 20: Now unto God and our Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

These last three verses are the benediction. This doxology flows out of Paul's joy from age to age. Paul gives all glory to God for every thing in his life and the life of the Philippians.

VERSE 21: Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

No partiality is shown he says greet all the saints, Paul shows us that every saint is in vital union with Christ. The brethren here are Paul's companions there in Rome working with him.

VERSE 23: All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

All those saints at Rome sent their greetings and so it should be today when we send greetings it should be from all the church. Paul had friends who were connected to the Palace at Rome. He was using them to preach to the royalty as Jesus had told him in the beginning of his ministry.

VERSE 23: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Paul ends with this short, sublime prayer.