

Living with Abundant Gratitude

Philippians 4:10-23

Greco Roman Friendship

- Gratitude is expressed at the end of the letter.
- Avoidance of the word which is equivalent to “thank you”.
- Wrestling with the mutuality of giving and receiving.

Paul rejoices in the Lord.

His thankfulness is certainly implied.

1:3-5 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, **4** always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, **5** because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

2:25, 30 I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, **30** for he nearly died[a] for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

Although the precise word may not be present the deep feelings of gratefulness are present (vs. 10, 14, 18).

Friendship - eastern understanding of keeping things mutual.

There is a lot of cultural relational dynamics taking place.

- Paul has received much from the church in Philippi. He has not been able to give in return (he has been under house arrest in Rome).
- Paul however was the one that brought the message of the gospel to Philippi.
- There are some authority dynamics. Paul is an Apostle. He helped start the church.
- All relationships are flattened because of the gospel.

Although all of these dynamics are true, they all end in a heartfelt display of oneness of relationship.

We are family.

We are united by the same spirit.

We are striving side by side for the gospel.

vs. 10, Concern

You are displaying the mind of Christ.

Your mindset is that of concern.

You are looking to the needs of others, above your own.

vs. 11, I don't rejoice in your gift. I rejoice in your friendship.

More cultural understanding.

Roman Stoicism highly valued self-sufficiency.

Paul takes this idea and flips it on its head.

Paul is not self-sufficient.

Paul relies on Christ's sufficiency.

Paul's contentment is not based on the resources around him.

His contentment is found completely in **Jesus**.

vs. 12, I have learned the secret. Jesus is my source of contentment.

I know how to be brought low (humility).

Humility in Roman Culture was not a virtue.

For a disciple, humility is a way of life.

Remember, truly living happens now and it is not dependent on circumstances. It is not conditioned on plenty and abundance or hunger and need.

vs. 13, I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
What is the context?

The difficulty of life's circumstances.

The context is **not** to pass a test or to win a basketball game.

All of Paul is Jesus centered.

He employs the church in Philippi to do the same.

Our existence as disciples are characterized by the centrality of Jesus.

vs. 14-17, Kind of you to share my trouble.

1:5, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

In the beginning of the gospel

Acts 16:40 So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

No church entered into partnership with me, except you only.

2 Corinthians 11:9 And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need.

1 Thessalonians 2:2 But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict.

The church in Philippi was Paul's sending church!

I seek the fruit. Your support is building interest (financial imagery).

vs. 18, Your gift was of the highest quality. A fragrant offering. A sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

vs. 19-20, When we ponder God's provision according to his limitless resources we can't help but burst into praise.

Doxology - liturgical expression of praise to God. The gospel has done its work in the church in Philippi. Even in their affliction and poverty they are abounding in generosity.

vs. 21-23,

Greet every saint

- All included
- All important
- All family
- All essential
- Of the same mind and in one Spirit.

You aren't just benefiting me.

Timothy is with me and others who send their greeting.

Those who have found Christ because of the fruitfulness of ministry greet you, especially those of Caesar's household (soldiers, slaves, freeman).

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Be a people of grace, because of Jesus.

Summary

Believe and Suffer

1:29-30 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, **30** engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The Mind of Christ

2:5-11 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,^[c] being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **9** Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Link Arms (Imitate me and your brothers and sisters)

3:17, 20-21 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. **20** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Keep your eyes on heavenly things.

4:5-9 The Lord is at hand; **6** do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.