

Philippians 1

About in love still more...

Introduction

- **One of 4 Paul's Epistles written from Roman Prison**
 1. Ephesians
 2. Philemon
 3. Colossians
 4. **Philippians written from prison...**
- Some of most quotes verses in the Scripture...

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:8 ... whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Philippians 4:12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 **I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.**

Written in chains...The Theme of Philippians is Joy

- **Written to believers in Philippi**
 1. **Author: Paul**
 2. **Date written:** 61 AD
 - About 30 Years after Jesus Death, Resurrection and Ascension
 - Holy Spirit has been given and is active in 1st century church
 - Believers scattered after a guy named Saul kills Stephan first martyr
 - Saul meets Jesus. Now Paul he plants Church of Phillip in about 50 AD

Corinthians: Correction/disciplinary epistle

Philippians: Commendation/ encouragement epistle; i.e. Letter

Deep mutual love between Paul and the Believers in Philippi

- **Philippi History/Demographics**
 1. First church in Europe
 2. Relatively large population
 3. Highly polished Greek society
 4. Center of Greek culture/learning

Acts 16:12 [Paul went...] to Philippi, which is the **foremost** [leading] **city** of that part of Macedonia, a [Roman] colony.

- **Phillip in the Book of Acts**

1. Church planted on Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey
2. After Paul/Barnabas part ways regarding John Mark who went home during 1st
3. Paul visited Philippi with new partner in ministry; Silas
4. Paul's Calling to Philippi
5. Prevented by Spirit to move North, South, or East... Paul awaits instruction
6. Vision of "man in Macedonia"
7. Travels west by boat taking the Gospel to Europe
8. First stop is Philippi meets woman Lydia praying with other women at river
 - Seller of purple
 - Heart burned as Paul spoke the Word of God
 - Her and household baptized
 - Paul and companions stay at her home
 - Lydia was "the man from Macedonia" praying for the Word to come
 - Fortune telling slave girl follows Paul and Silas for many days yelling...

**"These men are the servants of the Most High God
...who proclaim to us the way of salvation."**

- Paul discerns a demon and casts it out. Loses her ability
- Master upset no longer winning the lottery bring Pau/Silas to Po -Po
- Beaten/Flogged/Thrown in dungeon[inner prison] feet in chains

Acts 16:25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. 28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." 29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, **"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"**

- **Later Separation**

1. Paul later arrested in Jerusalem held in Caesarean prison 2 years
2. Roman citizen Appealed to Caesar
3. Sent to Rome
4. Two more years in Roman Prison awaiting appeal to Caesar Nero
5. Under house arrest in his own rented quarters as a **prisoner of Rome**

Acts 28:16 [Luke speaking]... when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

- 24 hours chained to a Roman soldier taking different shifts w/Paul

They can't get away, and as the result of Paul's witnessing to these men, many of them of Caesar's household were brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Quite a revival there in Rome while Paul was there awaiting his appearance before Caesar. [Chuck Smith]

- **Gift to Paul from Philippians**

1. Church of Philippi sent a messenger Epaphroditus to Paul with gift
2. **Epaphroditus:** Belonging to Aphrodite [Now belonging to Christ]

3. Becomes ill on way almost dies on way to bring care package
4. Arrives safe and sent back by Paul with Book of Philippians

- **Motivation for Letter to Philippians**

1. **Thanksgiving:** For gift sent/remembering Paul in jail

Philippians 4:18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

2. Paul desires to express his continued love
3. No doctrinal corrections
4. No behavioral corrections; save a riff between two women
5. Paul writes more as a friend more than as an Apostle

- **Theme: Joy on steroids** in what God is doing in Church of Philippi

1. **Happiness:** Based on what happens
2. **Joy:** Based on faith in unchanging God in our ever-changing circumstances

I. Greetings from a Friend

1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ

- Only Epistle **not affirming** Paul's Apostleship "Paul an apostle by the will of God"
- Writing as a friend
- **Bondservant:** gr. *doulos* or bond-slave of Jesus
- From both Paul and Timothy [who Paul will hope to send to Philippi Ch. 2]

1b...To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi...

1. To become a saint you must first be a devoted Christian, ideally a Catholic.
2. You must lead a saintly life. This includes being selfless and benevolent and an exemplary role model and teacher. It also involves loving and serving God.
3. You must perform at least two miracles. These are seen by the Church as affirmations that you can in fact intervene on the part of humans, and verifiable miracles are required for canonization.
4. **Hope for the best.** After death, whether or not you become a saint will be down to living bishops and Pope. They will wait at least five years before beginning an analysis to make sure that your life on earth was pure, virtuous, kind, prudent and devout.

The process of becoming a Catholic saint is lengthy, often taking decades or centuries to complete.

- **Saints:** gr. *hagios* lit. Holy i.e. set apart by/for God. All those who are in-Christ

Paul once an enemy to "the Saints"

Acts 9:13 ...Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.

1c...[to the Saints and] the bishops and deacons:

- **Bishops or Elders:** Spiritual needs of congregation
 1. Teaching
 2. Praying
 3. Anointing sick with oil
 4. Seeking Lord's direction for the church
- **Deacons:** Physical needs of the congregation
 1. Building
 2. Facilitating ministries of others with material needs
 3. Transporting

All Godly Leaders held to a high standard

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**We must know God's Grace to know God's Peace
In order to know God's peace we must first accept His grace**

God's unmerited favor and undeserved kindness to us
Jesus dying for us "while we were yet sinners" Bringing peace between us and God

- Grace and Peace from **God the Father**
- Grace and Peace from **God the Son...Lord Jesus Christ**
 1. **Lord:** Title
 2. **Jesus:** Name
 3. **Christ:** Messiah [not last Name]
- Grace and Peace from God the Father and God the Son
- **Holy Spirit?** Philippians were presently experiencing grace/peace of the Spirit

SUMMARY Greeting: To all the saints...Grace [unmerited kindness] and Peace [Peace with God leading to peace of God]

II. Joy in Thankfulness and Prayer

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you...

Every time I think about you... I thank God

Joy knowing those we talked to about Jesus now continue to walk with the Lord

2 John 1:4 I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth

- Paul also rejoiced in the faith of the saints in Rome

Romans 1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

- Love to see others doing well in the Lord.

Every time I think about you... I thank God

4 ...always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,

- **Always/in every prayer/with all joy...**
 1. **Petition God for your needs:** Spiritual/Physical blessings
 2. **Thank God for our fellowship:** Times we spent together sharing the Gospel

6 ...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ...

I am confident of what I am about to say next

- **God will complete the work He started:** Salvation, Sanctification, Glorification

Your salvation is God's good work. He started it and He will finish it

Hebrews 12:2 [we look] unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith

- **He...will finish the work He started:** Salvation, Sanctification, Glorification
 1. **Salvation:** Saved from Sin, Devil, and Hell
 2. **Sanctification:** Becoming like Jesus
 3. **Glorification:** All we were created to be...

I am confident...

God who started the good work in you will complete that work on the Day of Jesus Christ; i.e. When Jesus comes for His Bride

Paul believed in the **imminent return of Jesus Christ** to get His blood-bought Church; i.e. prophetically *nothing more needs to happen* before Jesus can return in the air for His bride...and it could happen at any time. Paul and other NT writers believed Jesus could come in their lifetime.

1 Corinthians 1:7 [We are...] **eagerly waiting** for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 4:5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. **The Lord is at hand.**

Jude 21...keep yourselves in the love of God, **looking for** the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Luke 12:40 ...you also **be ready**, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

John 14:3 ...I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and **receive you to Myself**; that where I am, there you may be also.

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also **eagerly wait for**

the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body...

Titus 2:13 [We are be] **looking for the blessed hope** and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. 15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 [You turned from idols to God] ...to **wait for His Son** from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who **delivers us from the wrath to come.**

- Hope of the Rapture purifies

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

When Jesus returns we will be complete/whole/perfect

1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

- **Two different events**

Day of the Lord or 2nd Coming to Earth: Unlike the Rapture which can happen at any time, certain prophetic events *must take place* before the 2nd coming of Jesus to earth; e.g. building of the Jewish Temple, AC being revealed, 2 Witnesses, Abomination of Desolation, 144,000 Jewish followers of the Lamb, False-Prophet, Mark of the Beast, Fall of Babylon etc.

Day of Christ or Rapture in the Air: Paul believed in the imminent return of Jesus Christ to get His Bride; i.e. that prophetically nothing more needs to happen before Jesus returns in the air for His bride and it could happen at any time. Paul and other NT writers believed Jesus could come in their lifetime as do we.

- John the Apostle a picture of the Bride meeting the Bridegroom...

Revelation 4:1 After these things...

- **Meta tauta:** After the Letters to Churches not mentioned again till last chapter

1b... I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

- John is raptured into Heaven as we will be when the Lord meets us in the air
- **Complete/Whole/Perfect:** When we see Him we will be like Him

He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ...

- **Encouragement:**
 1. No matter how horrendous things look now
 2. No matter how hard the challenge ahead
 3. No matter how high mountain ...God will finish the "good work" in you

Roman 8:39 [[Nothing] shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- All the things we thought would kill us made us stronger
- Difficulty of challenges/trials will never compare to the eternal joy to come

Romans 8:18 ...I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

- To the same extent that we suffer for Christ will be our joy in eternity

1 Peter 4:12 [Don't] think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

- God uses trials to train us; i.e. That we may "grow up" in Christ
- God left giants in the land His people "may learn war" [Judges 3:2]

Good News: Victory is sure as we trust in Jesus

Joshua 10:8 And the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand" [In this would we will have trouble but be of good cheer...He has overcome the world]

Paul encouraged the Philippians: God's got this. He will get you to the other side

7 just as it is right for me to think this of **you all**, because I have you in my heart...

- As I am confident God will finish what He started in you...
- I am also confident of my love for you...

7b...inasmuch [since] as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel

**Even though I am in chains and over 4000 miles away
I have you in my heart because we are one in Christ**

- **You are with me in my chains:** I feel your prayers and have received your support
- **You are with me in sharing the Gospel:** Me here and you there
 1. **Defending the Gospel:** Giving reasons to believe
 - Paul defending Gospel to pagan Roman he is chained to
 - Philippians defending the Gospel to the religious Jews
 2. **Confirming the Gospel:** Proving its ability to change/restore/save lives
 - Paul the Apostle confirming Gospel with signs and testimony
 - Philippians confirming the Gospel by turning from Idols and perversion
 - E.g. Epaphroditus: "Belonging to Aphrodite" [Now to Christ]
- **We are one because:**
 1. We are defending the Gospel: It is Truth

2. We are confirming the Gospel: The Truth changes people
3. We are all partakers of God's Grace

7c...you all are partakers with me of grace.

- **Without exception** all true Christians are partakers of God's grace

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

If you're not saved by Grace you are not saved at all

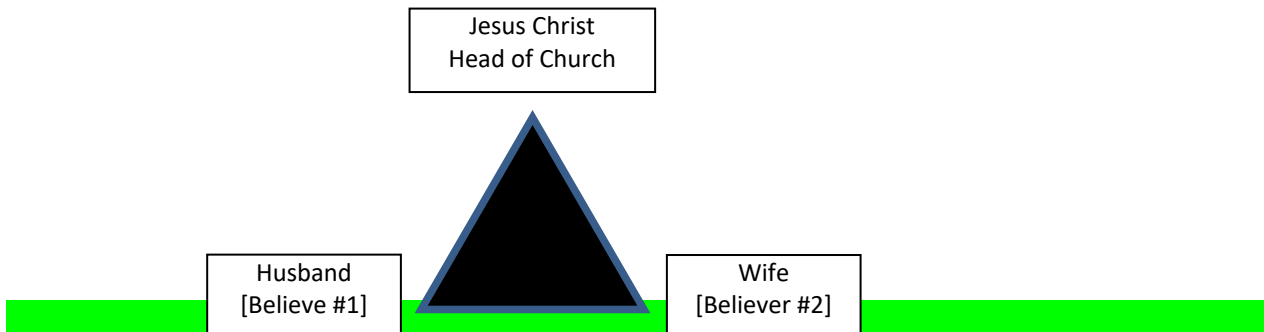
- **Grace:** By very definition Undeserved
 1. No room for boasting
 2. No room for self-righteousness
 3. No room for self-exaltation
 4. No room for self

Partakers of God's Grace: Level ground at the foot of the cross

- Though we are apart we are one in Christ. Each a part of His body
- Jesus is Head of the Church we are His body made one by Him

Colossians 2:19 [We are to hold...] fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.

- **As we look to Christ we grow closer together:** Marriage triangle



- Looking to Jesus we don't focus on the flaws of others
- Gods desire is believers are knit together in love

Colossians 2:2 [Paul prayed] that their hearts may be encouraged, being **knit together in love...**

- **You are in my heart:**
 1. We are defending the Gospel

2. We are confirming the Gospel
3. We are all partakers of the Gospel: God's Grace

8 For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.

God is my witness: I greatly long for you with affection of Jesus

- **Greatly Long:** Lit. Deep inward love from the depths of my "Bowels"

**God is my witness... I love you with the kind of love Jesus has for me
Jesus died for me...I would gladly give my life for you**

- Think about who Paul is telling he would die for:
 1. **Non-Jews:** No synagogue in Philippi because there was not 10 Jews
 2. **Greeks:** Idol worshippers, perverse lovers of pleasure... "sinners"
 3. Everything Paul despised as a Pharisee

Paul had nothing in common with these people except one thing
...Jesus changed all their lives forever

- **Paul:** You are in my heart...but I would really love to see you in person
- **Now some long-distance counsel to a church already doing well**

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more...

**Paul calls these lovers of God and man to love even more
You can't love: Too much**

- **Paul's prayer for his friends?** Abound in Love...still more

1 Thessalonians 3:12 ...may the Lord make **you increase and abound in love to one another** and to all, just as we do to you, 13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

- **Spurgeon on loving one another:**

You are no lover of Christ if you do not love his children. As soon as ever the heart is given to the master of the house it is given to the children of the house. Love Christ and you will soon love all that love him.

I am told that Christians do not love each other. I am very sorry if that be true, but I rather doubt it, for I suspect that those who do not love each other are not Christians.

Now no man is a Christian who does not love Christians. He, who, being in the church, is yet not of its heart and soul, is but an intruder in the family.

Q. How important is it to "grow in love"

A. In God's economy...All important

1 Peter 4:8 And **above all things** have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a

multitude of sins.”

- **Christians are quite a cast of characters to love:**
 1. **Look around:** All so different
 2. **Pastors conference:** Different shapes/sizes/quirks...Including self
 3. **Philippi:** Lydia who sells purple, ex-fortune-teller, humbled jailer
 4. **Paul:** Ex-murderer
- Paul will later encourage two women in church to “be of the same mind in the Lord”

We all need lots of grace to love others and lots of grace to be loved.
Unmerited Favor... Undeserved Kindness
- V9 **I pray, that your love may abound still more and more**

9b...in knowledge and all discernment

I pray your love may abound yet within parameters of Knowledge/Discernment

We cannot love too much...but we can certainly love incorrectly

- **Love is like a river**
 1. **When it stays within its banks it is refreshing, helpful, nourishing**
 2. **When it overflows its boundaries it is devastating and disastrous**

Abound/grow in love **but** keep within love’s boundaries; **Knowledge and Discernment**

Before dishing out the dough, place to stay, bus ticket without thinking...

- **Knowledge:** What do you already know about a person/situation? Call churches
- **Discernment:** What is the Lord showing you apart from outward appearance?
 1. Is what they are asking for right/wrong biblically
 2. Is what they are asking for good/evil in God’s eyes? Are you condoning sin?
 3. Is what they are asking for going to help or hurt in the long run. Band aid

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him to fish and he will eat for a lifetime

4. Are they teachable? Are they humble? Are they cons?
 - E.g. Couple asking for room. Called for another night. Smoked in room. Stole curtain
 5. Family members: Are you enabling them **to sin**? Enabling them **in their sin**?
 - E.g. 2 brothers whose mother had control over their speed allowance
- Let your love abound more and more but Love within Knowledge and Discernment

Not oo-wee-go-wee sickening sweet stupid anything goes
So I can feel better about myself love. Why? **People get hurt!**

- **Corinthian church:** Counterpart to the Philippians

1. Philippians commendation letter
2. I Corinthian correction letter: "Loving" outside banks. People were drowning

They were commending and condoning sin in the Church and calling it love

1 Corinthians 5:1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! **2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned**

- Paul commands to lovingly had them over to Satan that their spirit might be saved
- John exemplified the Love of God to the unrepentant self-righteous...

Matthew 3:7 ...when [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "**Brood of vipers!** Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? **8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance**

- Jesus showed love to the Pharisees by telling them what they needed to hear...not what they wanted to hear:

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. **45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. [Woe to you!]**

- Love within the boundaries/banks or Knowledge and Discernment

God's will is very rarely Politically Correct

Love is not always NICE...but love is always kind and true in the strictest sense

- **2 Kinds of Christians:** Mercy people and Prophet people and we need them both
- Abound more and more in Love but within its boundaries; knowledge/discernment

10 ...that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ

Love speaks truth. Love is real. Love is sincere

- **Love approves what is good:** Does not condone/enable sin

What you are doing is killing you!

This is what God says leads to Life. This is what God says leads to death

1. **Sexual Sin:** Never ends well
2. Mind/Mood altering drugs: Band-Aids
3. Heresy: Way that seems right but leads to death
4. Gossip/Slander/Complaining/Un-loving: Sign of false conversion

Love speaks truth. Love is real.

- **Love is sincere; without wax:** Not fake, not *pleasing* people...but *loving* people

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. **3 For the time will come when they will not**

endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

▪ **Fear of man leads weak to be silent:**

1. Sin
2. Eternal Judgment
3. Blood of Jesus
4. Narrow Way
5. Hard Teachings: 6 Day Creation, Inerrancy of Scripture, Men's/Woman's roles

Hypocritical Love protects itself while destroying others by its silence [NJC]

Romans 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

▪ **We should be found sincerely loving when the Lord returns...**

1. Warning others of ways leading to destruction
2. Encouraging others in the way of Life...Goal is always restoration

1 John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar [Manifested in slander, gossip, apathy, jealousy, etc.]

3. We will be found without offense when we sincerely love one another

1 Peter 4:7 ...the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

Do you fear judgment? Sincere love casts out the fear of judgment

1 John 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because **as He is, so are we in this world.** 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear

- How do we know what is good and what is evil? God's Word...
- Doesn't matter what we think, feel, opinion. **The Word of God is the final Word**

Paul's instructions: Abound in Love

Next... constantly be filled with the Fruits of Righteousness

11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

- God's desire is that we are filled with the fruits of righteousness
 1. **Filled:** Constant filling to the brim.
 2. **Fruit:** Change that proceeds from our life

Paraphrase: Overflow with good changes that come from right relationship to Jesus. These good changes give God glory

Q. **How do I glorify God?**

John 15:5 [Read] "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for **without Me you can do nothing.**

- We cannot produce fruit by wanting, hoping, or trying hard
- We must be connected to the spiritual source of fruit...
 1. v 5 Jesus is vine we are the branches
 2. v7.8 When we abide/connected to Jesus; Bear fruit that glorifies God

When we are disconnected from the source we can do nothing. How do I connect?

3. v9 Abiding in Jesus means abiding in the **love of Jesus**
4. v10 Abiding in the love of Jesus means **keeping His commands**

15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love...

15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

What kind of Love should we have for one another?

15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

15:8 By this [Abiding/Loving] My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit

Q. How do I glorify God? Wanting, hoping trying harder?

A. Stay connected to Jesus by practically loving others in His Name

- When we practically love one another we naturally bear fruit and glorify God

Review

- **Love previously tied to Holiness.** Set apart to God but not from one another

1 Thessalonians 3:12 ...may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, 13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

- **Now loves tied to Spiritual Maturity:** What does it mean to "grow up"?

Ephesians 4:14 [Read] ...we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, **speaking the truth in love, may grow up** in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and **knit together** by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the **edifying of itself in love.**

Building each other up in love as we each do our part

- Genuine love for one another creates fertile ground for growth in **personal holiness**

NOTE: Holiness means set-apart unto God...not set apart from one another

- Genuine love for one another **glorifies God**
- Genuine love for one another is **the** sign of Spiritual Maturity

No wonder Paul's prayer for the Philippians would be they would abound still more and more in love

III. Joy: Christ is Preached!

- **Begs question:** Paul, why are you so up? You're in a dungeon! Paul counted cost...

Acts 20:23 ... the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

- God's plan for Paul's ministry included suffering...knew what he signed up for

Acts 8:16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."
12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, 13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ...

What seemed like a tragedy was actually a blessing

- **Chained and in prison for preaching Christ**
 1. People began to ask "why is he in here?"
 2. Guards were getting saved
 3. Gospel penetrated Caesar Nero's palace

14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

- Other believers heard gained courage to suffer for Jesus

15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: 16 The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; 17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.

- **Preach Christ from envy and strife?**
 1. Motivated by selfish ambition
 2. Motivated by desired to see me suffer even more
- **Preach Christ from goodwill**
 1. Motivated by love
 2. Motivated by knowing it is God's will that I am here defending the Gospel

18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

- I'm just happy Christ is being preached?

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. **The Lord is at hand.**

- Paul's motivation:

The Lord is at hand. I want to be found faithful/loving no matter what

SUMMARY Joy Christ Preached

IV. To Live Is Christ

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

- **Deliverance is coming:**

1. God is answering your prayers as...
2. I am being "supplied" with the Spirit of Christ [Joy, Peace, Patience]

Whether I live or die people will know that I did all I could to **make God big**
I refuse to be ashamed when I meet Jesus

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

- If I live I get to **preach Jesus**
- If I die I get to **be with Jesus**

22 But **if I live** on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.

- I would rather die and be with Christ [no soul sleep]

2 Corinthians 5:6 ...we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be **absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.**

- If I live it is better for you. [2nd Philippians?]

25 And being confident of this [v.24 that it is needful I stay], I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith...

...I get to watch and help in your progress and your joy in the faith

26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my

coming to you again.

- We can one day rejoice together again

SUMMARY To Live is Christ

- **To live is Christ? As He is so are we in the world**
 1. "To live is Christ" means we share the Great News of Salvation
 2. "To live is Christ" means we exemplified his love for others [even sinners]
 3. "To live is Christ" means we pursue His Word for self and others
 4. "To live is Christ" means we are willing to suffer for the Gospel
 5. "To live is Christ" means we magnify Jesus above everything/everyone

We desire the King more than what we find on the King's table

Genesis 15:1 ... the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. **I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.**"

V. Two Gifts: Temporal Suffering and Eternal Salvation

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.

- **While we wait to be together...I encourage the Philippian congregation**
 1. **Walk worthy of your calling:** Conduct becoming a man/woman of God
 2. **Stand fast in one Spirit/one mind:**
 - Co-operate with the Holy Spirit
 - One goal; Love God/Love others
 3. **Strive together for the faith:** Within the bounds of God's Word
 4. Be **Strong and Courageous** in face of those who oppose message

Fear is the enemy's weapon. Not giving in to fear is the enemies defeat

- **Your courage in the face of persecution will be...**
 1. Proof **you** believe the message
 2. Evidence **they** will be judged unless they repent
 3. Sign you will be saved... **no matter what they do to you**

Christians will suffer. Do we really know what we signed up for?

2 Timothy 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake

- Every true believer has been given two precious gifts from Jesus Himself:
 1. Granted to Believe in Him and inherit **Eternal Life**
 2. Granted to Suffer for Him during this temporal pilgrimage

30 having the **same conflict** which you saw in me and now hear is in me.

- **You will all ask the same question I did**
 1. Do I die and be with Jesus forever [not our choice]
 2. Do I live as an example of God's grace to others who suffer

People watched how Paul dealt with suffering. People watch how we deal with suffering

2 Corinthians 12:8 ... I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- Jesus dislocated Jacob's hip in order **get his attention...**

Genesis 32:25 ...when [God] saw that He did not prevail against [Jacob], He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. 26 And [God] said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But [Jacob] said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

- **Our suffering is never for no reason:** Joseph abandoned by his brothers

Genesis 50:20 ... you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. [Saved Egypt and his family]

- Jacob left Jesus limping yet rejoicing. Physically injured but Spiritually renewed

Genesis 32:31 Just as [Jacob] crossed over Penuel **the sun rose on him**, and he limped on his hip.

Phony so-called faith healers say no one should suffer...lack of faith to suffer
Wake up in cold sweats to this verse...

V29 ...granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake

- **True believers will suffer for Christ**
 1. Physically
 2. Spiritually
 3. Emotionally

NOTE: All Christian suffering passes through filter of God's love and Purpose

- **Paul** rejoices while suffering knowing it is for God's purpose. **Never closer to Jesus**
- **James** says rejoice in suffering. **It is producing fruit...**

James 1:2 My brethren, **count it all joy** when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that

the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. [whole/solid/victorious/filled]

- **Peter says rejoice...** to extent that you suffer for Jesus now you will rejoice forever

1 Peter 4:13 ...rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

- Jesus never asks us to do anything He did not do. He suffered first.

Our suffering is never for no reason, always has a purpose and **always has an end...**

Revelation 21:4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."