

Book of Philippians

Part 4

Philippians 2

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. **20** I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. **21** For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. **22** But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. **23** I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. **24** And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. **26** For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. **27** Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. **28** Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. **29** So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, **30** because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.

- At the end of Chapter 2 Paul shares about faithful assistants, Timothy and Epaphroditus, who Paul loved and each had unique roles with Paul and his ministry.
- Timothy is the one Paul speaks of as a son. **Vs. 22** “But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.”
- Paul in **1 Timothy 1;2** says “To Timothy my true son in the faith”

- From what we know, Paul never had biological children of his own. But Timothy was a spiritual son to Paul.
- Timothy also picks up the mantle from Paul to care for the church. In **Vs. 20** “I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare.”
- About Epaphroditus, It seems that he could have been older than Timothy because Paul refers to him as “my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier”
- Paul’s remarks about Timothy and Epaphroditus shows us that even though he is a great Apostle, He was also a normal man. He appreciated help and encouragement like anyone else.
- Paul ends his thoughts about Epaphroditus with encouraging the church in Philippi to show honor. **Vs. 29,30** “honor people like him, because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.”

Philippians 3 NIV

1 Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. **2** Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh.

- Again joy is central to the theme of Paul’s letter to the Philippians.
- In Vs. 1 Paul says “rejoice in the Lord!”. Joy is the noun form of the word and rejoice is the verb tense.

Vs. 1b It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you.

- I believe one of the great temptations that preachers and ministers face is the pressure to find new revelation and deeper meaning all while Christians really never master the basics. In all honesty we are better to do as Paul says and remind and re-remind ourselves and others of God's Word.
- It seems there is a renewed devotion to preaching God's word in the Church today. This is much needed because we never master the instruction of God's Word. It never grows old and it's never outside of the scope of what is needed. It seems in every season of life the same Word of God is pertinent and needed in the same way God causes the sun to shine day after day and no one says that sun shine sure is redundant. No that same sunshine is needed every day no matter the task, and who knows what tomorrow might bring.
- Paul says it is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard to you.

Vs. 2

Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh.

- Dogs in our American culture are loved and embraced, and for good reason. In old Jewish custom dogs were viewed differently. They were considered unclean scavengers. For this reason Paul gives this harsh reference to "Watch out for those dogs."
- **Who were these dogs Paul speaks of?** They were Judaizing believers who followed Paul's ministry in an attempt to convince new Christians to incorporate certain old Jewish customs into their new found faith in Christ. They taught it was needed for them to please God.

- Paul Speaks of them in **Galatians 5:12** he says, “As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!”
- **Why would Paul call them “evildoers and mutilators of the flesh”?** Because anytime you or I feel the need to add to the work of the cross it is a contradiction to the finished work that Christ did for us.
- **What Christ did for us is perfect and to add anything to it, or taking anything away from it, is a big mistake.**

Ephesians 2:8,9

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

- You and I are not saved because of what Jesus did plus this... or that... or anything else.
- We are not saved by any other special revelation... or extra spiritual duty... or extra understanding for other spiritual books...
- We are Saved because Jesus went to a Cross, Died and Rose from the grave... That's it... Believe in Him.. Everyone who believes in Him and turns to him, they will be saved.
- The Apostle Paul had a deep and profound revelation of the Grace of God found in Christ Jesus. Because of this he is known as the Apostle of Grace.

Let this also be a warning to us today:

- We are not concerned with Circumcision being a spiritual issue.
- But notice how other cults and comparative religious. Often time they have new revelations, new books and new teachings that may add to or take away from the Cross of Christ and the Gospel.

Galatians 1:8 NKJV

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

Vs. 3-6

3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— **4** though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: **5** circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

- Paul begins by saying “it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by the Spirit.
- What is circumcision? Circumcision is found in Genesis 17:10,11 when God told Abraham to cut off the foreskin of every male and it would be a sign of the covenant God made with him. Well that covenant was the Old Covenant.
- Now what Paul says, we no longer identify with the Old Covenant that shows itself with outward things. In Christ we are circumcised in the heart by the Holy Spirit. **(Romans 2:29)**

Vs. 3b,4 and put no confidence in the flesh - though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more:

Here Paul lists his credentials:

- **Circumcised on the eighth day** - Paul was already circumcised in the flesh before he met Christ on the road to Damascus. Then he found out that wasn't enough.
- **Of the people of Israel** - He was a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and therefore an heir to God's covenant with them.
- **Of the tribe of Benjamin** - A distinguished tribe and one that aligned itself with Judah, the tribe Christ came from.
- **A Hebrew of Hebrews** - Paul was elite among his people.
- **In regard to the law, a Pharisee** - These were the Navy Seals of the Jewish Faith. Their very name means The Separated Ones. They had separated themselves off from all common life and from all common tasks in order to make it the aim of their lives to keep every smallest detail of the Law."
- **As for zeal, persecuting the church** - Paul was not merely an intellectual; he was an active fighter for Judaism.
- **As for righteousness based on the law, faultless** - This shows that Paul achieved the standard of righteousness which was accepted among the men of his day – though this standard fell short of God's holy standard.
- With all of these credentials hanging on the wall of Paul's earthly achievements, this is what he says...

Vs. 7-9

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. **8** What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ

9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

- Paul is speaking of here of Impute Righteousness.

Impute: to credit, to reckon.

Romans 4:6-8 NKJV

6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God **imputes** righteousness apart from works:

7

“Blessed *are those* whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered;

8

Blessed *is the* man to whom the Lord shall not **impute** sin.”

James 2:23 KJV

Abraham believed God, and it was **imputed** unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

- When it comes to works, James makes it clear that good works are a part of the Christian life.
- **But it important to understand:** We don't work for Salvation. We work from Salvation.

Vs. 10-11

10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

- The most important thing is to know Christ...
- Paul says “I want to know Christ - yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,”
- Paul doesn’t designate or pull back from any part of Christ. He says I want to know him entirely. In his Power yes and even in his death... What was Christ like in his death? Fully obedient to God. Like he said in Chapter 2 Obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

The old saying is true; It’s not what you know, it’s who you know. Knowing Christ really is the most important thing...

Matthew 7:21 NIV

21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22** Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ **23** Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

- Prophecy is good
- Driving out demons is good
- Performing many Miracles are good.
- So what’s the problem?

We don’t work for Salvation, We work from Salvation...

The First Question is, do you know him?

Vs. 12-14

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. **13** Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Paul says first I want to know him...

Second I want to press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me...

Paul understood Jesus moved heaven and earth to get to him on the road to Damascus; and there was a reason for it.

Now He will not quit until he accomplish the thing for which Christ took hold of him... In other words Jesus had something in mind for Paul to do other than to just save his soul.

Vs. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

Paul had to forget what was behind:

What was behind Him?

Past Failures? Possibly

Past Victories? Possibly... either one can be a distraction... Paul knew in order to take hold of what was ahead he had to forget what was behind

Closing: