

# Philipians

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

When I spoke with pastor last, he indicated that he would be in the hospital for several weeks, while they worked out his medications. We need to keep him in prayer. He asked me to fill the pulpit while he was recovering and it is my pleasure to serve such a great man of God. We spoke on what should be the topic and we decided we should go through Philipians.

I suggested Philipians for several reasons. First, it shows us how to live and function as a church in the joy of the Lord. The joy Christ gives is independent of our circumstances, and with all the trials seeking to disquiet our souls it is particularly poignant. Second, there is an emphasis on prayer. Both what the apostle prayed and what Paul encourages the believers to pray. Third, there is an emphasis on the Gospel, both in how it is advanced, and on the humility that shows where it has been. Finally, it was written by a beloved man who had ministered to the church and was now uncertain if he would live or die. He tells them how they are to live no matter what happens, and his heart cares for them. The letter was written during Paul's first imprisonment, so we know that he was released and thus did not die, which is our hope as well.



## Chapter 2

# Salutations

Many people skip the first several verses of the epistles because they “only” contain greetings. In fact, the greetings often contain some real gems.

Paul and Timotheus, bondmen of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the overseers and ministers; grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:1-2

### 2.1 Paul and Timotheus

It is interesting to note that this letter was from both, but it is certain that it was Paul, who wrote it. Paul included Timothy in the salutation of many letters, Silas (Silvanus) is included in several letters and Sosthenes once. Paul seems to have included others in the titles if they were there when the church was founded or were members of the church, and if they were to be known as faithful men. In Philippians 2:19-24, we see that Paul intended to send Timothy to them. Many false teachers were traveling about. Last Sunday we saw what Nicolas had done to Pergamum, and how John had warned not to let such have a voice in the church. Let’s look at Galatians 1:6-9. Note that the Galatians were subverted by people who came to teach them. In Acts 20:25-31, we see Paul warning that this would happen a few years before the book of Philippians was written. Paul’s concern is to let them know they could trust Timothy, for Timothy honoured God.

### 2.2 Doulos

Paul uses an interesting word to describe himself and Timothy. It is translated servant or slave, but both fall short of the strength of the word. The word is doulos, and roughly means a bondsman. The picture is taken from Deuteronomy 15:12-18. A Doulos was a slave forever. They could not be freed. They thus had no agenda of their own, rather they sought only the will of their lord. Paul expounds this idea in Romans 6:15-23. Note that all men are slaves. Some are doulos of sin, some are doulos of righteousness. None are now free. To the believer it is of the greatest comfort to know we are to be slaves forever of Christ. A slave cannot free himself and a doulos has been taken forever by his master. This looks to our security in Christ and how we are to respond to it. We are His forever so we serve. We are to serve without looking to our own interest. We are to

serve out of love for our master. We are to serve with a whole heart. No task should be too small. No task should be too big. The master commands and we follow. The master tells us how and we comply. Our will is not to be our own, for our will is His. We are to seek, know, love and cherish His will.

We also seek to hear from Christ what is said in Matthew 25:14-30.

Note that unbelievers are *doulos* also, just not of God. Where the service of God is good and sweet leading to eternal life, the service of sin is dark and bitter leading to eternal damnation. Those who serve sin are caught in a web so sticky they cannot get out, but even more so they have been so overcome by it's intoxication they lay drunk and unknowing in its vile grip. The service of sin is a vile chore that blinds so you can't see the horrible state you are in.

## 2.3 Saints

When we hear of saints we think of the Roman titles of some elite group of people who are supposed to be super-holy. We should not allow this. The Bible uses the term saints to refer to all believers. For instance look at Romans 1:7, I Corinthians 1:2, II Corinthians 1:1, and Colossians 1:2. In Isaiah 61:3 believers are called oaks of righteousness. In I Peter 1:2, and Jude 1:1 we see the underlying reasons. We are saints because God has sanctified us. To deny that believers are saints is to deny that Christ could fully wash us of our sins. We cannot allow this term to be high-jacked because it speaks of the wonderful salvation of Jesus. Though we don't feel like saints, and we have not earned the title, we have been made saints by Jesus and saints we are.

## 2.4 Bishops and Deacons

It is rare for the church officers to be called out in the salutation of a letter, and it is instructive to see who these men are.

Bishops or overseers are identified as elders in Acts 20:17-18, 28 Bishop is *episcopos* from the Greek *scope* (to view) and *epi* (a word that strengthens the meaning). In Greece an *Episcopos* was a general who reviewed the troops for preparedness thus making them fit. This is the purpose in the church of a bishop. A bishop is to review the servants of Christ and make them ready for service. In our church this is what Pastor Donnelson does.

luke 12:51, John 14:27

## 2.5 Apostolic Blessing

The verses end with the blessing of the apostle. The apostle wishes two things for the Philippians: grace (*charis*) and peace (*irayne*). Both are general terms and are used with refernce to salvation at some times (the grace of God in saving, and peace with God through salvation) but this is not what is being spoken of hear. Paul is not wishing salvation on the saved (saints v.1), rather he is wishing the peace of God, which passes all understanding, peace in the fellowship of saints, and peace with all men. Peace does not exist apart from Christ. Paul is also wishing the common grace of God's care and providence, the grace of God in serving Him, and the gracious gifts (spiritual gifts) which make service possible. These too are from the Father and the Son and to God's glory alone.

## Chapter 3

# Thanksgiving

The verses 3-11 are so rich I cannot get through them all in one sermon so we will look at verses 3-6 this week and 7-11 next week. Let's read the whole beginning though so we can see the beautiful context of this section of scripture.

Not every letter has the apostle's thanks to God for the recipients, but most do. For a second lets read some passages that cover similar areas.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is proclaimed in the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the glad tidings of his Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always beseeching at my prayers, if any way now at least I may be prospered by the will of God to come to you. For I greatly desire to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to establish you; that is, to have mutual comfort among you, each by the faith which is in the other, both yours and mine. But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, that I often proposed to come to you, (and have been hindered until the present time,) that I might have some fruit among you too, even as among the other nations also. I am a debtor both to Greeks and barbarians, both to wise and unintelligent: so, as far as depends on me, am I ready to announce the glad tidings to you also who are in Rome.

Romans 1:8-15

I thank my God always about you, in respect of the grace of God given to you in Christ Jesus; that in everything ye have been enriched in him, in all word of doctrine, and all knowledge, (according as the testimony of the Christ has been confirmed in you,) so that ye come short in no gift, awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall also confirm you to the end, unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye have been called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:4-9

Wherefore **I** also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is in you, and the love which ye have towards all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you at my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of him,

being enlightened in the eyes of your heart, so that ye should know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the surpassing greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to the working of the might of his strength, in which he wrought in the Christ in raising him from among the dead, and he set him down at his right hand in the heavenlies, above every principality, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name named, not only in this age, but also in that to come; and has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the assembly, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all:

Ephesians 1:15-23

I thank my God for my whole remembrance of you, constantly in my every supplication, making the supplication for you all with joy, because of your fellowship with the gospel, from the first day until now; having confidence of this very thing, that he who has begun in you a good work will complete it unto Jesus Christ's day: as it is righteous for me to think this as to you all, because ye have **me** in your hearts, and that both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the glad tidings ye are all participators in my grace. For God is my witness how I long after you all in the bowels of Christ Jesus. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and all intelligence, that ye may judge of and approve the things that are more excellent, in order that ye may be pure and without offence for Christ's day, being complete as regards the fruit of righteousness, which is by Jesus Christ, to God's glory and praise.

Philippians 1:3-11

We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ continually when praying for you, having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love which ye have towards all the saints, on account of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens; of which ye heard before in the word of the truth of the glad tidings, which are come to you, as they are in all the world, and are bearing fruit and growing, even as also among you, from the day ye heard them and knew indeed the grace of God, in truth: even as ye learned from Epaphras our beloved fellow-bondman, who is a faithful minister of Christ for you, who has also manifested to us your love in the Spirit. For this reason **we** also, from the day we heard of your faith and love, do not cease praying and asking for you, to the end that ye may be filled with the full knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so as to walk worthily of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing by the true knowledge of God; strengthened with all power according to the might of his glory unto all endurance and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has made us fit for sharing the portion of the saints in light, who has delivered us from the authority of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love: in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins;

Colossians 1:3-14

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you at our prayers, remembering unceasingly your work of faith, and labour of love, and enduring constancy of hope, of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father; knowing, brethren beloved by God, your election. For our glad tidings were not with you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; even as ye know what we were among you for your sakes:

1 Thessalonians 1:2-5

We ought to thank God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, because your faith increases exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all towards one another abounds; so that we ourselves make our boast in you in the assemblies of God for your endurance and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations, which ye are sustaining; a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, to the end that ye should be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for the sake of which ye also suffer; if at least it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to those that trouble you, and to you that are troubled repose with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with the angels of his power, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God, and those who do not obey the glad tidings of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall pay the penalty of everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might, when he shall have come to be glorified in his saints, and wondered at in all that have believed, (for our testimony to you has been believed,) in that day. To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of the calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and **ye** in him, according to the grace of our God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-12

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me power, that he has counted me faithful, appointing to ministry him who before was a blasphemers and persecutor, and an insolent overbearing man: but mercy was shewn me because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief. But the grace of our Lord surpassingly over-abounded with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the word, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom **I** am the first. But for this reason mercy was shewn me, that in me, the first, Jesus Christ might display the whole long-suffering, for a delineation of those about to believe on him to life eternal. Now to the King of the ages, the incorruptible, invisible, only God, honour and glory to the ages of ages. Amen.

1 Timothy 1:12-17

I am thankful to God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, how unceasingly I have the remembrance of thee in my supplications night and day, earnestly desiring to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; calling to mind the unfeigned faith which has been in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also.

2 Timothy 1:3-5

I thank my God, always making mention of thee at my prayers, hearing of thy love and the faith which thou hast towards the Lord Jesus, and towards all the saints, in such sort that thy participation in the faith should become operative in the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in us towards Christ Jesus. For we have great thankfulness and encouragement through thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

Philemon 4-7

Of the other writers the only one who has such a writing style is John.

I rejoiced greatly that I have found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received commandment from the Father.

2 John 4

For I rejoiced exceedingly when the brethren came and bore testimony to thy holding fast the truth, even as **thou** walkest in truth. I have no greater joy than these things that I hear of my children walking in the truth.

3 John 3-4

Several key ideas keep coming from these passages: thankfulness to God, continual prayer, joy in salvation, desire for fruit (growth, knowledge, spiritual gifts, love, fellowship, evangelism, etc.), God's faithfulness and ability, and finally God's glory.

The ideas in the beginning of the book are reflected in the end of the book. Look at Philippians 4:4-11. Paul meditates on what is good (their faith and service) and is driven to praise God. The word for thanksgiving in Philippians 4 and give thanks in Philippians 1 is the essentially the same. The root is *charis* - grace - and gives the idea of gratitude born out of grace shown. Paul is grateful for them but also of God allowing him to serve God through these believers. Look at 1 Corinthians 15:9-11 and 1 Timothy 1:12-17. Note the heart and desire of the apostle. He sees all things as an opportunity to serve God, and is grateful for that chance. When Paul thinks of the surpassing joy of walking with God and doing His work, Paul is given over to thanks. When Paul thinks of those faithful believers or their lives are brought to mind, Paul thanks God for knowing them. Is this our attitude? Is service not only what we will do but what we earnestly desire and are thankful for? Are we grateful for our brothers and sisters in the Lord? Are we living lives, like the Philippians, that would cause others to praise God? It is not just for the "spiritual elite" to be so minded, it is the character of every Christian. I really like how Paul said it in II Corinthians 9:6-15.

In verse 4 we see an interesting statement - "Always in every prayer" which reminded me of Ephesians 6:18. The armour of God has just been described. What does a fully outfitted and ready warrior of the Lord do? Does he fight battles? Subjugate principalities? No. He prays for all the saints, watching over them. The idea is similar to what happened in Mark 14:32-42. We are to contend for each other vigilantly in the Lord. We are to pray attentively and circumspectly. We are to pray continuously for all our brothers and sisters. We often pray for others only when there is a known need. It is good to pray particularly when there is a need, but it is not good to pray only

when we know it. Let us take up a serious regiment of prayer for the saints and do it joyfully. We will be going before the Lord.

The fellowship is the fellowship of Christ in service. See II Corinthians 8:1-6. The goal is the glory of God through the service of the bretheren. Prayer leads to service. The unity of Christ causes fellowship. We partner together to serve the Lord.

We end with one of the most beautiful verses I know. The concept is the eternality of our salvation and the sufficiency of God. See Romans 8:28-39, 1 Corithians 1:6-9, and 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.



## Chapter 4

# Foundation of Love

We now turn our attention to verses 7-8.

### 4.1 In Our Hearts

Every Greek scholar I have read indicates the difficulty of translating the passage “I have you in my heart”. It could also be translated “you have me in your heart”. Robertson had the best comment on what God is getting at here,

There is no way to decide which is the idea meant except to say that love begets love. The pastor who, like Paul, holds his people in his heart will find them holding him in their hearts.

From the surrounding passages Paul is speaking of his love for the Philippians so the translation is most likely correct. It is still good to see that Paul is showing how the teacher and discipler leads the people in love by example.

Still we are left with the question what Paul meant by it is right to be confident because of his love. Christian love is not a sentimental love, though it certainly has sentiment. Christian love is based on Jesus and mutual fellowship. Look at verse 8 and we see affection in Jesus. Affection is the strongest term in the Greek for affection, but note that it is not my affection or yearning, rather it is God's. Consider 1 John 1:7, 2:9-11, 3:10-23, 4:7-11, 20-5:5. By the mutual love and fellowship, Paul is certain they are children of God.



## Chapter 5

# Chains, Defense, and Confirmation

All three are judicial terms and could refer to his trial in Rome. The first most certainly does. The last could refer to the general proclamation. Which ever is the case: defense and proclamation clearly underscores how Paul spoke of Christ to others be it in the courts or out of the courts.

The word for bond is used in several different contexts. Paul refers to love as a perfect bond in Colosians 3:12-17, and the Holy Spirit is the bond of peace in Ephesians 4:1-7.

Defense is apologia: we get the word apologetics from it. Apologia means a reasoned and logical explanation of something, that shows that it is not wrong. Our word apology is not correct to its origin, apologia does not mean to say you are sorry, rather it is to show you are not guilty. This is the word used throughout Acts to speak of Paul's legal defence. For instance read Acts 22:1-16. Note that even in legal proceedings Paul centered his defense on Christ, because he was being persecuted for Christ. Thus whether Paul ment it legally or evangelically, it would still include a defense of the gospel - what we call apologetics. For the believer it has some interesting implications. First note that Paul says in verse 17 that he is here for the apologia of the gospel. One of the classic passages on apologia is 1 Peter 3:8-17. Jesus also spoke on apologeomai (middle voice - same word) in Luke 12:8-12 and Luke 21:12-19. Jesus is not saying to not learn God's word, or even to think on how to communicate it clearly. Jesus is saying not to get wrapped up trying to find the perfect words, as if it were our words that made the difference. It is not our words it is the power of God. Think of Paul in I Corinthians 1:19-2:8. The idea is that it is not how perfectly you say it rather God uses our imperfect stammerings to glorify His name. The word Jesus uses in Luke 12 for "thought" is merimnao - to be anxious, to carefully look out for, or to seek ones own promotion. The word "meditate" is just that to think over and over to get perfect.

Probably one of the best passages on apologetics is the example in Acts 17:16-34. Note that Paul first did his homework (he had looked around the city to learn of them before the incident). Second, he was motivated by Christian compassion to want them saved. Third, he dialoged/disputed, preached, and taught/doctrined them. He started with a discourse and worked up as the truth of God took over the conversation. Even those with whom he spoke noticed this and asked him to do so. Note also that this took several days - don't be in a rush, God is in command of the time and events. Fourth, Paul starts where they are and explains how Christ alone makes sense and is what they need. Fifth, they rejected and sneered at him, but he stayed faithful to Christ and Christ called those who he wanted unto himself and Paul was able to train them. We see in Paul a solid example of how to confront unbelievers. Note that Paul never changes the truth, but he does change his tact in presenting to help them understand. The best thing you can do to help your presentation of the truth is to know the truth better than anything, and then learn to bring Christ

into a conversation to meaningfully answer a problem.

Confirmation is a different word, *bebaiosis*. *Bebaiosis* means to make steady and firm, thus to confirm. *Apologia* shows the challenges against scripture and the Bible are wrong, *Bebaiosis* shows the truth and thus makes them to know the truth of God. This is what Paul did for those who came up after his *apologia*. This brings them to an acknowledgement of the truth. Least we think this is repentance and faith let's look at James 2:14-19. Knowledge does not make a believer, rather it makes a well educated pagan. What does make the difference? Look at Paul's statement in Romans 1:16-25, and Isaiah's in Isaiah 55:9-13. We cannot serve God in our way. That did not work for Saul in I Samuel 15:19-26. We must obey all. Not just the command but also the way. Not my will but God's be done!

## Chapter 6

# Prayer for Growth

The verses 9-11 contain a lot of interesting images and important information about Christian growth. As I study I am struck by a simple truth in the word prayer. The word can only mean a sacred communication with God. Paul didn't just right this, it was the subject of his speech with God. So many say they will pray but do not. This is a weakness and tendency in our fallen natures, but we must never accept this. We must strive to keep the image of the holy. We need to set aside a time to pray, as well as, a time to read scripture. It is also interesting to note that not only is the word for prayer God centered but so is the word for love (or charity), agape. God is the main theme of the believer and we are to be conformed to His image.

Note that these verses contain a cascading chain of ideas: prayer that love with knowledge that approve good that no offense that fruits and all to the glory and praise of the Godhead. We have already looked at prayer, so over the next 2 weeks we are going to look at the remaining 4.

### 6.1 Love Abounding

This was a frequent prayer of the apostle. Look at I Thessalonians 3:6-4:12. Notice the parallels. It starts with Paul's thankfulness and prayers, then moves to his desire for their love to abound in holiness. Chapter 4 indicates this is the will of God and that though they already show it they should show it more. We must never be satisfied with good love, better love, great love, or even tremendous love. The word abound literally means to have no bounds. We must never feel we have loved enough. We cannot find a resting place. Why? God loved us first. God did not love us with a finite love, so we must reflect that. Is not this the message of I John 4:7-11?

Notice that love is not to abound in affection or sentimentality but rather in knowledge and discernment. The word for knowledge is not the normal word gnosis, which means factual knowledge. Rather the word is epignosis. The epi on the front strengthens the meaning. This word is not mere facts, rather it is factual knowledge that has become applied to life so regularly that it is second nature. Epignosis is the knowledge of one who has long been with the object of the knowledge. Peter makes frequent use of the word in II Peter 1:1-8, 2:20. Note that epignosis of God is a source of grace and peace, a conduit for power to stand, and an integral part of Christian living. Epignosis is the result of gnosis and sophia (wisdom) daily working in the life of a believer. This is the point of the condemnation in Hebrews 5:12-14. The passage does not say the basic truths are bad, rather it is bad if you fail to progress to the practical outworking of that and become fit to teach others. If we are lacking in gnosis we can read the Word and pray. If we lack sophia we can pray according to James 1:5-8.

We are not just to abound in knowledge though, we are to abound in judgement or perception. The basic word and its derivatives only appears 3 times in the new testament, in Luke 9:43-45 it is used of the lack of perception in the disciples with regard to a saying of Jesus about His sacrifice. The base word also appears in Hebrews 5:14, which we read a short while ago speaking of our sense. The full meaning of the word looks at perception, particularly mental, that discerns or tells the difference between things, especially moral or ethical matters. Consider 1 Thessalonians 5:14-24. We often hear that we are to test and do the right. The Bereans were called more noble for it.

# Chapter 7

## Prayer for Growth, II

Remember that verses 9-11 contain a lot of interesting images and important information about Christian growth. These verses contain a cascading chain of ideas: prayer that love with knowledge that approve good that no offense that fruits and all to the glory and praise of the Godhead. I wanted to finish these three verses in 2 weeks, but it looks like it will take 3.

### 7.1 Approving the Excellent

The phrase “approve the things that are more excellent” literally reads “test the things that differ”. The term to test is dokimazo, and it was used in assaying or metalurgy to check and see what the metal is and its quality. It was used also to see if currency was counterfeit or not. The Bible uses it in several ways.

First we are tested:

Wherein ye exult, for a little while at present, if needed, put to grief by various trials, that the proving of your faith, much more precious than of gold which perishes, though it be proved by fire, be found to praise and glory and honour in the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom, having not seen, ye love; on whom though not now looking, but believing, ye exult with joy unspeakable and filled with the glory, receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

I Peter 1: 6-9

Second, men test God:

Wherefore, even as says the Holy Spirit, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; where your fathers tempted me, by proving me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was wroth with this generation, and said, They always err in heart; and \*they\* have not known my ways; so I swore in my wrath, If they shall enter into my rest.

Hebrews 3:7-11

Third, we are to test the spirits:

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, if they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby ye know the Spirit of God:

every spirit which confesses Jesus Christ come in flesh is of God; and every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God: and this is that power of the antichrist, of which ye have heard that it comes, and now it is already in the world. \*Ye\* are of God, children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. \*They\* are of the world; for this reason they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. \*We\* are of God; he that knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

1 John 4:1-6

Fourth, those who serve as deacons are to be tested:

Ministers, in like manner, grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not seeking gain by base means, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these be first proved, then let them minister, being without charge against them. The women in like manner grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the ministers be husbands of one wife, conducting their children and their own houses well: for those who shall have ministered well obtain for themselves a good degree, and much boldness in faith which is in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 3:8-13

Fifth, we should test ourselves:

Of such a one I will boast, but of myself I will not boast, unless in my weaknesses. For if I shall desire to boast, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth; but I forbear, lest any one should think as to me above what he sees me to be, or whatever he may hear of me. And that I might not be exalted by the exceeding greatness of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn for the flesh, a messenger of Satan that he might buffet me, that I might not be exalted. For this I thrice besought the Lord that it might depart from me. And he said to me, My grace suffices thee; for my power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather boast in my weaknesses, that the power of the Christ may dwell upon me.

2 Corinthians 12:5-9

and

Brethren, if even a man be taken in some fault, ye who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest \*thou\* also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfil the law of the Christ. For if any man reputes himself to be something, being nothing, he deceives himself; but let each prove his own work, and then he will have his boast in what belongs to himself alone, and not in what belongs to another. For each shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teaches in all good things. Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatever a man shall sow, that also shall he reap. For he that sows to his own flesh, shall reap corruption from the flesh; but he that sows to the Spirit, from the Spirit shall reap eternal life: but let us not lose heart in doing good; for in due time, if we do not faint, we shall reap. So then, as we have occasion, let us do good towards all, and specially towards those of the household of faith.

## Galatians 6:1-10

The word is also used in 1 Corinthians 11:28, reminding us to examine ourselves before we come to the table, lest we eat and drink condemnation unto ourselves. Why do we do this? Look at 1 Corinthians 3:11-20

While these are all ways this word is used in the Bible, it is not the way it is used here (though the last one comes close). Here we are testing things to see if they are in line with God's will. Look at Romans 12. We often think of the first two verses, but neglect the others which explain it. Note Read Ephesians 5:1-20. It is a long passage, but it sets the scene for Ephesians 5:10 where dokimazo appears.

The excellent things are those that are from God and thus differ from the things of this world. This is not looking at someone and saying isn't that nice. The same phrase appears in Romans 2:17-23.

We usually leaving at saying the Bible is true and our rule of faith and practice. We say it but do we mean it. Is your first reaction to something new, to ask if it is Biblical and let that decide the matter? Do you examine yourself and your actions in light of scripture, or are there things, which do by habit rather than by God's command? If a cherished activity in your life was found wanting in scripture, would you drop it? The words are easy, the practice is hard. Let us not be found wanting.

## 7.2 Sincere and Without Offense

What is the goal of testing and approving the good? To be sincere and without offense. The word for sincere is *heilikrines* - literally tested by the light. It came from checking pottery. Fine pottery was thin, and if it cracked while being fired dishonest makers would fill it with a hard wax and glaze over it. The result was nearly impossible to tell in a shop, but it was obvious when held to the light. Pottery that was free of such fakes was labeled 'sin cere' or 'without wax'. The idea to us is that we are not to be hypocrites, putting on an image. This was a major point of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

To be without offense, was literally to not stumble. Here it is passive, i.e. it refers to us not being a stumbling to others. Look at Galatians 5:13-15, 1 Corinthians 8, and 1 Peter 2:13-17.



# Chapter 8

## Philipians 1:11

### 8.1 Filled

The word is playroo - to be fulfilled, to cause to abound, to fill up, to complete, to consummate in number, to realize.

To fulfill prophesy and God's will: Mt 1:22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled <4137> which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Mt 2:15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled <4137> which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. Mt 2:17 Then was fulfilled <4137> that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, Mt 2:23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled <4137> which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene. Mt 3:15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil <4137> all righteousness. Then he suffered him. Mt 4:14 That it might be fulfilled <4137> which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Mt 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil <4137>.

To get the full amount:

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:47-50

Fill to the brim

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

Matthew 23:28-33

Literally “Fill ye up” is playroo.

To have a full measure: Lu 2:40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled <4137> with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

To accomplish:

And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

Luke 9:28-36

To be, to come:

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee. But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

John 7:1-13

in verse 8: “time is not yet full come” ends with playroo, but in verse 6 it is pareime (arrived, present).

What do we get from all this? This word speaks of fulfilling God’s will as revealed in God’s word. The accomplishment is sure for it is God who fills, and He fills to the brim.

## 8.2 Fruit of Righteousness

Karpos (kar-pos) - fruit:

trees, children, deeds done in response, profit received from, praises to God in response, gathered fruit.

dikaiosune (dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay) - righteousness

Condition acceptable to God, how one can obtain it, integrity, giving each his due

Philipians 4:10-19 Paul speaking on fruit later

Galatians 5:18-26 Fruits of the Spirit

Proverbs 11:23-31 Righteousness from OT

Matthew 3:7-12 John the Baptist speaking to Pharisees

Matthew 7:21-29 The famous Lord, Lord passage

Haggai 2:10-14 Clean and unclean

Note who this is from - Jesus

## 8.3 Praise of God

Ephesians 1:1-14

Psalm 22

Psalm 145



# Chapter 9

## Philipians 1:12-14

This is part of the section, Philipians 1:12-20. Before we look in depth at verses 12-14, I want you to look at a word. The word is “know”. In particular Paul says that he would have them to know. This comes from the word ginosko - a word related to gnosis and epignosis, that I have already explained. This word means to come to know by perception, hence colloquially to experience. We can't experience what Paul did but we can perceive the sufferings by what is written.

### 9.1 Suffering Expands Gospel

Read 2 Corinthians 11:22-33. We get a quick list of the many sufferings that Paul went through. Sufferings that would stop most of us. But look at how Paul deals with them in 2 Corinthians 4:8-18. This was the attitude of Job and all the saints of God.

This has set the background, but not the immediate context. Let's look at the passage which speaks of Paul's current situation. Read Acts 28. For 2 years, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year, Paul was chained to a Praetorian Guard. They would have been rotated through the watches each day, so Paul would have been able to work his way through them. We know that some of the Praetorians came to faith, and that faith lasted, as archeology has unearthed mocking caricatures of soldiers worshipping one on a cross, even in Praetorian guard chambers. It is most likely these guards who Paul alludes to in Philipians 4:22. Paul used these guards as a model for armour of God, a background that helps make the imagery easier to understand.

The rest most likely refers to the city of Rome which Paul evangelized to for two years. While Paul was in jail he saw the conversion of Onesimus, which is the background for the book of Philemon. Roman historians speak of Christianity having a great sway over much of the city a few years after Paul's death.

The big point of this though is Romans 8:28 and 1 Peter 3:15. All things does not mean just in our life. God caused the suffering of Paul to work for the good of men in the Praetorian Guard of Nero, one of the greatest persecutors of the church. Paul's suffering for good was what made his case so strong. He had conviction.

### 9.2 Suffering Encourages Brethren

At first glance this seems anti-thetical. How can suffering encourage? First you should always read in context, they saw Paul suffering and leading others to the Lord. God's protection and use of Paul encourages me that suffering is not in vain. Consider two churches response to suffering:

Revelation 2:8-11 Smyrna

Revelation 2:12-17 Pergamos

Revelation 6:9-11 saints under altar.

# Chapter 10

## Philipians 1:15-18

Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel; the former proclaim Christ out of partisanship, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in that I rejoice.

Philippians 1:15-18 (RSV)

If you are using the King James Version you will not verses 16 and 17 are reversed. This is because the KJV is based on late manuscripts which reversed the order of the originals. All the earliest and best manuscripts have the reading above. The late manuscripts reversed it most likely to make the reading easier. The original is a construct common to Hebrew and early Greek writing, called chi-ist after the Greek letter chi, which looks like an “x”. This is easiest to see if you write

1 2  
3 4

then connect 1 to 4 and 2 to 3. Thus the first and last ideas are connected and the middle ideas are connected. This is very different from European constructs, and to make it easier to understand the later translators probably switched it.

In any case, the meaning of the text is not significantly altered either way. The main point of the structure is to note that there are two opposing groups with a connecting idea. The connecting idea is preaching Christ. The difference is in the motive: God honouring or self-seeking.

### 10.1 Preaching Christ

This is a tough passage because we see people preaching Christ from wrong motives. Many people try to avoid the problem by saying these are false teachers and Judiazers that are spoken against elsewhere in the New Testament. After all these people are trying to cause Paul pain. How could a real Christian oppose Paul? This view runs into a bigger problem though. Look at the last verse of our passage: Paul rejoices in their work! Is this what Paul thinks of false teachers or Judiazers?

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven,

preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:6-12

and

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

2 John 7-11

No these had to be true believers, preaching true things about Christ. How can this be?

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

1Corinthians 1:10-16

Note that in the beginning the people addressed are brothers - those who believe in Christ. If you read the verses before Paul uses many unmistakable terms to identify them as believers. These believers sought to promote a favorite preacher or teacher. Some claimed to be of Paul, some of Peter (Cephas), some of Apollos (a faithful teacher and friend of Paul's). Note first that none of the men listed were seeking this "support" or elevation. Paul did not even approve of those who promoted him. Some people sought to seem more spiritual by saying they followed Christ. Following Christ is our goal, what is wrong with what they said? They are putting it in opposition to listening and being lead by Paul, Peter, and Apollos. These are the people who say they only "read the words in red". This is a false dichotomy they are drawing. Jesus said He was sending His disciples and if people would listen to them, it was actually Him they were rejecting for it is His words (Matthew 10:14-20).

## 10.2 Promoting Yourself

Let's look at the words used to describe the group that is trying to promote itself. They are described by

1. envy - they preach Christ because they are envious of Paul and his position in the church.
2. strife - they preach Christ because they don't like Paul and want to make his life hard.
3. partisanship - contention is not a good translation as it is based on the idea that root is the same as the word translated strife. It is actually derived from the word meaning to work for hire. It was only used for those who tried to rig elections to get a public office. The idea is they want a place of prominence in the church, a name or a title, because they want the glory.
4. not sincerely - literally "not pure", or "mixed". The idea is that they have some good reasons and some bad.
5. in pretense - They say one thing before men so they will be accepted but they are really concerned with something else.

This gives us a pretty good idea of what these people are like. God commands us not to covet, but they really want to be in the lime-light. Oh to have the big name and be well known. Jesus told us to love one another, but they just don't like Paul. He is hard. He doesn't make me feel good about myself. They might even have tried to make it sound spiritual by saying Paul's imprisonment was a blemish on Christianity. With their dislike of Paul and envy of position, they seek to gain position in the church by doing things that look good: witnessing, studying, praying, helping, etc. Things that we should do, but that they did with a wrong heart. They had mixed reasons. They were saved so these things were laid on their heart, but they had other reasons in there. They claimed the good reasons though so others would recognize them, and they might have wanted to convince themselves. Lest you think that I am going to far, one of the early church fathers was Clement. Clement was the pastor at the church of Rome and wrote a letter about 25 years after Paul's death that said what prompted the execution of Paul was Christians who envied and did not like him speaking out against him. Paul hints at this when he writes to Timothy (1 Tim 1 - people had to search for Paul, 2 Tim 4 - people abandoned and harmed Paul).

We can see this in 1 Corinthians 3, the finishing of Paul-Apollos passage. Here Paul attributed envy and strife to be believers in verse 3. Our attitude should be what is displayed in v 5-10. Note that verses 12-5 says we can build with good or bad materials, but that the bad will be burned up. You don't want that. God indicates He will save them, but look at the loss. All the time they could have been knowing Christ better, but didn't. (also 1 Peter 5:1-9 Elders, people, and the roaring lion)

## 10.3 Promoting God

1. good will - pleasure and desire to do what is right.
2. love - agape - God's love.
3. knowing ... - they recognize Paul as a servant of Christ and receive him appropriately.

4. truth - what they say is what they feel and do.

Look at 2 Corinthians 4:5-7 earthen vessels.

# Chapter 11

## 1 Philippians 1:19-20

Two key words jump out from this passage: ashamed and boldness. They are key because the rest of the passage revolves around them. Verse 19 and the beginning of 20 say why Paul will not be ashamed. The end of verse 20 says what the result of boldness will be. The ideas are linked in that boldness is the opposite of ashamed.

### 11.1 Ashamed

When I think of ashamed, I think of being embarrassed. Either I did something wrong or was teased and I fear others reactions. Embarrassed is thus a public thing, it carries with it the idea of others reactions. Not so with the Biblical idea of being ashamed. Ashamed means to be disappointed or disillusioned by a misplaced trust. It primarily looks inward. The New Testament says there are three things we will not be ashamed of:

1. Romans 1:16-18. We will not be disappointed in the gospel because it is the power of God unto salvation. God's words change the heart not mine. God uses us in the spread of His word, but it is His power, thus we shall not be disappointed because He assures it.
2. 2 Timothy 1:6-14. Not ashamed appears twice here. First, it says not to be ashamed in Christ's martyrion (testimony of His life and death) and of Paul's imprisonment. The second time it appears, Paul says he is not disappointed because he knows God cannot lose his soul. The two are really speaking of the same thing. Paul says not to look at the death of Christ and Paul's imprisonment and think that God will not be able to save. God can and will save in the ultimate and best sense - spiritually.
3. Philippians 1:20. We will not be disappointed in the deliverance or salvation God provides. The word translated salvation can mean eternal (and thus be similar to 2 Timothy) or it could be witnessing (and thus be similar to Romans 1), but I think it is more likely that Paul is looking providentially. We will not be ashamed (or disappointed) in what God provides for us, for all things work together for those who love God.

Why is Paul so confident? First, believers are praying for him. (James 5:16-18, John 16:23-24) Second, the Spirit is the one who supplies him. Zechariah 4: 1-10. Earnest looking - Paul is "looking with outstretched head" to see the Lord's provision. Note Paul is not concerned with life or death, captivity or freedom. This is not what Paul is looking for. Paul is looking for Romans 8:28 - all

things work together for our good. Ps 62:5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. Pr 10:28 The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. Ps 119:80\* Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed. Ps 119:116\* Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Isa 45:17\* But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. Isa 50:7\* For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. Isa 54:4\* Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. Ro 5:5\* And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

## 11.2 Boldness

Ephesians 6:18-20. Speak the word openly and plainly. Think of the situation in Acts 17. Think of the trials of Paul. In these places Paul did not merely want to be internally not disappointed, he wanted that to flow out into testifying about Jesus. Why? That Christ would be magnified. Romans 12:1 (our bodies)

Joh 12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Joh 12:28\* Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

2Ti 4:6\* For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 2Ti 4:7\* I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: