

PHILIPPIANS

Nov. 14, 2017

LESSON 1 (11-14-17)

INTRODUCTION

Philippi, an ancient city in northeastern Greece. Its site, surrounded by mountains on three sides, lies ten miles inland from the modern port city of Kavalla (ancient Neapolis).

The history of Philippi before the fourth century B.C. remains obscure, although there are reports of two older settlements on or near the site, Krenides and Datum. Philip II of Macedonia, particularly interested in the nearby gold and silver mines of Mount Pangaeus, annexed the entire region and in 356 B.C. formally established Philippi as a city bearing his own name. Although the extensive city wall which still survives perhaps originated at this time, Philippi remained insignificant until after the Roman conquest of Macedonia in 168-167 B.C. It became a major stopping place on the Via Egnatia.

In October of 42 B.C. Mark Antony and Octavian defeated Roman Republican forces led by Brutus and Cassius in two separate battles just west of Philippi. Shortly afterward, Mark Antony settled many veterans from his army here and refounded Philippi as a Roman colony. After the battle of Actium (31 B.C.) more settlers came here from Italy by order of Octavian (Augustus), and Philippi was again

refounded, receiving the formal name that it thenceforth retained, Colonia Julia Augusta Philippensis. These settlers along with some of the previous inhabitants constituted the legal citizen body; and Philippi was governed by 'Italian law', the highest privilege attainable by a Roman provincial municipality.

Paul J. Achtemeier, Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, Harper's Bible Dictionary (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 785–786.

“Philippi was a Roman colony (Acts 16:12). After the Battle of Philippi in 42 B.C. some Roman soldiers were ordered by Anthony to live there. Then in 30 B.C. Octavian forced some people in Italy to give up their homes and settle in Philippi and elsewhere.

These Philippian residents were given special privileges including the “Italic right.” This meant that the colonists, in return for their displacement, were treated as if their land were part of Italian soil. So the residents were citizens of Rome, their “mother city,” and enjoyed the full rights of Roman citizenship, including exemption from taxes. So Paul’s words (Phil. 1:27) “conduct yourselves” (lit., “live as citizens”) and “our citizenship is in heaven” (3:20) had special meaning to the Christians at Philippi.

Robert P. Lightner, “Philippians,” in The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 646–648.

The Apostle Paul wrote the letter to believers in the city of Philippi while he was imprisoned in Rome.

“The arrival of St Paul in the metropolis marks a new and important epoch in the history of the Christian Church. Hitherto he had come in contact with Roman institutions modified by local circumstances and administered by subordinate officers in the outlying provinces of the Empire. Now he was in the very center and focus of Roman influence; and from this time forward neither the policy of the government nor the character of the reigning prince was altogether a matter of indifference to the welfare of Christianity. The change of scene had brought with it a change in the mutual relations between the Gospel and the Empire. They were now occupying the same ground, and a collision was inevitable. Up to this time the Apostle had found rather an ally than an enemy in a power which he had more than once successfully invoked against the malignity of his fellow country- men. This precarious alliance was henceforward exchanged for direct, though intermittent, antagonism.” Joseph Barber Lightfoot, ed., *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians, Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd, 1913), 1.

How did Rome play an important role in both Paul’s life and the life of the early church?

“The Empire, which in one of his earlier epistles he would seem to have taken as the type of that restraining power which kept Antichrist in check, was itself now assuming the character of Antichrist. When St Paul appealed from the tribunal of the Jewish procurator to the court of Cæsar (Acts 25:9-11), he

attracted the notice and challenged the hostility of the greatest power which the world had ever seen.”* *ibid

“It was doubtless the impulse given to the progress of Christianity by the presence of its greatest preacher in the metropolis, which raised the Church in Rome to a position of prominence, and made it a mark for the wanton attacks of the tyrant. Its very obscurity would have shielded it otherwise. The preaching of Paul was the necessary antecedent to the persecution of Nero.”* *ibid

“St Paul remained in captivity between four and five years (A.D. 58–63); the first half of this period being spent at Cæsarea, the second at Rome. While thus a prisoner he wrote four epistles, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, to the Ephesians, to Philemon.”* *ibid

“When the Philippian believers heard about Paul’s imprisonment at Rome, they sent Epaphroditus, who may have been their pastor, to minister to him. Epaphroditus personally comforted Paul, expressing to him the affection of the saints in Philippi. And he brought Paul a financial contribution from them so that his confinement would be more comfortable (4:18). Three times before—twice when Paul was at Thessalonica, and once when he was at Corinth (Phil. 4:15–16; cf. 2 Cor. 11:9)—the saints ministered to his needs.

The Book of Philippians might be called a thank-you note to saints in Philippi for their generous gifts.

While Epaphroditus was in Rome, he became so ill he almost died (Phil. 2:27). After he recovered, he took Paul's letter to the Philippian Christians."

Robert P. Lightner, "Philippians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 646–648.

The main focus of the epistle to the Philippians is **JOY**, even in sorrow. In spite of Paul's imprisonment, the dominant tone of the letter is joyful (1:4, 18, 25, 26; 2:2, 16–18, 28; 3:1, 3; 4:1, 4, 10).

"There is one little outburst of anger in it, but its one leading thought—the leading thought of the poor, suffering prisoner, so full of gratitude for the pecuniary help which the Philippians had sent to him is—

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."

Saint Paul's 13 Epistles

"On his second missionary journey Paul visited Philippi. Through his ministry there several people trusted Christ as their Savior. Some of these were Lydia and her family and the Philippian jailer and his family (Acts 16:14–34).

Soon after Paul's visit a local church was established in Philippi. The church helped the apostle in different ways so this epistle was written to acknowledge their help, as well as to help them."

Robert P. Lightner, "Philippians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 646–647.

LESSON 2 (11-16-17)

AUTHOR PROFILE—PAUL

- Jewish-born in Tarsus, near the Lebanese border in modern Turkey.
- Roman citizen.
- Prominent, highly educated Jewish religious leader (Pharisee).
- Dramatically converted to Christianity, A.D. 35.
- Primary apostle to the Gentiles.
- Tireless missionary.
- Imprisoned in Rome, A.D. 67, during the reign of Nero.
- Died in prison, A.D. 68.

THE CHURCH OF PHILIPPI

- A historically Greek city, named after Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great.
- Located in the northern part of what is modern Greece, near the coast of the Aegean Sea.
- In New Testament times, a Roman colony (in the Roman province of Macedonia) whose citizens had Roman citizenship.
- It was a fairly large and important gold-mining town.
- Home to many pagan religious influences.

Max Anders, Galatians-Colossians, vol. 8, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 204.

LETTER PROFILE

- Written to the Christians in Philippi while Paul was in prison in Rome.

- The church at Philippi was founded by people whom Paul led to Christ during his first journey to that region.
- Lydia and her family and the Philippian jailer and his family may have been part of this first church (see Acts 16:14–34).
- Epaphroditus visited Paul while he was in prison to give him a financial gift and to encourage him. Epaphroditus may have been the pastor of the church.
- The letter is written to thank the Philippian Christians for their generous financial and spiritual gifts to Paul and to address some of their practical problems

Max Anders, Galatians-Colossians, vol. 8, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 204.

“Paul states that the purpose of Philippians is to thank them (4:10–20); but writing from prison, he also wishes to address some other issues, including the likely further persecution the church will face and an exhortation to work together. As much as the Philippian church (probably made up of several house churches) loved Paul, its members were divided among themselves; thus the recurrent exhortations to unity (1:27; 2:2, 14) and mutual service (2:3–11). At least part of the division revolves around disagreement between two of Paul’s fellow laborers, possibly leaders of separate house churches (4:2–3). If opposition to Paul exists, it probably involves Jewish Christians who advocate circumcision, if Paul believes they have already arrived

in Philippi (3:2–21). *Craig S. Keener, The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Php.*

As opposed to the harsh letters to the Corinthians and Galatians, Paul wrote this as a loving letter to the Philippians.

“Have you ever watched a football game on television and seen players talking on the telephone? What are they doing? Talking to mom? Ordering a pizza? The quarterback throws an interception, goes off the field, picks up a phone, and starts talking to someone. Who in the world is he talking to? Of course, he’s talking to someone in the press box, usually an assistant coach.

Why is he talking to a coach in the press box? Two words: vantage point. The coach in the press box is one hundred yards from the field. From there, way above the field, he can see the whole field at once. He can see the weaknesses in the opposition’s defense. He can see what each player is doing on each play. So, after an interception, the coach calls the quarterback on the sideline and says, “Let me tell you why that cornerback intercepted your pass and what to do differently the next time. Next time, run with the ball rather than pass it.”

Now the quarterback may say, “That will never work in a million years.” How does the coach respond? He says, “Trust me. From up here I have a much better vantage point of the whole field than you can possibly have down there in the midst of play.”

In the press box of life, God looks down on our circumstances. God is trying to do for us exactly what the assistant coach is trying to do for that quarterback—give us the big picture.

The apostle Paul grasped the big picture very well. As he wrote Philippians 1, he was about to be tackled for a twenty-yard loss. Under Roman house arrest, chained to a big burly Roman guard, he was waiting trial on a capital offense before none other than the mad man himself—Nero. Yet we find Paul rejoicing. How can he be doing that? How can he be full of joy in the midst of adversity? The answer? Vantage point! Like a master quarterback, he's on the phone to God in the press box. He sees his circumstances from

God's perspective. Therefore, he has a clear understanding of what is going on on the field and why these things are happening to him.

Getting God's big picture, vantage point, on your problems and adversities can help give you a sense of joy and peace. Philippians 1 will challenge you to rejoice in the midst of adversity by seeing God's perspective. Then like Paul you can rejoice in troubling circumstances.” *Ibid*

OUTLINE

- I. Paul's Greeting (1:1–11)**
- II. Paul's Circumstances (1:12–26)**
- III. Paul's Exhortations (1:27–2:18)**
 - A. To Stand Firm Amid Persecution (1:27–30)**

- B. To Be United by Humility (2:1–4)
- C. To Remember the Example of Christ (2:5–11)
- D. To Be Light in a Dark World (2:12–18)

IV. Paul's Companions (2:19–30)

- A. Timothy (2:19–24)
- B. Epaphroditus (2:25–30)

V. Paul's Warnings (3:1–4:1)

- A. Against Legalism (3:1–16)
- B. Against Lawlessness (3:17–4:1)

VI. Paul's Admonition (4:2–9)

VII. Paul's Thankfulness (4:10–20)

VIII. Paul's Farewell (4:21–23)

John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1819.

*O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (1 Chronicles 16:34)*

“Philippians—a wellspring of spiritual truths that has brought countless believers new joy and peace in their daily walk. You will find Philippians a beautiful and a profitable book. It contains many principles of life that will literally transform your attitude toward people and circumstances as you become a doer of those things which you are about to learn... Precept Ministries International, *Philippians: How to Have Joy*, 1st edition., Precept Upon Precept (Chattanooga, TN: Precept Ministries International, 2014), 1.

Verses 1 and 2 were the salutation.

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

“Paul was the author’s Gentile name and Saul his Hebrew name. As the apostle to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:7–8) he used his Gentile name. Robert P. Lightner, “Philippians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 648–649.

“St. Paul does not assume his official title in writing to the Macedonian Churches, Philippi and Thessalonica; it is used in all his other Epistles, except the short letter to Philemon. His relations to the Philippians and Thessalonians were those of the deepest personal affection; there was no need of a formal introduction, especially in an Epistle which has so little of an official character as this to the Philippians. H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Philippians, The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 1.

Paul associates Timothy with himself. Paul brings this young preacher and puts him right beside himself, encouraging him. Paul loved this young man Timothy. He was Paul’s son in the Lord, that is, he had won him to Christ; and Paul was very interested in him (2:19–24). J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 289.

“Paul joins the name of Timothy with his own, as in 2 Corinthians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. Thus Timothy is associated with St. Paul in every Epistle in which another name is found except 1 Corinthians, where Sosthenes only is mentioned; this shows the intimate affection that bound St. Paul to his “own son in the faith.” H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Philippians, The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 1.

Timothy is mentioned here along with Paul but he did not co-author this epistle. Paul used the first person singular, “I,” not “we” in verse 3. Timothy was also well known to the Philippians (Ac 16:3, 10–12).

TIMOTHY – Gr. Τιμόθεος, Timotheus – a compound noun, timo = honor, Theos = God, so his name means, one who honors God.

- He was the son of an unbeliever father, a Greek, and his mother was a believer and a Jewess— *Acts 16:1-3*.
- He was reared by his grandmother, Lois. Timothy was not only blessed by personal spiritual advice through doctrine but he was blessed by association with super-grace grandmother and super-grace mother. Consequently, Timothy received great spiritual heritage and great rearing—*2 Timothy 3:15*
- Timothy was circumcised by Paul—*Acts 16:3*, and ordained to the ministry—*1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:5*. Timothy did not have to be circumcised but he was circumcised for a purpose. Paul anticipated that Timothy would be the greatest man in the next generation. Circumcision was a sign of maturity in Israel.
- He accompanied Paul, with Silas and Luke, to Philippi. He had been in Philippi before. He remained there as the first pastor after Paul left—*Acts 16:12; Philippians 2:22*.

- He also pastored the Berean church after he was replaced by Epaphroditus—*Acts 17:14*.
- After leaving Berea he joined Paul in Athens, and he pastored the church at Thessalonica for a short time—*1 Thessalonians 3:2*.
- As pastor, Timothy had failed at Corinth— **1 Cor. 16:10-11**. This failure was not in Bible teaching but in his inability to handle bullies. He was being intimidated by women!
- He shared Paul's first Roman imprisonment— *Philippians 1:1; 2:19; Colossians 1:1; Philemon 1*.
- *After Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment Paul and Timothy went to Ephesus where Timothy remained as the pastor.* RBT Notes on Philippians

bond-servants of Christ Jesus

Gr. DOULOS (δοῦλος) N. NPM, One who is solely committed to another, slave, subject

“The title “servants” is not demeaning in either a Jewish (the prophets had been called “servants of God”) or Greco-Roman setting (slaves of the emperor and other high officials wielded far more power than independent free persons).” Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), *Php 1:1*.

Of course being a bond-servant of Christ Jesus is far from being demeaning, it is a great honor. A slave is available to his master 24/7 and relies fully on the provisions of their master.

Paul and Timothy were communicators of Bible doctrine as are all pastors who are (should be) slave to Jesus Christ.

overseers – *episkopos* (ἐπίσκοπος)- one who has the responsibility of safeguarding or seeing to it that something is done in the correct way, guardian

The KJV and NKJV use the term “bishops”.

“The term bishop is never once used to denote a different office from that of elder or presbyter. These different names are simply titles of the same office, “bishop” designating the function, namely, that of oversight, and “presbyter” the dignity appertaining to the office. M. G. Easton, Easton’s Bible Dictionary (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893).

“Bishop is used of those brethren whose gift and experience qualify them to be leaders and guardians of the saints (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7).

“Bishops” are made such by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28; cp. 1 Cor. 12, throughout); their qualifications are described in 1 Timothy 3:2–7; Titus 1:5–9.” W. E. Vine, *Collected Writings of W.E. Vine* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1996).

“The purpose of this separate mention is, apparently, to recognize, and so to commend, their status and work in the church. It is significant that the church is put in the forefront, the officers of the church are mentioned as adjuncts thereto. *ibid*

LESSON 3 (11-21-17)

Prager University 5 minute video on GRATITUDE.

<https://www.prageru.com/videos/key-unhappiness>

Philippians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace always comes before **peace** and both come from not only **GTF** but also from the **LJC**.

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that *in Me you may have peace*. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

"The addition of "Jesus Christ" here adds a profound Christological dimension to the blessing. The church knew well that grace was embodied in Jesus (Titus 2:11–14), and peace was his gift to the believer (John 14:27; 16:33). In so combining the work of God and Jesus, Paul reflected his deep conviction about the deity of Jesus. Jesus does what God the Father does."

Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, vol. 32, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 51.

"This verse (2) is related to Deut. 6:4, the Shema, which Paul explains and expands information about God in 1 Cor. 8:6 which adds that the God of the Shema is called the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is included and is said to be the Creator of all things.

It is abundantly clear that the God with whom Paul is dealing as he refers to God is God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He's referring, though in a surprising way, to the God of Scripture.

Robert B. Sloan Jr., NT344 *Paul's Theology and the Letter to the Philippians*, Logos Mobile Education (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015).

1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

and the Lord (kurios) Jesus Christ.

“This full designation emphasizes Jesus’ deity (Lord, like YHWH), humanity (His human name), and title (Messiah, the anointed one). This full designation is linked grammatically to “God our Father” with only one PREPOSITION for both. This was one way that NT authors asserted Jesus’ deity and equality. There is only one divine essence, but three personal manifesta-

tions.” Robert James Utley, Paul Bound, the Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philippians), vol. Volume 8, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 164.

Philippians 1:3-5 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4) always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5) in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.

Verse 3 - “I thank my God” Paul is the only one the Bible records as using this phrase. He used it four times in the NASV, (Rom. 1:8, 1 Cor. 1:14, Phil. 1:4, Philem. 4).

thank – EUCHARISTEO (εὐχαριστέω) v. pai,

① to show that one is under obligation, be thankful, feel obligated to thank.

② to express appreciation for benefits or blessings, give thanks, express thanks, render/return thanks

William Arndt et al., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 415.

The word for thank, thanksgiving in Greek is eucharistéo, from eu, “well,” and chárís, “grace or thanks.” When we consider God’s chárís, “grace,” we are compelled to have eucharistía, “thanksgiving.” Spiros Zodhiates, vol. 1–4 (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992).

“I thank my God” *Of the letters that Paul wrote, six of them were written from prison. It is an astonishing thought to think of how much of Paul's writing ministry took place in jail. He wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Hebrews (if Paul wrote Hebrews) and II Timothy while incarcerated. Paul would not let himself give way to self-pity. As a result we have this jubilant letter of joy.”* GraceNotes

“It must have brought great joy to the Philippians’ hearts as they read how the apostle often thanked God for them. Here was a letter of commendation from one who was in Roman chains some 800 miles away. About 10 years had passed since Paul had first worked among them. But the passing of time had not diminished his love or his interest in them. Every time Paul thought of them he thanked God for them.” Robert P. Lightner, “Philippians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 649.

There is something here that we certainly don’t want to miss. Paul not only had a deep and abiding love for the people of the Philippian churches, he also let them know how he felt about them by telling them how every time he

remembered them, he thanked God for them with joy in their heart.

How many times do we think about how much someone means to us and how much we love them without telling them? When we do that, it robs those who we love of the happiness that our words would bring them.

Expressing gratitude to God for the Philippians pleased Him and revealing that to them, pleased them. Everyone benefitted.

It is remarkable that Paul was thinking of others and not of himself? As Paul was awaiting his trial in Rome and facing the prospect of death, his mind went back to the believers in Philippi, and every recollection he had brought him joy. Even though he was illegally arrested and beaten, was placed in the stocks, and was humiliated before the people. He didn't feel sorry for himself and didn't consider himself a victim.

Paul's hardships made him better, not bitter. They always do one or the other to a child of God.

Why not? Because he had a great capacity to love others and he had an attitude of gratitude. He learned and then applied verses like the following one to his circumstances:

LESSON 4 (11-28-17)

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself;

What do think of people you know? Do you consider yourself to be more important or better than they are?

Do you make decisions based on what is best or easiest for yourself or for them? Usually, our attitude toward others, determines their attitude toward us.

Wouldn't it be wonderful for other people to say of us, "I thank God for that person; I thank God that I met them, what a blessing they have been to me"?

Unfortunately, many Christians are so self-centered and selfish that people say, "What did I do to cause that person to come across my path? I wish that God would send them somewhere else to haunt somebody other than me. Shame on Christians who have such an arrogant ungracious attitude! What ever happened to impersonal / unconditional love?

Every believer is either a blessing or a curse; a help or a hindrance; an asset or a liability. We either help people in their Christian life or we get in their way.

We are not to think that the people we know must be flawless before we can thank God for them. There were unpleasant memories in Philippi if Paul cared to dwell on them--the rage of the masters of the girl set free from demons, the conduct of the city officials and populace toward Paul, and the conduct of two women who were locked in a bitter battle (4:2). But, Paul chose not to remember the petty irritations. Gratitude springs out of *what we choose to think about*. A common fault of some believers is to fail to thank God for the common courtesies and favors of life.

IMPERSONAL/UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

- 1. Impersonal love for all mankind is the basis for problem solving in human relationships.**
- 2. Personal love is a problem manufacturing device which can only be solved by impersonal love.**
- 3. Personal love is related to the human race in a virtue-dependent system for its validity and for its reality.**
- 4. It is impossible for a person with an old sin nature to love successfully with personal love unless the object is perfect.**
- 5. Personal love in the human race has attraction but no built-in virtue. Personal love depends on impersonal love.**
- 6. Bible doctrine in your soul is how you develop impersonal love for others.**
- 7. Only impersonal love has virtue and problem solving characteristics.**

This love is called impersonal because the subject has the ability to accept all people as they are.

- 8. When love emphasizes the object, it is personal. When it emphasizes the subject, it is impersonal.**
- 9. It is a love produced only by the filling of the Holy Spirit.**

Philippians 1:4 *always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all,*

Notice how often Paul used all-inclusive words such as “all”, “always”, “every”, “everyone”, “everyway”, and “anything”. Why did he use these types of words so often? It’s because he was not controlled by his circumstances. They didn’t hold sway over what he thought, what he did, or how he felt. See PP

For Paul, there was never a bad time nor an inappropriate time to pray. There was probably never a day that passed where Paul did not pray for his friends and fellow believers.

with joy *This is the first of five uses of the Greek word for joy [CHARA – χαρά] in the letter (v. 25; 2:2, 29; 4:1). Paul also uses the Greek word for rejoice nine times in this letter (v. 18; 2:17 [twice], 18 [twice], 28; 3:1; 4:4*

[twice]). Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php 1:4.

“It is a personal relationship with Christ that brings joy to a believer’s life. Some try to produce joy in the church by external means. They have a program and tell folks, “Come and you will enjoy it.” They have a banquet—people enjoy a banquet—so they say they have joy. Actually, joy does not depend upon outward circumstances. Real joy depends upon the inward condition of the individual. It depends on the proper attitude toward life. If you are complaining and whining about your lot in life, certainly you will not be experiencing joy. J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 291.

None of the believers were excluded from Paul's prayers. Sometimes we may tend to omit believers who have rubbed us the wrong way or who may have offended us, but they need to be included as well, for their sake and for our own.

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.

Luke 6:28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

LESSON 5 (11-30-17)

The prayer life of the apostle Paul was an incredible witness to his character. His prayers are constantly set forth in his epistles (*Rom. 1:9; Eph 1:16; Co 1:3,9; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:11; Philemon 4*).

“Prayer was no mechanical duty whereby he labored to find words or thoughts as he forced prayer for them. This joy was not mere excitement; it was not a commonplace pedantic necessity of life. However, this joy was a serenity of spirit in the face of adverse circumstances in which he was confident God was able to manage the problems. While sitting in jail Paul could do little for the Philippians. Yet he enjoyed a serenity of spirit which drew its reliance upon God... His joy was irrepressible.” GraceNotes

Philippians 1:5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.

NKJV “*your fellowship in the gospel*”

NRSV “*your sharing in the gospel*”

ESV “*your partnership in the gospel*”

“This key term (**koinōnia**) means (1) “**joint participation in**”; (2) “**fellowship in**” (cf. 4:15); or (3) **an idiom for giving money** (cf. Phil. 4:15; Rom. 12:13; 15:26; 2 Cor. 9:13; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 6:18), therefore, it may refer to this church’s monetary gift to Paul (cf. 1:7; 4:10, 14–18).”

The word also expresses intimacy with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9) and other believers (1 John 1:7).

1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into **fellowship** with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 John 1:7 but if ^{3rd} we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have (pai) **fellowship** with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses (pai) us from all sin.

Not only did the Philippians share with him in his need as a prisoner, they had also fellow-shipped with him from the first day they trusted Christ. Of course this put a smile on the apostle’s face, and joy in his heart.

These believers, no doubt, eagerly started sharing the gospel to unbelievers with Paul in Philippi from the very first day that they were born again.

“One reason Paul thanked God was for the fellowship they had with him in getting the gospel out. Of all the

churches with which Paul was associated, it is quite obvious that the church at Philippi was the closest to his heart. He loved them all, but they loved him more than other churches did. Paul's capacity for thanksgiving went beyond warm "fuzzies." Paul gave thanks on the basis of substance; his love for them had a basis to it-- their participation in advancing the gospel."* *ibid

In what ways can believers participate in the gospel with their pastor? 1) Pray for those giving the gospel. 2) Give the gospel themselves. 3) Give financial support for those giving the gospel.

Many of the Philippians were mature believers in the felt it was a great trade . . . Paul's teaching doctrine, allowing them to become mature and prosper and they shared back the fruits with Paul . . . all being gifts from God anyway!}

This church supported the apostle Paul from the first day they met until the moment he was writing them sitting in jail. They never forgot him. They continued to support him. It is now over ten years later and their commitment is still faithful to him. No wonder he thanked God for them.* *ibid

[Philippians 1:6](#) *For I am confident* (part. ra) *of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect* (v. fai, epiteleo) *it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Keeping our confidence in God and His Word is very important and the Scriptures warn us to be careful not to lose it:

Hebrews 10:35-37 Therefore, **do not throw away your confidence**, which has a great reward. 36) For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. 37) For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

It is interesting that the epistle of 2 Corinthians is about suffering and the word “**confidence**” is found in it 10 times, more than any other NT book, why? Because it is imperative that we maintain our confidence in God when we suffer.

Also, it is no accident that the epistle of 2 Corinthians uses the word “**comfort**” 11 times, more than any other book in the NT? Do you know why this is no coincidence? Because those who have **confidence** in God, also have **comfort** in their soul.

LESSON 6 (12-5-17)

The following verse is probably the most profound and concise verse in the Bible that expresses confidence in God:

Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

Paul makes it very clear, there is no place in the spiritual life for ‘I hope so.’ Confidence is a spiritual asset, it is not

a sign of arrogance. The more doctrine you have in your soul the more confidence you have about almost everything in life.

When God begins the work of salvation in us he will finish it. God never starts anything that he cannot finish. When God begins a work in us he will see it through to completion.

God will either work in us or he will work on us but he will finish the job.

He will finish it whether we want it finished or not! Once we have come to know Christ we cannot say, “stop the process, I want out.” Paul says, “I am certain of this; this is not debatable; I am sure; I am confident.”

Paul's confidence was in the capacity of God, not in men. Ibid

He who began a good work – God’s work of salvation when one accepts the gospel is total and complete. However, His work doesn’t stop there, He continues to work with us to refine and perfect us for His glory and our blessing.

Psalm 138:8 The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

will perfect it – EPITELEO, (ἐπιτελέω) - ① to finish something begun, end, bring to an end, complete, finish.

Jesus used a form of this word is found in John 19:30 as He hung on the cross: It is finished!

(Read J. Vernon Magee's excerpt.)

the day of Christ Jesus. This refers to the next time Christ returns to earth, the rapture.

Similar Verses:

Philippians 2:16 holding fast the word of life, so that **in the day of Christ** I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

1 Corinthians 1:8 who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in **the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

LESSON 7 (12-7-17)

Like Psalm 23 or Prov 3:5–6, the simple promise of Phil 1:6 is claimed by many Christians for comfort and encouragement, “**For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.**” They understand the verse in a general way to imply that God is presently sustaining us in His grace, and that this divine ministry continues a process which began at salvation. Others find in the verse a more specific theological teaching: Progressive sanctification cannot fail because God has sovereignly ordained that His “good work” of salvation will continue in both sanctification and final glorification. John F. Hart, “Does Philippians 1:6 Guarantee Progressive Sanctification? Part 1,” Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society Volume 9 9, no. 16 (1996): 37–38.

But Christians often find consolation in biblical truths that are not really found in the passages that they claim. And sometimes theologians base their theological

systems on inappropriate conclusions from the prooftexts they employ. Any so-called promise of Scripture or theological teaching must stand or fall in light of valid exegetical investigation.

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate in the immediate and the broader context of the whole letter that Phil 1:6 does not intend to teach the concept that God guarantees the sanctification of His children.

Therefore, it cannot justifiably be used to affirm that God's sovereign grace prevents the possibility of prolonged, serious failure in the Christian life.

Surprisingly, only two basic options can be culled from commentaries and interpretive research on Philipians.

LESSON 8 (12-12-17)

A. The "Good Work" is God's Gift of Salvation/Sanct.

A wide variety of scholars perceives Phil 1:6 as addressing the work of salvation and sanctification in the life of the believer. This might be labeled the "traditional view" because of its wide popularity in laymen's commentaries.

[Colossians 1:21-23 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, 22) yet He has now reconciled (v. api) you in His fleshly body through death, **in order to present (inf. aa) **you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach**-- 23) if indeed you continue (v. pai) in the faith firmly established (part. rp) and steadfast, and not moved away (part. pp) from the hope of the gospel...**

Colossians 1:28 And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we **may present (v. aas) every man complete in Christ.**

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ **I might (inf. aa) present you as a pure virgin.]**

But certain theologians claim v 6 as a key text for the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints—the teaching that true Christians will persevere in faith and holiness.

*In his book, “Faith Works”, [John] MacArthur explains his theology in this way: That ongoing work of grace in the Christian’s life is as much a certainty as justification, glorification, or any other aspect of God’s redeeming work ... [Phil 1:6 is quoted] ... Salvation is wholly God’s work, and He finishes what He starts. His grace is sufficient. And potent. It cannot be defective in any regard. *ibid* p. 40*

B. The “Good Work” is the Philippians’ Gift/Participation in Advancing the Gospel.

The average Christian is sometimes surprised to learn that there is a viable alternative to interpreting Phil 1:6 as a reference to salvation. In fact, there are many commentators who view the good work that God began in the Philippians as their partnership with Paul in advancing the Gospel.

Robert C. Swift is also quite clear in expressing this view of 1:6 - His [Paul's] confident hope was that God would perfect (epitelesei) them in their work of the gospel and that it would bear fruit from then till the day of Christ. In brief, verse 6 speaks of the perfecting of the Philippians' koinōnia ("partnership") and of them as koinōnoi ("partners") in the gospel. *ibid* p. 42-43

Therefore, it is the sacrificial gift to Paul that forms the essence of their partnership and the "good work" instigated by God. *ibid* p. 54

Conclusion:

Unlike many problem passages, the interpretive alternatives to Phil 1:6 are few. Commentators line up in two broad camps. Most common is the interpretive approach that understands the verse to address the ongoing sanctification and final eschatological salvation of the Philippians (and all Christians) that God began in them. Despite the widespread popularity of this viewpoint, many commentators and scholars find that this interpretation violates the *mise-en-scène* of the passage. This article has been in agreement with this criticism. Instead, the verse speaks of the Philippians' joint venture with Paul by means of one or all of their financial contributions to his Gospel mission.

In the verses leading up to 1:6, no hints can be found to encourage us to handle the verse as an overview of the salvation/sanctification process. A true

epistolary introduction prepares the reader (and listener) for all the major themes to be addressed in the rest of the letter.

Salvation/sanctification as a primary thematic development in Philippians as a whole seems absent, while a gift motif stands out as a dominant subject of 4:10–20. Partnership in the Gospel is also a significant concern for Paul, and the disunity in the Macedonian congregation threatened this partnership (1:27; 4:2). The striking harmony of 1:3–7 and 4:10–20 favors an approach to 1:6 that will highlight the Philippians' gift to Paul. *ibid* p. 57-58

Taking “good work” in Phil. 1:6 in a similar fashion to the same phrase in 2 Cor. 9:8 is quite appropriate. In fact, in the NT, ergon agathon (“good work”) always has humans as the primary agent of the action and never God. If the “good work” in Phil 1:6 is salvation, God alone becomes the agent of ergon agathon (“good deed”), excluding the Philippians as actively participating, since salvation is apart from good works (Rom 4:5). But if the “good deed” is the Philippians' participation with Paul financially in the advance of the Gospel, then their own actions could have begun the “good deed” that God empowered and stimulated. John F. Hart, “Does Philippians 1:6 Guarantee Progressive Sanctification? Part 2,” *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* Volume 9 9, no. 17 (1996): 46–48.

BDAG [Greek-English lexicon of the N.T.] puts “ergon” in Phil 1:6 under “the deeds of humans.” John Reumann,

Philippians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, vol. 33B, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 112.

Phil. 1:6 relates to three other passages using ἀγαθός *good ἔργον work*: Ibid 112

Colossians 1:10 so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in *every good work* and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for *good works*,

1 Timothy 2:10 but rather by means of *good works*, as befits women making a claim to godliness.

God began and will complete it, (*the good work*) but it is in or among the Philippians and involves them. Ibid 113

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every *good deed*.

There is a parallel of what God did with the Philippians and what Titus did:

2 Corinthians 8:6 Consequently we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.

***Titus initially encouraged the Corinthians to begin the collection at least one year earlier. When he returned to Corinth with the severe letter, Paul encouraged him to help the believers finish the collection of the money for the support of the poor saints in Jerusalem.* John MacArthur**

LESSON 9 (12-14-17)

the day of Christ Jesus.

The word “day” is used three ways in Scripture: a twenty-four hour day; less than a twenty-four hour day (when Jesus comes in a twinkling of an eye); more than a twenty-four hour period (Day of the Lord; millennium). GraceNotes p. 7

“the day of Christ” is used just three times in Scripture and all three are found in Philippians and all three refer to the rapture (Phil. 1:6, 10, & 2:16). There is a textual variant in the KJV in 2 Thess. 2:2 where “day of the Lord” is found.

“the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” is found in (1 Cor. 1:8) and “the day of the Lord Jesus” is found in (1 Cor. 5:5 & 2 Cor. 1:14) and they all refer to the rapture as well.

Expanded version of **Philippians 1:3-6:**

Philippians 1:3-6 I [Paul] thank my God in all my remembrance of you, [Philippians] 4) always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5) in view of your participation in the gospel [by giving financial support to Paul] from the first day until now; [consistently giving] 6) For I [Paul] am confident [based on the Philippian’s history of giving] of this very thing, that He [God] who began a good work [supporting the dissemination of the gospel] in you will perfect it [by using believers to duplicate

what the Philippians did] *until the day of Christ Jesus* [when Christ returns at the rapture].

Philippians 1:7 *For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all* [in light of Philippian gifts] *because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.*

The NASV, NET, NIV ends verse 6 with a period and starts a new sentence here in verse 7. However the NKJV and LEB combines verse 6 and 7 as one sentence.

right – [KJV “meet”] ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ, (δικαίος) adj. nsn, ② The neuter denotes that which is obligatory in view of certain requirements of justice, right, fair, equitable

The word right conveys a sense of moral uprightness (in keeping with God’s law) and is often translated throughout the New Testament as “righteous.” In this context, the word indicates that Paul’s thoughts regarding the Philippians were in perfect accord with God’s will. BDAG p. 247

NASV *feel this way about you all*

NKJV *to think this about you all*

LEB *to think this about all of you*

PHRONEO, (φρονέω) inf. pa, ① to have an opinion with regard to something, think, form/hold an opinion, judge
BDAG p. 1065

“The word for “think” means to have in mind, to hold a mental attitude about something. Paul held an attitude toward the Philippians. An attitude is a habit of thinking. Paul had a habit of thinking about the subject of verse seven. He formed this attitude based on divine viewpoint. That is why his attitude was proper.” Grace Notes

LESSON 10 (12-17-17)

because I have you in my heart, KARDIA, (καρδία) inf. pa, the center and source of the whole inner life, with its thinking, feeling, and volition. The heart embraces perception, wit, intellect, and reflection of humans. BDAG p.508

For Paul, the mind (Gk. nous, sometimes kardia, “heart”; cf. Heb. lēb) within the human being as a person capable of having a relationship with self as well as with others (and with God)—i.e., as part of sōma (body, the whole person)—involves “the knowing, understanding, and judging which belong to man as man and determine what attitude he adopts” ... Hebrew had no word for brain.

John Reumann, *Philippians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 33B, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 116.

Most of the time people use the word “heart” to describe something concerning the emotions. “She was heart broken” would be understood as a woman or girl who has been crushed emotionally.

The image of a heart  is associated with Valentine's Day which is based on personal love.

The HEART (kardia) is the dominate portion of the soul. Some refer to it as the right lobe.

Emotion is the physiological response to what is in the soul, not part of the soul, but interacts with it.

Emotions cannot think.

Responds to thinking in the heart, doctrine or to MAS

God tests the emotions

Words for emotion:

KILJAH Heb., NEPHROS Gk., Reins [kidneys],
SPLAGCHNON [intestines], KOILLIA [belly]

Emotional Revolt of the Soul occurs when mentality is shut down and volition chooses to allow emotional dominance of the soul. When we are in a state of carnality, we act according to the MAS in our souls.

COMPARTMENTS OF THE HEART:

Frame of Reference retains data and doctrines as a system on which to build more data and doctrine. Our frame of reference acts as a foundation on which to build.

Memory Center is where the doctrine and other data, that is important to us, is stored away for long-term memory.

A positive response to information centralized in the association cortex initiates an electrochemical

sequence that creates a permanent neural pathway called a memory trace or, more precisely, an engram.

Long-term memories may be recalled into working memory (brought up from sub- to active consciousness) under the proper stimulus. This process reaches maximum efficiency under the recall ministry of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 - *“But the Helper [PARAKLETOS: a title used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant or counselor], the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”*

Technical Vocabulary needs to be developed before we can advance in any area.

Norms and Standards, everyone has these, but doctrine changes our norms and standards to line up with the Word of God.

LESSON 11 (12-21-17)

THE HEART HAS:

Mentality is mental power, capacity, intelligence, or mode of thought.

Conscience is the evaluator of our norms and standards.

Rom. 2:15 - *in that they [Gentiles] show the work of the Law written in their hearts [N & S], their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,*

Self-Consciousness is awareness of self.

Volition is the ability and responsibility of making choices and decisions.

Viewpoint is a combination of what you have in your frame of reference, memory center, and norms and standards that determines what you think about something.

The left lobe of the soul is called “*nous*” in the Greek; it processes new information so that it can be understood.

The non-meritorious function of faith, or believing at salvation, is a function of the heart.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A HEAD AND A HEART (emotions) BELIEF. ALL FAITH COMES FROM THE HEART. (the dominant part of the soul).

NASV Proverbs 4:23 Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.

GNT Proverbs 4:23 Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts.

2 Corinthians 7:2-3 Make room (v. aam) for us in your hearts [NKJV “open your heart to us”]; we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one. 3) I do not speak to condemn you; for I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together.

Philippians 1:7b since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.

in the defense and confirmation

defense – APOLOGIA (ἀπολογία) n. dsf, ① a speech of defense, defense, reply

Two judicial terms referring either to the first phase of Paul's trial in Rome in which he defended his gospel ministry or in a general sense to his continual defense of the faith, which was the heart of his ministry. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1820.

confirmation – BEBAIOSIS (βεβαίωσις) n. dsf, process of establishing or confirming something, confirmation, validation

Used only here and in Heb. 6:16 in the New Testament, this word is a legal and commercial term meaning “a validating guarantee.” Defense and confirmation are the negative and positive aspects of Paul's ministry. He defended the gospel against its opponents' attacks, and he confirmed the gospel through powerful signs. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php 1:7.

LESSON 12 (12-28-17)

Words in connection with the gospel: “**defending**” (1:7), “**confirming**” (v. 7), “**advance**” (v. 12), “**speak**” (v. 14), “**preach**” (κηρύσσω in v. 15; καταγγέλλω in v. 18), “**contending for**” (v. 27), “**do it out of love**” (2:16),

“served ... in the work of” (v. 22), and **“contended ... in the cause of”** (4:3). George W. Murray, “Paul’s Corporate Witness in Philippians,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155 (1998): 317.

The gospel is defended with words and confirmed with works. We defend the gospel with our lips and confirm the gospel with our life. Grace Notes

you all are partakers of grace with me. indicates that the Philippians shared in all aspects of Paul’s ministry, both the good and the difficult.

“partakers” SUGKOINONIA (συγκοινωνός) adj. amp, sharer with someone in something

“partakers of grace” brings us back to the word fellowship. It is koinōnia with a preposition that intensifies it: συγκοινωνός, meaning “being all wrapped up together.”

You may remember that lovely Abigail used these words when she talked to David: “... but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God ...” (1 Sam. 25:29). Paul is saying that he and the Philippians are all wrapped up together as partners in the gospel. J. Vernon McGee, [Thru the Bible Commentary](#), electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 29

Another Greek word that refers to partners or participating with someone is **metochoi**.

Hebrews 3:14 For we have become **partakers** of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end;

It did not matter whether Paul was in chains or free; his flock in Philippi shared with him in what God was doing through him. It is wonderful when Christian friends share in the great enterprise of getting out the gospel and the Word of God.

“Christian love is “the tie that binds.” Love is the evidence of salvation: “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren” (1 John 3:14). It is the “spiritual lubrication” that keeps the machinery of life running smoothly. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 65.

All those who participate in the dissemination of the gospel also share in experiencing the grace of God.

There are two aspects to sharing Christ: the lip and the life. Both are necessary to present a total package in our representation of Christ. *Grace Notes*

Similar passage to *Phil. 1:7*

Hebrews 10:34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.

When a believer supports someone who leads people to the Lord, he gets a percentage of the rewards related to every conversion that is made at the judgment seat of Christ. *ibid*

LESSON 13 (1-4-18)

Philippians 1:8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the **affection** of Christ Jesus.

affection – KJV “*bowels*” in Greek refers to the nobler human entrails or organs—the heart, liver, and lungs. By a figure of speech (metonymy) one word (“*bowels*”) is changed for another (“*love*”) only remotely connected with it; that is, as a man’s entrails are located deep within his body, so his strongest passions (e.g., *love*) come from deep within. King James Version Study Bible, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 1:8.

SPLAGCHNON, (σπλάγχνον) n. dpn, ③ of the feeling itself, pl. love, affection.

The word literally refers to the internal organs, which are the part of the body that reacts to intense emotion. It became the strongest Gr. word to express compassionate love—a love that involves one’s entire being. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1820.

Splogchnon used eleven times in the NASV. Four times it is translated “affection”, once “tender”, five times “heart”, and one time (Acts 1:18) “intestines”.

It is important to recognize when a figure of speech called a “metonymy” is used or else a sentence makes no sense. Ex. The white-house said today... Of course this doesn’t mean that the white-house actually spoke but that some government official representing the president made a statement.

Philemon 1:12 I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very *heart*,

The Greek word literally means intestines but it would be absurd to translate it that way.

Paul's feelings for the Philippians were like those of Jesus Christ, who loved them and died for them.

1 John 4:8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9) By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10) In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11) Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 19 We love, because He first loved us.

Philippians 1:9-11 And this I pray, *that* your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10) *that* you may approve the things that are excellent, *that* you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11) being filled with the fruit of righteousness which is by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

In this prayer there are three petitions all of which begin with the word "*that*". Verse nine is the first "*that*."

It is interesting that Paul didn't pray for the Philippians to love each other, but for them to love each other more

and more. They already loved each other but they could love each other more.

Here is a piling up of adverbs, an exuberance of love. Wave after wave of love should hit the banks of our souls. The more we grow in grace the greater is our capacity to love. One way we know we are growing is how much we love the unlovely. We rub elbows with people who are more difficult than others. All people do not appeal to us equally. Grace Notes

Paul exhorted the Philippians to grow in knowledge and discernment, words that in the Greek refer to a relational understanding (1:9). In other words, the Greek word for knowledge focuses on a person-to-God relationship, whereas the Greek word for discernment points to a person-to-person relationship. Paul wanted the Philippians not only to abound in love but also to experience more of God so that they could grow into a mature understanding of His ways. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php.

We do not love others for their sake; we love them for Jesus' sake. It doesn't matter how much doctrine one has, if he gets angry over every little thing and gets exasperated and put-out over nothing, his spiritual impact is neutralized.

A believer can be trapped in spiritual babyhood, making a big deal out of inconsequentialities and not even be aware of it. We excuse ourselves for our spiritual immaturity because of the behavior of others. We give

ourselves permission to harbor MAS of implacability, anger, judging, gossiping, hate, rudeness, spite, bitterness, hypersensitivity, thoughtlessness, jealousy, harmful criticism, and bickering.

We allow others to control us because we do what feels good rather than what is right. Mature believers have learned to “LET IT GO”. That is the only way to keep an RMA. It’s not worth the effort or the hassle to get even with people or to make a big deal over trivial things. It is much easier to let God take care of it.

The only way that a believer can do this is through acquiring true (epignosis) knowledge and then, properly apply it to his circumstances which is called discernment.

One may know doctrine but misapply it. One may know the gospel well but be ineffective or even turn people off if they lack discernment.

Many Christians fail in giving the gospel because they lack knowledge and many who have knowledge fail because they lack discernment. They in effect, preach to unbelievers not knowing their worldview nor what they believe. They ask few, if any questions, so they, the believers, are constantly trying to defend what they believe rather than having the unbeliever defend what he believes.

The one who asks the questions, controls the conversation. Few unbelievers have been challenged to defend their beliefs because most believers preach to them

rather than having a conversation with them. Most unbelievers don't really know what they believe and those who do have a difficult time defending their beliefs.

Knowledge is the accumulation of facts. Discernment is the correct use of facts. Knowledge always comes first because we all must learn how to be discerning since it doesn't come naturally.

The more we know, the more we can rightly divide things that differ. We can separate things to see their distinctions, notice how they are different.

LESSON 14 (1-9-18)

Discerning love can tell the difference between maudlin love and authentic love. Maudlin love may not employ "tough love" when necessary. Maudlin love loves on the basis of **sympathy**, not **empathy**.

SYM•PA•THY \ 'sim-pə-thē\ *noun*

[Latin *sympathia*, from Greek *sympatheia*, from *sympathēs* having common feelings, sympathetic, from *syn-* + *pathos* feelings, emotion, experience]

2 a : inclination to think or feel alike : emotional or intellectual accord

3 a : the act or capacity of entering into or sharing the feelings or interests of another

Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

EM•PA•THY \ 'em-pə-thē\ noun

[Greek empathēia, literally, passion, from empathēs emotional, from em- + pathos feelings, emotion]

2 : the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner. *ibid*

Authentic love requires both knowledge and discernment. We must not permit our relationships to be based purely on emotions? Can you dislike someone and still love them? Unconditional love enables believers to deplore the foolishness and aggravation of someone yet still love them.

1 Thessalonians 3:12 and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you; 13) so that He may establish your hearts un-blamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

We must decide who we want to please. Most people want to please themselves so they ignore or mistreat those considered misfits, but believers who befriend those types, do so because they realize it is pleasing to the Lord and it is more important for them to please the

Lord than it is to please themselves by avoiding people who find it harder to make friends.

It is not pleasing to the Lord when a believer associates with family or friends but ignores someone in a group who may be shy, different, or who may find it hard to fit in with others. Jesus associated with those who were considered to be riffraff, tax-collectors, ex-prostitutes, and fishermen.

When one's love grows more and more and is based on knowledge and discernment, he doesn't associate only with those who are easy to love and ignore those who have idiosyncrasies or peculiarities. Those who have quirks and oddities are the ones who need love the most. Besides, we all have foibles of some sort don't we?

Luke 6:41-42 And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 42) "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

A believer who has knowledge and discernment from the intake of God's word is able to love others unconditionally, in spite of their imperfections, which is the way that our Lord loves us.

Read Luke 6:30-37

LESSON 15 (1-11-18)

Philippians 1:9-11 And this I pray, *that* your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10) *that* you may *approve* the things that are *excellent*, *that* you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

***may approve* DOKIMAZO, (δοκιμάζω) inf. pa, ② to draw a conclusion about worth on the basis of testing, prove, approve**

This phrase could very easily use the words “*discern*” or “*determine*” instead of “*approve*”.

Discernment is the ability to distinguish between the chaff and wheat, the dross and the gold, the genuine and the superficial. Grace Notes

The world is full of deception and deceit and it is imperative that we have something to determine the true from the false and the good from the bad. Only the word of God can do this with perfect accuracy.

***are excellent* DIAPHERO, (διαφέρω) part. pa, ④ differ to one's advantage from someone or something, be worth more than, be superior to**

We should be able to test for approval the things which are the most valuable in life. None of us operate in life without some scale of values. The question is not whether we have a scale of values but the question is

more which scale of values we choose. Do we chose God's highest values [declared in His Word] or some other set of values that are available to us? *ibid*

Pseudo scale values:

- 1. Parent's values**
- 2. Your friend's values**
- 3. The majority's values**
- 4. Hollywood's values**
- 5. Government's values**
- 6. Society's values**

One reason so many people have the wrong scale of values is because they set their minds on the things of earth and seek the things of earth rather than the things above.

Colossians 3:1-2 *If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2) **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.***

We will never be able to determine what is most valuable in life if we seldom, if ever, set our minds on things above by considering the spiritual aspect in the decisions we make.

If we always use a false scale of values rather than the canon of Scriptures to live by, how can we make the right decisions that will enrich our lives and secure the security, contentment, and joy that God desires us to have?

Do we have God's scale of values? What is the highest item on your scale of values? What is first or most important to us? A good way to measure these questions is how do we use our time? Answering these things will reveal what is important in our lives. Then we will have a sense of what is vital. ibid

that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

may be sincere EILIKRINES, (εἰλικρινής) adj. npm, ELI – heile = the sun's rays, KRINES = to consider or pass judgment. To analyze in sunlight, to be sincere, without hidden motives or pretense, pure. Sincerity is the opposite of hypocrisy.

The word “sincere” comes from two Greek words: “sun” and “to judge.” It means to judge by holding up to the light of the sun. Broken pottery in the ancient world was often covered with wax and painted over. People were deceived into thinking they were buying a sound vase, for example. However, if a person were to hold this vase up to the sun, the sun would reveal the cracks.

“Sincere” is an interesting word which comes from the Latin sincerus, which means without wax. When the Romans became a world power, they were a very strong and rather brutal people. They destroyed a great many of the art treasures of Greece in many

places... But many of the art treasures of Greece were broken up. When the Romans reached the point of development in their culture that they appreciated these things, they began to gather them up. Many of them were broken. When there was a crack in a statue or a vase, a dishonest dealer would fill it in with wax so that one couldn't tell that it had been broken. Then he would sell it as a genuine, perfect piece. An unsuspecting man would buy it, take it to his villa, and display it in his garden. The next hot day he would walk out and, lo and behold, the wax would be running out of a crack in that lovely art treasure! Finally the reputable art dealers began to put on their material the word *sincerus*, meaning without wax. In other words, they guaranteed it was a perfect piece. J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 295.

without offense – APROSKOPOS, (ἀπρόσκοπος) adj. npm, being without fault because of not giving offense, undamaged, blameless

This does not mean that we must be perfect but that we should strive to not lead others to sin by the way we live. We should strive to not be a stumbling stone in the path of others.

1 Corinthians 10:32 Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God;

LESSON 16 (1-18-18)

The **day of Christ**, refers to when Jesus Christ comes back to the atmosphere around the earth to ketch-up all church age believers who will have received their resurrection bodies.

The term, “*day of Christ*” is found only in the epistle of Philippians in the NASV and it is used three times: *Phil. 1:6, 10, & 2:16.*

Paul was emphasizing the importance of a Personal Sense of Destiny (PSD) to the Philippian church by anticipating the return of our Lord Jesus Christ at the rapture.

1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. 3) And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

James 5:7-9 Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the **coming of the Lord**. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8) You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the **coming of the Lord** is at hand. 9) Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

11) *being filled with the fruit of righteousness* which is by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

This verse sets forth the characteristics of those who fulfill the three requests for which Paul prays:

- 1. "...that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,"***
- 2. "that you may approve the things that are excellent,"***
- 3. "that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,"***

"the fruit of righteousness" is found only four times in the Bible.

Hebrews 12:11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields (v. pai) the peaceful *fruit of righteousness*.

It is used here in an experiential sense describing the benefit for believers who are trained by discipline.

Amos 6:12 Do horses run on rocks? Or does one plow them with oxen? Yet you have turned (qal. perf. 2nd per. mas. pl.) justice into poison, and the *fruit of righteous-ness* into wormwood,

It is used here experientially as well, describing how turning from God results in turning righteous acts into bitterness and animosity.

(NKJV) James 3:17-18 *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. 18) Now the fruit (harvest) of righteousness is sown (v. ppi received) in peace by those who make (part. pa) peace.*

being filled (part. rp) with the fruit of righteousness which is by Jesus Christ,

It appears that believers who fulfill the things mentioned in Paul's prayer (love more, approve of what is excellent, and are not hypocritical), have received the harvest of righteousness (motivation to produce righteous acts from B.D.) through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. His death makes it possible to be delivered from our sins so that we can be good and faithful servants which glorifies God.

Filled with the fruits of uprightness which come through Jesus Christ: The term of Christian growth and development is the status of uprightness before God, yet it is not a status that one achieves by oneself; rather it is begun by God (Phil. 1:6) and has its fullness in that which comes only through union with Christ [imputed righteousness] (Phil. 3:9).

Such inner qualities, partially described in Galatians 5:22-23, will be evident to others. The fruit of the Spirit

comes through Jesus Christ, for it is really His life lived out through believers. Such fruit magnifies God, not self.

PRINCIPLE: God is the source for the fruit that is produced in our lives. God has given us imputed righteousness (a legal righteousness which he put in us) so that we might produce a practical righteousness.

Grace Notes

LESSON 17 (1-23-18)

Phil 1:11 is often taken in a moral sense, “righteousness, uprightness as the compelling motive for the conduct of one’s whole life” (BAGD 2.b/BDAG 3 “produce of uprightness”), in contrast to dikaiosynē (theou), “the (saving) righteousness (of God)” and its implications.

John Reumann, Philippians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, vol. 33B, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 131.

The scriptures below primarily have an experiential connotation:

2 Corinthians 9:8-10 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9) As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever." 10) Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness,

We cannot strut about and boast about how great we are because we have produced good works. Why?

Because Jesus said:

John 15:5 "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.**

*But righteousness/justification is not limited by Paul to a past event. It involves the power of God at work in the present and for future fulfillment and consummation. Righteousness as proper fellowship with God provides fullness of fruit or results in daily life, toward the perfection of the eschaton (enrkd of history)... *ibid**

The motivation of our good works is so important. If we produce good works in order to be eternally saved, then God is not in them and they are nothing but filthy rags.

However, if we understand as a believer that we have God's righteousness on the basis of faith, then we recognize that we are already accepted by God and He provides everything we need to produce good works. Our motivation is to please our Lord and to someday receive rewards and decorations at the JSC.

to the glory and praise of God. It is God who gets the glory and praise for our good works because He is the One who provided the motivation and the means for us to do them. So God gets the glory and praise, what do we get? **THE BLESSING!**

This does not mean that believers who stay the course in doing good works while filled with the H.S. will not receive any glory or praise.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. *Then each one's praise will come from God.*

When we respond to God, then He, as it were, applauds us.

Romans 2:28-29 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29) but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; *whose praise is not from men but from God.*

Seeking praise and glory from men is futile but seeking the praise and glory that mature believers receive from God at the coming of Jesus Christ is a legitimate form of motivation. We are actually reflecting His glory.

Read: **Romans 2:5-10**

1 Peter 1:6-7 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7) that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, *may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

LESSON 18 (1-25-18)

Philippians 1:12-14 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, 13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

Verse 12 is a great example that what appears to be obstacles and hindrances which prevent us from fulfilling our mission on earth as believers but often turn out to be opportunities to enlarge our mission.

Paul's suffering and imprisonment did not hinder the gospel, it advanced it.

Acts 28:30-31 Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, 31) preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

Paul was under house arrest but that wasn't a problem, God brought people to him.

Philippians 4:22 All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

[Paul reached] a significant number of people, not limited to Caesar's family, which would include

courtiers, princes, judges, cooks, food-tasters, musicians, custodians, builders, stablemen, soldiers, and accountants. Within that large group, Paul had in mind those who, through the proclamation of the gospel by members of the church at Rome, had been saved prior to his coming. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1829.

Also, consider the millions of people who have been saved by reading or hearing the Pauline epistles. God allowed him to be imprisoned so that he would be stuck in one place which gave him the opportunity to write most of the N.T.

A couple of CBC bulletin sayings:

God is greater than anything that happens to us.

God expects us to grow wherever He plants us.

Two positive results of Paul's imprisonment are given in verses 13 and 14: (1) Caesar's palace learned the gospel from him (v. 13); and (2) many Roman Christians were motivated to spread the gospel even more due to his bondage (v. 14).

Luke 21:12 *"But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake. 13) **"It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. 14) **"So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves;*****

15) for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

This does not suggest that ministers and teachers should forego preparation in their normal spiritual duties. To cite this passage and others like it (21:12–15; Matt. 10:19) to justify the neglect of study and meditation is to twist the meaning of Scripture. This verse is meant as a comfort for those under life threatening persecution, not an excuse for laziness in ministry. The exact same expression is used in v. 22, speaking of concern for one's material necessities. In neither context was Jesus condemning legitimate toil and preparation. He was promising the Holy Spirit's aid for times of persecution when there can be no preparation.

John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1539.

13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else,

This verse was to inform everyone that Paul was not in prison because he was a criminal; he was in chains because he stood for Christ, truth, and righteousness.

There were many in prison in Paul's day that didn't belong there just as there has been ever since then, including the present. The majority of people in U.S. prisons are there for non-violent crimes such as contempt of court, failure to pay parking and traffic fines, using drugs, parole violations, bad checks, etc.

77% of the people entering prisons and jails were sentenced for nonviolent offenses. Since 1978, the number of violent prisoners entering America's prisons doubled, the number of nonviolent prisoners tripled, and the number of persons imprisoned for drug offenses increased eight-fold. America imprisons over a million nonviolent offenders, <http://www.november.org/razorwire/rzold/12/1201.html>

They estimate that there are around 120,000 people in prison who are innocent.

According to the Innocence Project's estimates, between 2.3 percent and 5 percent of all US prisoners are innocent. The American prison population numbers about 2.4 million. Using those numbers, as many as 120,000 innocent people could currently be in prison.

A record-breaking number of people were exonerated in 2015 — freed after serving time in American prisons for crimes they did not commit.

In all, 149 people spent an average of 15 years in prison before being cleared last year, according to a new report out Wednesday from the National Registry of Exonerations, a project at the University of Michigan Law School.

The convictions ranged from lower level offenses, such as 47 drug crimes, to major felonies, including 54 murder convictions that were overturned. Five of the convicts were awaiting execution, and were saved last year when courts ruled they didn't belong in the prison in the first

place. NBC News <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/jailed-innocent-record-number-people-exonerated-2015-n510196>

We now have believers who have been fined and some sent to jail for preaching on streets, refusing to obey an unconstitutional and immoral law, and for refusing to bake a cake or take pictures at same-sex weddings.

Throughout history, people have suffered and been imprisoned for courageously declaring the gospel, but Paul demonstrated that even though a believer may be imprisoned, the gospel isn't.

2 Timothy 2:8-9 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, 9) for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment,

There were some ambitious believers who were competing with the Apostle Paul who felt threatened by his faithfulness and courage under pressure.

(NASV) *Phil. 1:14 ... and that most (n. apm) of the brethren (n. gpm), trusting (part. ra, pl. acu. mas.) in the Lord (n. dsm) because of my imprisonment (n. dpm),*

(NKJV) *Phil. 1:14 ... and most (n. apm) brethren (n. gpm) in the Lord (n. dsm), having become confident (peitho, part. ra, pl. acu. mas.) by my chains (n. dpm),*

1. Most of the Philippian believers were not trusting in the

Lord because of Paul's imprisonment,

2. Most of the Philippian believers were in the Lord (in fellowship, filled with the H.S.) and had confidence in giving the gospel in the face of danger because of Paul's faithfulness while in chains.

The believers had received confidence because of his imprisonment—not because he was in prison but because in prison he maintained his leadership activities. He continued to teach the Word of God and to rule the church. The fact that Paul was in prison and awaiting a very serious trial did not intimidate him at all.

LESSON 19 (1-30-18)

(NKJV) Philippians 1:13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;

*++(NKJV) Philippians 1:14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, **are much more bold to speak the word without fear.***

Courage is contagious, but so is cowardice.

There isn't a person on this planet that doesn't have to deal with fear at one time or another.

Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.

- Mark Twain

FEAR noun

- 1 a : an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger
b (1) : an instance of this emotion
(2) : a state marked by this emotion
- 2 : anxious concern
- 3 : profound reverence and awe especially toward God
- 4 : reason for alarm : **DANGER** Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

Psalm 27:1 *A Psalm of David. The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?*

Psalm 46:1-2 *... God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2) Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;*

Psalm 56:3-4 *When I am afraid, I will put my trust in Thee. 4) In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?*

Read: **Psalm 55:16-23**

Psalm 34:4-9 *I sought the LORD, and He answered me, And delivered me from all my fears. 5) They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces shall never be ashamed. 6) This poor man cried and the LORD heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles. 7) The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them. 8) O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! 9) O*

fear the LORD, you His saints; For to those who fear Him, there is no want.

Psalm 118:6 The LORD is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me?

Isaiah 41:10 Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Those who lack courage can never shield themselves from the presence of fear.

After buying a \$50,000 insurance policy before a plane trip, the traveler stepped on a nearby scale. Out came one of those fortune-telling cards. The message read: "A recent investment may pay big dividends." Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times (Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc., 1996),

***The wise man in the storm prays to God,
not for safety from danger,
but for deliverance from fear.
It is the storm within which endangers him,
not the storm without.***

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Never let the fear of striking out get in your way.

- Babe Ruth

Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.

- Anonymous

I will gather myself around my faith, for light does the darkness fear most.

- Jewel

Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

- Karl Barth

Fear is the root of the tree of suffering.

- Jonathan Lockwood Huie

Fear knocked at the door. Faith answered. There was no one there.

- Source unknown

After taking the oath of office, Roosevelt proceeded to deliver his 20 minute-long inaugural address, (March 4, 1933) best known for his famously pointed reference to "fear itself" in one of its first lines:

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that **the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself** — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and of vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. And I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

LESSON 20 (2-1-18)

These verses emphasize the importance of having good leaders who are great examples for those under their charge. Leaders are held to a higher level of scrutiny.

Leaders will either inspire their subordinates to rise to the occasion with courageous determination, or they will fold under pressure instilling fear and disappointment.

The most common downfall of leaders is arrogance. The death knell for a leader is to think he's better than his subordinates or to strive to be popular with them. A good leader isn't interested in polls or flattery; he is impartial, intent on doing what is right regardless of what others may think or say.

Those who have the Word of God circulating in their stream of consciousness use it to eliminate fear so that they can boldly speak the Word of God.

We must always remember that a) Jesus Christ controls history; b) Every believer is in union with Him. What does that mean? It means that nothing can happen to you, whether good or bad unless it was allowed by Him.

Everyone needs a leader. No one understands mankind better than God Himself, and He has made it clear that 98% of all mankind needs some kind of supervision, and therefore a system of authority—establishment, even authority principles related to love.

You can't have anything in life that is worthwhile without authority, even your own self-discipline. The leadership discussed here is a spiritual leadership whereby God

Himself provides the commission. He commissioned Paul at the point of his salvation by giving him the gift of apostleship. And there are several spiritual gifts which are the basis for all spiritual leadership. Since apostleship is extinct all that is left is the gift of pastor-teacher, and to a very limited extent evangelism. R.B. Theime Jr. Philippian notes

The Servant Role

In Journey to the East, Hermann Hesse described the activities and relationships of explorers who were sent on a difficult mission by a certain order. A servant, Leo, cared for their every need: prepared the food, washed their clothes, and was at their beck and call. In terms of protocol, he was the lowest of the least. As the mission progressed, Leo's adaptability and spirit proved invaluable.

The servant's worth became more evident when their ship was wrecked and Leo was missing. Trying to proceed without him proved impossible. Eventually one member of the party made his way back to headquarters, where he met the leader. And, lo, it was none other than Leo! Though assuming the role of servant during the expedition, in reality he was their leader. Hesse was saying: real leadership has more to do with service than with status. G. Curtis Jones, 1000 Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1986), 210.

Courage in a leader very important because it can inspire boldness in those who are timid and afraid. Being bold in

Rome certainly took courage. It was open season on Christians and one would risk imprisonment or even death by evangelizing to the wrong person.

It was Paul's uncompromising determination to further the gospel in every circumstance which bolstered their confidence and courage to do the same. If we are absolutely confident about the gospel (*faith alone in Christ alone*) we shouldn't be afraid to witness to others because confidence vanquishes fear. We, like the Roman believers need to become "*much more bold*".

Christians are commanded to be bold and courageous:

Joshua 1:6-7 ***Be strong and of good courage***, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7) "***Only be strong and very courageous***, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

1 Corinthians 16:13 ***Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men***, be strong,

2 Samuel 10:12 "***Be strong, and let us show ourselves courageous*** for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what is good in His sight."

1 Timothy 6:12 ***Fight the good fight of faith***; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Courage is going from failure to failure without losing

enthusiasm.

- Winston Churchill

LESSON 21 (2-6-18)

***Let us not pray to be sheltered from dangers
but to be fearless when facing them.***

- Rabindranath Tagore

The secret of happiness is freedom.

The secret of freedom is courage.

- Thucydides

***Circumstance does not make the man: it reveals him to
himself.***

- James Allen

***The opposite of courage in our society is not cowardice, it
is conformity.***

- Rollo May

***Philippians 1:15-17* Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ
even from **envy and strife**, but some also from good will; 6)
the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for
the defense of the gospel; 17) the former proclaim Christ
out of selfish ambition, rather than from pure motives,
thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.**

***Philippians 1:15* Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ
even from **envy and strife**, but some also from good will;**

The Philippian church had everyone communicating the Word of God correctly but from different motives. There are two mental attitude sins mentioned: Envy and Strife.

The envy probably came from the more immature believers who were jealous of other believers who had great success in witnessing where as they did not.

It takes maturity to rejoice in the success of others. Immaturity constantly compares self with others. Juvenile Christians are intimidated by the accomplishments of others.

THERE SHOULD BE NO COMPETITION AMONG BELIEVERS, WE ARE ALL ON THE SAME TEAM!

We should delight in the success of others. Envy seeks to diminish the accomplishments of others in order to make oneself look better. Envy never builds up, it always tears down.

Proverbs 14:30 A sound heart is life to the body, But **envy** is rottenness to the bones.

Job 5:2 For wrath kills a foolish man, And **envy** slays a simple one.

Acts 7:9 And the patriarchs, becoming **envious**, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him.

When people feel diminished by the success of others there is a corollary that always comes with this--strife. Strife is an expression of enmity. These two evils are stitched together in James 3:16, "For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are

there." People try to outdo and eclipse others where there is envy in motivation. Grace notes, Philippians

“Strife” connotes contention, rivalry, and conflict, which started when Paul’s critics began discrediting him.

It appears that the media, Hollywood, many university professors and students, and most of the political party that agrees with fake news are motivated by envy and hate, and they are full of strife and contention.

This type of pettiness is found in families, schools, sports, businesses, churches, and especially in government.

These kind of people are not a team players, they put themselves ahead of their team or organization. They make decisions to promote themselves, not the team. They may have great talent but they will not use it to help their team mates; all their effort is to bring attention upon themselves. They are selfish, arrogant, and have zero capacity to love anyone or anything but themselves.

LESSON 22 (2-8-18)

***Question:* Can people who hear the gospel from those who are motivated by envy be saved? The answer is yes.**

But do you know why? Because it doesn’t matter who gives the gospel if it is given accurately, because it is the H.S. that enables a spiritually dead unbeliever to understand the spiritual dimension of the gospel. We call that “common grace” (Matt. 16:16-17, John 16:8, 1 Thes. 1:5).

God never violates the freedom of mankind to accept or reject the gospel. That would be like programing robots to

automatically and mindlessly do His bidding, how could that glorify God? It would nullify the glory He deserves and the victory He rightfully receives in the angelic conflict. When man uses his volition to humble himself and seek salvation in order to be saved, it condemns Satan because he could have done the same thing; but he never did. Therefore, God is just and righteous in tossing him and all the fallen angels into the lake of fire.

The Holy Spirit also convicts the unbeliever of the gospel by persistently bringing it to mind (a rock in the shoe illustration). There is never force or coercion involved, only persuasion.

John 16:8 and when He [H.S.] has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

1 Thessalonians 1:5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance...

Will these wrongly motivated believers who accurately give the gospel to unbelievers be rewarded for their efforts?

No, because it is based on self-promotion, “human good” produced by believers in carnality, rather than “divine good”, which is produced by believers who are under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit which always has others in mind rather than self.

Thankfully, there were believers who were giving the gospel with good will and love. They were not competing

with other believers, they rejoiced in the success of other believers.

Philippians 1:16 *the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel;*

Some manuscripts reverse the order of vv. 16 and 17. The NKJV has the order of these verses reversed.

Now we get the proper motivation for serving God - LOVE. Love is always the right motive no matter what we are doing.

1 Corinthians 13:1 *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2) And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

It was love, no doubt, that motivated Paul to write the following:

Philippians 2:3 *Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself;*

knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel

OIDA, (οἶδα) part. ra, to grasp the meaning of something, understand, recognize, come to know, experience.

MAS short-circuit love. Knowing B.D. enable believers to recognize and remove MAS from their souls. With MAS

removed, the Holy Spirit's influence inspires the proper motivation to produce good works. Then B.D. enables believers to objectively evaluate situations and make correct decisions.

The Philippian believers who gave the gospel out of love were not envious of Paul because they knew, from the doctrine they learned, that God specifically appointed Paul as an apostle with a special mission to defend the gospel. Only MAS would cause his fellow believers to become envious or jealous of that.

To Paul's credit, he did not let these petty jealousies distract him or undermined his mission. Achievers always have petty people who try to discredit them because they aren't willing to take the risks or put forth the effort to be achievers themselves. It is much easier to just demean those who make them feel inferior.

Read: [1 Sam. 17:12-30](#)

[LESSON 23](#) (2-13-18)

Paul demonstrated how important the gospel is to the Philippians, he used the word "gospel" eight times in just four chapters. It is not just pastors and evangelists who are responsible for giving the gospel; every believer has this responsibility.

[1 Peter 3:15](#) *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and **always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks***

you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and **gave us the ministry of reconciliation**, 19) namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and **He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.**

The following information is pertinent to the notes already covered in Lessons 19 & 20 covering ***Philippians 1:14***. ***Philippians 1:14*** and most of the brethren in the Lord, ***having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.***

The Philippian believers were embolden to speak out about the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God because of Paul's unhesitating courage to give the gospel while imprisoned in Rome.

The boldness to speak the word without fear did not mean speaking boldly to each other, that requires no courage, but to strangers, friends, and family who may be indifferent or negative toward God's Word.

Read: ***Acts 4:1-29***

Acts 4:29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and **grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak (inf. pa, keep on speaking) Your word,**

We all need to pray this same prayer, to remove fear, dread, and embarrassment so that we will look for opportunities to speak the Word with boldness. When you look for opportunities, you'll find them.

When you engage folks at first, you may think that you have failed because you think that you made a mess of it. Not so, the only way to fail is by playing it safe and not even trying.

Acts 4:31 *And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and **began to speak** (v. imp. act. ind.) **the word of God with boldness.***

Remember, be bold but don't preach! Ask questions.

Philippians 1:17 *the former proclaim Christ out of **selfish ambition**, rather than from **pure motives**, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.*

selfish ambition – ERITHEIA (ἐριθεία) n. gsf; strife, contentiousness, selfishness, selfish ambition

This describes a person who has approbation lust and probably power lust. It produces a spirit of unacceptable rivalry, strife, and discord.

Philippians 2:3 *Do nothing from **selfishness** or empty conceit...*

Romans 2:8-9 *but to those who are **selfishly ambitious** and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,*

wrath and indignation. 9) There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil...

Philippians 2:20-21 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. 21) For they all **seek after their own interests**, not those of Christ Jesus.

pure motives – HAGNOS, (ἀγνῶς) adv. sincerely purely, innocent, chaste, free from sin

The NKJV translates this as “not sincerely”.

One way to look at this verse is by seeing those who acted out of selfish ambition were in carnality and those who acted out of love were filled with the Holy Spirit. Those in carnality gave the pure gospel which demonstrates that one can be in carnality and still impart truth that can benefit others.

The reason this is true is because it is the gospel itself, not the one giving it, that is the power unto salvation.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for **it is the power of God for salvation** to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.

to cause – EGEIRO, (ἐγείρω) inf. pa; ⑤ to cause to come into existence, raise up, bring into being

me distress – THLIPSIS, n. asf; (θλίψις) ② inward experience of distress, affliction, trouble

It is interesting that these carnal Christians were benefiting unbelievers by giving them the pure gospel, while at the same time were trying to cause the Apostle Paul distress. He was no doubt the one who responsible for their salvation and they show their appreciation by causing him trouble while he was suffering in prison.

This demonstrates how powerful the MAS of jealousy, envy, and inordinate ambition can be. All of us have witnessed people who stab their friends in the back in order to get ahead.

Paul's detractors used his incarceration as an opportunity to promote their own prestige by accusing Paul of being so sinful the Lord had chastened him by imprisonment. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1821.

Just because someone is thrown in jail or is imprisoned does not mean that they should be there. Throughout history, innocent patriots and saints have been incarcerated for standing for truth and righteousness.

Some egotistical Christians were jealous of the apostle and rejoiced over his imprisonment, for it gave them opportunity to be in the limelight. Supposing to add affliction to his bonds: They hoped that when Paul learned of their being the center of attention, his chains would become particularly galling to him. King James Version Study Bible ., electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 1:15.

These ignominious believers projected their own sin of jealousy on Paul which would cause him to grimace at their supposed success, but they miscalculated because he would always rejoice when other believers were making converts. Salvation of souls were more important to him than some perceived rivalry with him.

In a similar fashion, sometimes believers who are doctrinally sound, promoted themselves by running down a pastor because they have selfish ambition and envy towards him.

No one ever has and no one ever will become happy by making someone else unhappy. They may gloat and revel when they see someone they hate experience suffering, but that is certainly not happiness. It may momentarily thrill the senses but there is no real joy in it.

LESSON 24 (2-15-18)

Philippians 1:18 *What then? Only that in every way, whether in **pretense** or in **truth**, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will **rejoice**.*

Verse 18 is the conclusion to the paragraph dealing with motives. Two more motives are treated: "pretense" and "truth." Grace Notes – Philippians

Paul cared more about the gospel getting out than he did with the motivation of those who were witnessing.

pretense – PROPHASIS, (πρόφασις) n. dsf; ② falsely alleged motive, pretext, ostensible reason, excuse

It was the motive that was phony, not the gospel. Paul would never rejoice over a phony gospel going out to unbelievers. His wonderful attitude is seen in his second letter to Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:8b-9 ...according to my gospel, 9) for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

truth – ALETHEIA, (ἀλήθεια) n. dsf; ③ an actual event or state, reality

The truth here is referencing the motivation in giving the gospel, not the gospel itself. In other words, it is the proclamation of the gospel that is most important and that is what made Paul rejoice.

rejoice – CHIRO, (χαίρω), v. pai; ① to be in a state of happiness and well-being, rejoice, be glad. The second time this is used, it is a verb – future passive indicative. Paul was in prison and the outcome could result in his death, but he was rejoicing and planned to rejoice in the future as well.

This verse should be a mighty inspiration to us because it proves that believers can be happy and celebrate even in times of adversity and suffering. Paul had made up his mind that he was going to rejoice no matter what the future brought, and for him, it could be execution.

2 Corinthians 6:10 as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

Romans 15:13 Now *may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Philippians 4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!*

Romans 12:12 *rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,*

1 Thessalonians 5:16 *Rejoice always;*

1 Peter 1:6-7 *In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7) that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*

Read: John 16:16-22, Romans 8:31-39

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyD2BUnQEU4>

LESSON 25 (2-20-18)

Philippians 1:19-20 *For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20) according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.*

Philippians 1:19 For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

For I know – OIDA, (οἶδα) v. rai; ① to have information about, know

The fact that the Greek word used for “knowledge” is in the perfect tense is important.

The verb tense used by the writer to describe a completed verbal action that occurred in the past but which produced a state of being or a result that exists in the present (in relation to the writer). The emphasis of the perfect is not the past action so much as it is as such but the present “state of affairs” resulting from the past action.

Michael S. Heiser and Vincent M. Setterholm, Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology (Lexham Press, 2013; 2013).

This means that the Bible doctrine we learned in the past, and remember, definitely has an impact on our present state of affairs. The doctrine we learned in the past and have forgotten does not benefit us in our present state of affairs. That is one reason why it is imperative that we continue to consistently take in the Word of God.

James 1:25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.

Revelation 3:3 Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it,

Another reason to persistently take in B.D. is because it is commanded of us.

2 Peter 3:17-18 You therefore, beloved, **knowing this beforehand**, be on your guard (imp.) lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, 18) but **grow** (imp.) **in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**.

1 Peter 2:2 like newborn babes, **long** (imp.) **for the pure milk of the word**, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

2 Timothy 2:15 **Study** (imp.) **to show thyself approved unto God**, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Hebrews 10:23-25 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24) and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25) **not forsaking our own assembling together**, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

Paul's ministry and happiness both continue because he had the ability to use doctrine in the soul to face the reality of contemporary events.

For I know that *this* shall - The "this" refers to the preceding section, "Christ is preached." "Deliverance" means, in this context, deliverance from prison, not the salvation of the soul. The preaching of the gospel with new

intensity both by him and the Romans will contribute to his release from prison. This is the best way to conquer social problems--win people to Christ. Grace Notes Philippians

turn out for my deliverance – SOTERIA, (σωτηρία) n. asf;

① deliverance, preservation, with focus on physical aspect: from impending death.

② salvation, with focus on transcendent aspects.

It is the context that determines whether definition ① or ② is correct. Of course we know that the Apostle Paul was a believer, and like all believers, he had eternal security, so he didn't need people to pray for that.

Jesus Christ controls history and neither our future nor our happiness depends on what others do; our future depends upon Christ and our happiness depends on whether we trust and depend on Him.

Philippians 1:19 For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

We also know from verse 22 and 25 that Paul was referring to personal deliverance from death.

Philip. 1:22 But if (1st class – since) I am to live on in the flesh,

Philippians 1:25 And convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all...

It seems that Colossians and Ephesians were written early during Paul's Roman imprisonment and Philipians toward the end. Paul was released and conducted a fourth missionary journey which was described in the Pastoral Letters (I Timothy, Titus and II Timothy) and then apparently was rearrested and beheaded before Nero's suicide in A.D. 68

Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philipians), vol. Volume 8, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 170.

There is an important spiritual principle in verse 19 that some may miss. **It establishes a direct connection between prayer and deliverance from danger or death.**

James 5:16 ... *The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*

We all need to be praying for each other but especially for our leaders. They are the ones targeted by demonic forces the most.

It is interesting to note how often Paul requested prayer from the churches (*Rom. 15:30, 2 Cor. 1:11, Eph. 6:18–19, Col. 4:3, 1 Thess. 5:25*).

and the provision of the **Spirit of Jesus Christ,**

This phrase is used only two times in Scripture: Here and in Acts 16:7. In both places, it refers to God the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is mentioned because it is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in this dispensation to glorify Jesus Christ.

There are a few other places where the Holy Spirit is described in terms of His relationship to Jesus:

Gal. 4:6 – God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son.

1 Peter 1:11 ... seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ

The primary ministry of the Holy Spirit is to bring humans into a place of conviction, to reveal to them the gospel found in the person and work of Jesus Christ, to baptize them into Christ, and then to form Christ in them. Ibid, p. 171

Here we see one of the most beautiful pictures of how maximum doctrine in the soul, and the reasoning power which is given to anyone who has divine viewpoint, brings into focus a perfect interpretation of contemporary history.

Consistent Positive Volition
produces **Maximum Doctrine** in the soul,
plus the **Filling of the Holy Spirit**
produces **Divine Viewpoint**
which enables an
Accurate Evaluation of Circumstances.

Con. Pos. Vol. / Max. Doc. + FHS / Div. View. / Acc. Eval. Cir.

CPV / MD + FHS / DV = AEC

because they follow this formula and because they ask God for wisdom and discernment. That's why they face the

future with confidence, courage, and optimistic expectation.

LESSON 26 (2-22-18)

*Philippians 1:20 according to **my earnest expectation** and **hope**, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.*

my earnest expectation – ΑΠΟΚΑΡΑΚΟΚΙΑ, ἀποκαραδοκία
n. asf; from; *kara* = head; *dokuo* = to watch, eager expectation, eagerly awaiting. This word is used only here and in *Rom. 8:19* - *For the **anxious longing** of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.*

It literally means to stretch the head away from the body to look; the head bent forward to see something; a looking away towards something. It is an intense term for concentration. It means to anticipate by watching very carefully for something

This is a very intense word. Examples:

- Leaning forward in a crowd to see a close finish of a horse race.
- The great anticipation of a mother getting a first glance her newborn baby.
- Being on your tiptoes with others to see your grade posted on a bulletin board.
- Looking with a laser-like focus to see a loved one you haven't seen in a long time as people exit the airplane.

- A sentry watching in the dark as he strains to see the enemy. He is waiting to see the slightest movement.

hope – ELPIS (ἐλπίς) n. asf; ① the looking forward to something with some reason for confidence respecting fulfillment, hope, expectation:

What was it that Paul so anxiously anticipated? Not being put to shame. Believers often anticipate receiving rewards and decorations but Paul was presenting the other option which is shame.

He was determined not to be a casualty in the angelic conflict by being distracted and failing in his mission. He was attentive to anything that would even slightly reflect poorly upon the Lord Jesus. He hated the idea that he would become an embarrassment to the Lord.

Paul was determined not to be dishonored in anything or by anyone. He vividly demonstrated that right actions are not determined by environment but by right thinking. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php 1:20.

Paul lived his life with a personal sense of destiny. He wasn't anxious and hopeful about temporary transient matters; his mind was on the end game.

He did not allow his circumstances to divert his attention away from his service to Jesus Christ. He did not fear being executed, but he did fear being ashamed because of his mental attitude sins and acts of disobedience.

Some think that it was easier for Paul to serve the Lord because he had the spiritual gift apostleship; he had more power to resist temptation than the ordinary believer.

They believe this lie in order to excuse their own mental attitude sins and acts of disobedience. Paul proved in Rom. 7:14-25, that he had to fight against his OSN every day just as every believer who desires to please the Lord. We can't even begin to obey the command in 1 Tim. 6:12 to "fight the good fight" if we continually surrender to the slightest pressure from our OSN. We must fight hard every day against temptations to sin.

Sometimes believers fall for the phony baloney stunt where they yield to temptation because they plan to immediately Rebound (confess their sin) afterward, thinking that will pacify God. Does anyone really believe they can con God? They distort God's gracious method of regaining fellowship with Him into a way of avoiding accountability for our sins.

Rebound is not a trick and this gimmick does not work. Those who try it are still in carnality and they certainly have not humbled themselves which is what Rebound is all about. All they have done is to try to avoid accountability. God cannot have fellowship with an arrogant believer and it takes humility to acknowledge our sins.

It is not reciting the words to God, "I have done such in such..." that brings forgiveness, it is the respectful and humble attitude that initiates confession that brings forgiveness.

The way to victory over temptation is to keep a vibrant ongoing relationship with the Lord and by asking Him to give us the power and strength we need to resist temptation.

Philippians 1:20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not **be put to shame** in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

be put to shame EISCHUNO, (αἰσχύνομω), v. fpi, ② to experience shame, be put to shame, be disgraced

No one likes to be embarrassed or shamed. It's one thing to be put to shame in our experiences here on earth, but it is something else altogether to experience shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ (JSC).

LESSON 27 (2-27-18)

Do you remember the formula we studied last week for living the abundant life and correctly evaluating circumstances? <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#inbox/161d8e1971b3cc67?projector=1>

The Judgement Seat of Christ

1. The JSC is the place for evaluating the life of all Church Age believers to determine if they qualify for rewards, decorations, special privileges and opportunities.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For **we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ**, that each one may be

*recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad (worthless). Romans 14:10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God.***

*1 Timothy 6:18-19 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19) **storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future**, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.*

2. The Judgement Seat of Christ (often called Bema) takes place after the Rapture in heaven, during the time of the Tribulation here on earth.
3. The JSC is the **evaluation of believers** whereas the Great White Throne **judgment is for unbelievers** (Rev. 20:11-15)
4. Believer's divine good (good works done under the filling of the H.S.) will be rewarded and human good (good works done by unbelievers and believers in carnality) will be burned (1 Cor. 3:10-15).
5. Believers can trust God implicitly to reward the divine good they produce through them.

*Hebrews 6:10 For **God is not unjust so as to forget your work (divine good)** and the (agape) love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.*

LESSON 28 (3-1-18)

6. Believers are encouraged to persevere in learning and applying B.D. so that they will receive their rewards.

Hebrews 10:35-36 *Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36) For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, **you may receive what was promised** (rewards).*

1 Corinthians 1:7-8 *so that you are not lacking in any gift, **awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,** 8) who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Timothy 1:12 *For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and **I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.***

1 Timothy 6:12-14 *Fight the good fight of faith... lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13) I urge you in the sight of God... 14) that **you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,***

LESSON 29 (3-6-18)

7. Believers who are good and faithful servants will receive their inheritance at the JSC, those who are not, will not.

Romans 8:16-17 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17) and if children,*

heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer* v. pai, *with Him in order that we may also be glorified* v. aps *with Him.

All believers are heirs of God because we are His children.

We all will receive a resurrection body and we all will inherit heaven in the sense that it will be our habitation, we will reside there. (*Gal. 3:29, 4:7, Eph. 3:6, Heb. 1:14*)

However, only believers who spiritually mature, who grow in grace and knowledge, who are good and faithful servants, will receive their full inheritance which includes rewards, crowns, decorations, and special opportunities at the JSC. (*Matt. 19:29, Acts 20:32, 1 Cor. 15:2, Rom. 2:7, Col. 3:22-24, 1 Tim. 4:16, 2 Tim. 2:12, Heb. 6:10-12, 1 Pet. 3:9, Rev. 21:7*)

***Colossians 3:23-24 Whatever you do, do your work* v. pmm, *heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; 24) knowing* v. ra, *that from the Lord you will receive* v. fmi, *the reward of the inheritance.* It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.**

Hebrews 6:11-12 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12) that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Read: 1 Peter 1:3-9

LESSON 30 (3-8-18)

8. There will definitely be shame and loss for those who squandered the grace, opportunities, and time that God gave them to serve Him on earth.

1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, *he shall suffer loss* (of rewards); but he himself shall be saved, *yet so as through fire.*

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and *not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.*

2 John 1:8 Watch yourselves, that *you might not lose what we have accomplished*, but that you may receive a full reward.

Philippians 2:14-16 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15) that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16) *holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*

Hebrews 10:35-37 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence (in God and His Word), which has a great reward. 36) *For you have need of endurance* (Don't get distracted), so that when you have done the will of God (spiritually matured) *you may receive what was promised.* 37) For

*yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay. 38) But My righteous one shall live by faith; **And if^{3rd} he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him** (litotes). 39) But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.*

Whether we are faithful or not, has no effect on our eternal salvation, but it certainly affects our inheritance, our status, and the opportunities available to us in heaven.

2 Timothy 2:11-13 It is a trustworthy statement: For if (since) we died with Him (RPT), we shall also live with Him (CPT); 12) If (since) we endure (suffering), we shall also reign with Him; **If (since) we deny Him, He also will deny us (rewards); 13) If (since) we are faithless, He remains faithful (Christ's faithfulness does not depend on our faithfulness. 1 Thess. 5:24); for He cannot deny Himself (His promises Matt. 24:35, Titus 1:2).**

9. Believers can be confident, having no fear of what will happen at the JSC.

1 John 4:16-17 And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. 17) By this, love is perfected with us, that **we may have confidence in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.**

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7) I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8) in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, **will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.**

1 Corinthians 1:6-8 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, 7) so that you come short in no gift, **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.****

LESSON 31 (3-15-18)

Philippians 1:20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that **with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.**

“with all BOLDNESS” PARRESIA (παρρησία), n. dsf;
‘Openness’ to the public, confidence, boldness, openness, it is used 31 times in the N.T.

When one speaks with boldness, he is not hesitant to say what is on his mind. It means to look at someone right in their eyes and tell them confidently and clearly what you want them to know without holding anything back because you are afraid of how they will take it. What they think about you means nothing; what they think about Jesus Christ means everything.

Paul said in **Romans 1:16** - ***I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...***

It is shameful that so many Christians are ashamed to give the gospel or even to talk about Jesus or the Bible these days. Those are the ones who will be ashamed at the JSC. We are commanded to be bold and not be ashamed to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 1:8 ***Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord,***

2 Timothy 1:12 ***For this reason [Paul was appointed as an apostle] also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.***

Isaiah 51:7 ***Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, A people in whose heart is My law; Do not fear the reproach of man, Neither be dismayed at their insults.***

Mark 8:38 ***For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."***

What should our attitude be when we are insulted by those to whom we witness and/or minister?

1 Peter 4:14 ***If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.***

Acts 5:40-41 *And they took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and then released them. 41) So they went on their way from the presence of the Council rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.*

BOLDNESS *Boldness denotes two things in the NT. First, boldness describes the courageous manner of those who preach the gospel (Acts 2:29; 4:13, 31; 9:27–29; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31; 1 Thess. 2:2; Phil. 1:20).*

The word translated as “boldness” in these texts (parresia) was used of the free citizen of a city-state who could say anything in the public assembly. In the NT it denotes the moral freedom to speak the truth publicly. Second, boldness describes the confidence with which Christians can now approach God because of the redeeming work of Christ (2 Cor. 3:4–6, 12; Heb 10:19; 1 John 2:28; 4:17). Chad Brand et al., eds., “Boldness,” Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 230.

We should be praying for one another to look for opportunities to boldly give the gospel.

Ephesians 6:19-20 *and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with BOLDNESS the mystery of the gospel, 20) for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may SPEAK BOLDLY, as I ought to speak.*

Acts 4:29 *And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence (Grk. parresia),*

Psalm 27:14 Wait for the LORD; Be strong, and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD.

We should adopt the attitude of Joab, David's commanding general when we find ourselves between a rock and a hard place.

David's commanding general, Joab, "saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear." Then he and his brother, Abishai, vowed to support each other and to leave the results in the hands of God. Joab reinforced Abishai with these courageous words:

2 Sam. 10:9, 11–12 If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me, but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. Be of good courage, and let us play the man for our people, and for the cities of our God; and **may the Lord do what seems good to him.** G.

Curtis Jones, 1000 Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching (1986), 81.

"Analyzing certain British victories over the French, the Duke of Wellington said: "British soldiers are not braver than French soldiers, they are only brave five minutes longer." Ibid 84

"When Luther walked into the presence of Charles V and other powerful persons at the Diet of Worms, April 1521, to answer charges of heresy and to hear a possible death sentence, an old knight was heard to say: "Little monk, I like the step you take but neither I nor any of our battle comrades would take it."

Consider that little Augustinian monk who shocked Christendom by his defiance of papal authority and who, at last, stood trial for his life. During a high moment in the trial, Martin Luther exclaimed:

I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other—my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me.

Amen.” Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand, A Life of Martin Luther*, (New York, Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950), p. 185.

It is possible that believers in our country, in our lifetime, will be in danger of being arrested and incarcerated for witnessing to unbelievers. What will you do?

Acts 5:28-29 *We [those in power] gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." 29) But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men.*

LESSON 32 (3-20-18)

Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body,

Paul had a routine, a habit of always putting Christ first in his thinking, in his decisions, and in his actions.

be exalted – **MEGALUNO**, (μεγαλύνω) v. fpi, to cause to be held in greater esteem through praise or deeds, exalt, glorify, magnify, speak highly of.

The indicative mood of the verb “*be exalted*”, indicates that Paul was making a statement of fact. Was he being presumptuous? Was he being conceited or arrogant? No. Even though he had committed his life to this cause, he was not relying solely on himself to exalt Christ, but depended on the provision and power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish his goal. It is clear that Paul

depended on the prayers of his friends and the power of the Holy Spirit for his deliverance.

When Christ is “magnified/exhaulted,” He is brought into larger, clearer focus (understanding) on the part of others. They better understand Him, His ways, and His will. The Lord is then better loved, obeyed, served, and glorified. King James Version Study Bible ., electronic ed (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 1:20.

Does Christ need to be magnified? After all, how can a mere human being ever magnify the Son of God? Well, the stars are much bigger than the telescope, and yet the telescope magnifies them and brings them closer. The believer’s body is to be a telescope that brings Jesus Christ close to people. To the average person, Christ is a misty figure in history who lived centuries ago. But as the unsaved watch the believer go through a crisis, they can see Jesus magnified and brought so much closer. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 , 1996, 69.

whether by life or by death. - Paul was awaiting trial and knew that Caesar’s verdict may result in his execution. He knew the outcome was in the Lord hands, and that he had no control over what would happen.

However, he did have control, with the Holy Spirit’s help, to exalt Christ by continuing his life of service, or by exalting Him by boldly facing death, proclaiming God’s love and grace to the end. This was Paul’s purpose in life and it should be ours as well.

LESSON 33 (3-22-18)

The importance of knowing our purpose and being committed to it cannot be overstated. If we allow ourselves to forget why we are here, life becomes a meaningless rat race. Enthusiasm turns into

depression, confidence turns into doubt, contentment turns into restlessness, fulfilment turns into frustration, and hope turns into despair.

This has happened to millions of believers who don't know what to do with their lives after they are saved. They try to live the Christian way of life by following the Ten Commandments. Being moral is commendable but it is not the way Christians fulfil their mission in the Church Age. We have a much higher calling than being moral, unbelievers can be moral.

We have a spiritual calling that includes unique spiritual assets which are given only to Church Age believers. These spiritual assets are like our God given rights in the sense that one must know what they are and use them if they are to be of any benefit.

Most believers know little, if anything, about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, how to regain fellowship with God by going from carnality to spirituality, spiritual gifts, escrow blessings, common grace, efficacious grace, logistical grace, super grace, surpassing grace, their royal priesthood, and their royal ambassadorship.

People who have no relationship with Jesus Christ find it very difficult to cope with the pain and suffering of life. Their lives seem to lack meaning and purpose. Over time, whatever bit of hope they may have had vanishes and they are left with only despair.

No doubt, this is a major reason why there are about 45,000 suicides committed a year in the US. More than 60 percent of people in this country who die from guns, die by suicide. Suicide

is the second-most common cause of death for Americans between 15 and 34 (born between 1984 – 2013), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/09/upshot/gun-deaths-are-mostly-suicides.html>

Philip. 1:21 *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

This verse is a concise summarization of the previous verse. It is probably the most concise description of the viewpoint of a mature believer.

Most people would say to live is gain and to die is Christ, but Paul reversed these.

Paul, like all of us, had two phases to his life, the living part and the dying part. Paul knew that his death may be imminent even though he was confident that he was going to be released from prison.

LESSON 34 (3-29-18)

He addressed the living part first. What does “*to live is Christ*” mean? To Paul it meant that his number one priority in life was to be a good and faithful servant to Jesus Christ.

The most important thing in Paul’s life was to have the reality of Jesus Christ in his life. Is that true for your life too? Few believers can truthfully say what Paul says here.

Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.*

2 Corinthians 4:10-11 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11) For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

The more important Christ is in our life, the less important the things of this world become. Unfortunately, He is more willing to live his life through us than we are willing to allow him.

Galatians 6:14 But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Colossians 3:2-4 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3) For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4) When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

The command to set our minds on the things above might very well be the hardest of all the commands to obey. Christians must continually discipline themselves to focus on eternal realities instead of the temporal details of this earth which occupy our minds every day just so we can make it through the day. The amount of information that runs through our minds on an average day is astounding. Millions of believers go days, weeks, or even months without ever thinking about anything above.

Of course our number one priority is our relationship with God. To keep that number one we must eliminate:

1. Money distractions

2. People distractions
3. Marital distractions
4. Boyfriend/girlfriend distractions
5. Pleasure/entertainment distractions
6. School distractions
7. Work distractions
8. Health distractions
9. Children distractions
10. Personality conflict distractions

For me to live is _____. What would you put in place of "Christ"? Some might insert "my wife. I worship the ground she walks on." Others my say, "my children. I will sacrifice anything for them." Yet some may say, "my job. I love my work. I love my business."

Usually people don't like to think about death, especially those who are going through good times; death is the last thing they want to think about. But the good times never last, do they? They don't realize that the believer's death is a graduation to something better: it is a promotion to the heavenly presence of Jesus Christ and perfect fellowship with Him. The pain, suffering, and disappointments of earth are gone for good.

Revelation 14:12-13 Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus 13) And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on [henceforth]!" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

“Christ is gain in regard to living and dying.” *kai* [and] puts both on the same level.

Death was a gain because Paul would see the Lord, enjoy him, and no longer endure the difficulties he was called to bear on earth. For Paul, death was not a dark, bleak termination of the dynamics of life but the beginning of even a greater life.

Paul was just as content to magnify Christ by death because to him to die is gain; that is, even though living and serving God are good, death is a graduation to something better: it is a promotion to the heavenly presence of Christ and perfect fellowship with Him. King James Version Study Bible ., electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 1:21.

The Seven Types of Death **PP**

LESSON 35 (4-5-18)

One of the six blessings of Super Grace is “**Dying Grace**”.

SUPER GRACE BLESSINGS

1. Spiritual Blessings
2. Temporal Blessings
3. Blessings by Association
4. Historical blessings
5. Underserved Suffering
6. **Dying Grace Blessing**

1. By definition dying grace is the believer’s experience of physical death or dying under the provision of grace whereby the individual believer has blessing and happiness in death.

His death has a minimum or no pain, maximum happiness, and the soul is stimulated to the maximum in its last moments in the physical body.

2. Dying grace removes the fear of death — ***Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil...***” This describes the total lack of fear of dying with dying grace. “I will not fear” — dying grace is such a marvelous doctrine that it eliminates the idea of fear connected with death.

3. Dying grace, therefore, is a super-grace blessing:

Psalm 116:15 Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his godly ones [super-grace believers].”

A super-grace believer gets the best possible send-off into heaven.

4. Dying grace is the bridge that takes the SG believer from time to eternity.

5. The opposite of **Dying Grace** is the **Sin Unto Death**.

a. The SUD is a transition between time and eternity which includes pain, misery, horror, disaster, everything that is monstrous.

b. The sin unto death is maximum punitive discipline for the reversionistic believer.

c. The writer of Psalms 118 came close to the SUD but woke up before it was too late.

Psalm 118:17-18 I shall not die, but live, And tell of the works of the LORD. 18) The LORD has disciplined me severely, But He has not given me **over to death.**

1 John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a **sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.**

6. There are four causes for death for the C.A. believer:
 - 1) Your work on earth has come to an end; you have completed your mission.
 - 2) When dying accomplishes what could never be accomplished in living. A special type of death where God is glorified to the maximum. (ex. a martyr).
 - 3) Maximum discipline for reversionism (SUD)
1 Chron. 10:13.
 - 4) Suicide is generally committed by a reversionistic believer (one who has turned his back to God) based on a lack of trust and obedience to God. It is related to the SUD but the believer, rather than God, takes his life.
 - 5) Of course the sin unto death does not mean loss of salvation. We are to pray for those in reversionism that they might confess their sins before they die the SUD.

Some have been confused by passages in Ecclesiastes which appear to say that there is no life beyond the grave and that it is vanity to think otherwise.

Ecc. 3:18-21 and **9:3-6** These verses give the perspective of death from one who is expressing human viewpoint. It is from that point of view that all is vanity. Of course all is vanity when one rejects BD. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon gives the dismal view of life when one tries to find happiness and fulfillment apart from God.

LESSON 36 (4-10-18)

Philippians 1:22 *If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.*

Notice that Paul said, “*If I am to live **in the flesh***”. His choice wasn’t to live or die (cease to exist), but whether he would go on living in his physical body or go on to be with the Lord living in a temporary interim body.

The INTERIM BODY

Source: ICHTHYS.COM (ΙΧΘΥΣ) Robert Dean Luginbill, Ph.D. Between the earthly passing of those past and present and that blessed future time, all who now die in the Lord go to be with Him in heaven to await our corporate and corporal resurrection and return with Him at the Second Advent.

As our departed brethren wait with Him above, moreover, they are not "naked" but have been clothed with an interim body which, while not to be compared to the one of resurrection to come, is incomparably better than the one in which we presently reside.

[Tribulational saints will not be naked (disembodied), they will receive a white robe.]

Revelation 7:9-10 **After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations,**

tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10) and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

It is important to note that the interim body is in some sense at least a real body.

Those in this interim state are "not left naked" (2 Cor.5:3) but are given "white robes" to wear (Rev. 7:9).

We were made by God as body and spirit - the body came first and the spirit once breathed into the first man quickened him into a "living being" - exactly the same thing that all human beings since Adam and Eve have experienced at birth (see the link: The Creation of Man [from SR#3]). Even for those of us who die before the resurrection, there never will be a significant period of time when we are "disembodied spirits", incapable of appreciating and interacting with the Lord who bought us.

Should we pass on before the great day of Christ's return, in this interim state we shall abide, basking in the glory of our Lord and waiting for the day when we are clothed with our permanent abode on the day of His return to reclaim the direct ruler-ship of the world in which we shall all share.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4 For we [believers] know that if our earthly house [dwelling], this tent [temporary body], is destroyed [experiences death], we have a building [permanent body] from God, a house [resurrection body] not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2) For in this [tent] we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation

[resurrection body] **which is from heaven, 3) if indeed, having been clothed ~~clothed~~ **unclothed**** [departed from our physical body], **we shall not be found naked** [disembodied]. **4) For we who are in this tent** [believers still in their physical bodies] **groan, being burdened** [with aches, pains, and limitations of our physical bodies], **not because we want to be unclothed** [disembodied] **but further clothed** [with our resurrection body], **that mortality may be swallowed up by life.**

With the text understood correctly, this verse teaches the existence of the interim body because in it Paul assures us that even if we lose this present body we will "not be naked" before the Lord – which can only be true if our spirits have been given some sort of interim "tent" once we have put aside this "tent".

The 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek text used the Greek word *ekdusamenoī* (unclothed) rather than *endusamenoī* (clothed) in 2 Corinthians 5:3.

<https://ichthys.com/mail-Resurrection-Body-Eternal-Future.htm#interim%20body%20taught%20in%202nd%20Corinthians%205:3>

As to bodies, only Jesus Christ has been resurrected, and no one else will be until the entire Church is resurrected at His return. What happens in-between? There is no soul sleep, but how can a spirit function without a body? We know from our Lord's description of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31) in the underworld (respectively in paradise, to which the saints went before our Lord's ascension, and Torments, where unbelievers all still reside after death), that after death everyone is conscious, everyone is recognizable as who they were/are, everyone is apparently dressed and going about activities in much the same way as on earth, with the exception that we see

no material interaction the way we have now and will have in resurrection (eating and drinking, e.g.).

Thus it is clear both from the passage in Luke and also from the ones in Revelation which we are discussing that there is no such thing as a disembodied human spirit. Once God creates a spirit [soul] within a body at birth, that spirit [soul] will always have a home: a physical body at birth, a resurrection body at the Lord's return (for believers; unbelievers await the resurrection of judgment at the end of history), and in-between what we may term an "**interim body**" or "**covering**" which can be seen in all of these passages (n.b., this is also taught directly in 2 Cor.5:3, although that is not obvious from many English versions which are translating the wrong Greek text). That is the state described in Revelation chapters six and seven, an interim state with a "body" which is temporary and not tied to the material realm as the first body is, but also not as capable or permanent as the final "resurrection body" is.

"Body" is not used in scripture, but we see human forms in Luke, are told of "white sheets [robes]" in Revelation, and informed in 2 Cor.5:3 that even when we put off this body "we will not be found naked".

<https://answersingenesis.org/evolution/>

LESSON 37 (4-12-18)

In a bizarre situation, the prophet Samuel, who had died, was called on to speak to King Saul and a description of his interim body was given by the witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28:6-19).

On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah **appeared** (Greek *oraō* (ὀράω) to become visible, to see with the eyes.)

Matthew 17:3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them (Peter, James, & John), **talking with Him** (Jesus).

The point is, if they were spirit beings, they would not have been visible.

LESSON 38 (4-17-18)

Philippians 1:22 *If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.*

“fruitful labor” here refers to bringing more people to the Lord through witnessing and ministering to the needs of those who had already become believers. Both were needed.

Paul was not bragging about how many people he had brought to Jesus Christ because he knew that it is the Holy Spirit through common grace that persuades people to believe the gospel.

Philippians 1:23-24 *I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. 24) But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.*

Because Paul was a faithful obedient servant of Christ, his decision was to be between what was good and what was far better than good. Actually the decision was not up to Paul but to God. Don't we sometimes wonder what God has in store for us?

My desire – Paul expressed something that most people don't even think is possible. Death can be joyously anticipated, rather than a dreaded enemy to be avoided. This was possible for Paul and it is possible for us because of what happens when we believers die. We are relocated our heavenly home to be with Christ.

is to depart and be with Christ, - This should put to rest any doubts about what happens to a believer when he dies. However Paul's departure was unique:

depart – ANALUO, ἀναλύω, inf. aa; ANA = up or again, LUO = to loose, to depart or return, to depart to a place you have already been.

Paul was stoned to death in Lystra on his first missionary trip (Acts 14:19-20). 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 describes Paul's visit to the 3rd heaven. It makes sense that his desire is to go back to the 3rd heaven rather than to continue to be rejected and tortured here on earth in order to reach the lost.

2 Corinthians 5:8 ***Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.***

be away from – EKDOMEMO, ἐκδημέω, inf. aa; to leave, get away

at home ENDEMEO, ἐνδημέω, inf. aa, to be in a familiar place, to be at home

There is no reason for believers to wonder or be worried about what will happen to them after they die because we see in these two verses that when C.A. believers die, they go into the presence

of Jesus Christ. Evidently, He is the One who will welcome us into heaven.

The phrases *depart and be with Christ* and *be away from the body and at home with the Lord* are euphemisms for death. Paul knew that the physical death of a believer is the separation of his soul and spirit from his physical body into the arms of Jesus Christ.

There are other verses which indicate that physical death is a separation of the soul from the body.

- **Gen. 35:18 And it came about as her (Rachel's) soul was departing (for she died)...**
- **1 Kings 17:21-22 And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." 22) Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.**

One might wonder about disobedient and indifferent believers who die, how will our Lord Jesus Christ receive them? One can answer that question with another question. Can our gracious, forgiving, compassionate Lord, who gave Himself for all mankind, do less than the father of the prodigal son when he came home (**Luke 15:17-24**)?

Furthermore, whether a believer is carnal or spiritual has nothing to do with where he goes when his soul and spirit leave his body. Carnal believers will go to be at home with the Lord because:

- They received the irrevocable imputations of eternal life and God's Righteousness when they believed the gospel.
- Jesus Christ paid the price for their sins on the cross so it is impossible for their sins to keep them out of heaven.

LESSON 39 (4-19-18)

24) But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.

It was better for Paul to depart and be with the Lord but it wasn't better for the Philippians who would lose their spiritual leader. However, if it was up to Paul, he would forego what was better for him in order to do what was best for his fellow believers and for the future believers who would be born again because of his witnessing efforts.

Paul decided that Christ would have him remain, not only for the "furtherance of the Gospel" (Phil. 1:12) but also for the "furtherance and joy of [their] faith" (Phil. 1:25). Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 69.

Paul practiced what he preached, for in the next chapter note what he said:

Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4) do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

If this wasn't Paul's attitude, he would not have struggled with what he should do if the choice was his to make. He would not

hesitate to go home to be with the Lord and not give a thought about those believers who still needed his leadership and wisdom.

This demonstrates the importance of having a pastor/teacher who is doing his job of studying and teaching his flock. He must faithfully study and teach so that his flock can advance to spiritual maturity. How can a flock learn and grow if their pastor isn't learning and growing?

A local church not only needs a PT to teach the Word of God, they also need him and his authority to guide the flock in the right direction, to rebuke those who cause dissention, to encourage the flock, and protect it from false doctrine and predatory false teachers.

Paul also had to stay around to watch/assist Timothy in his advancement so that he could pass the baton on to him to lead the church.

Philippians 1:25-26 And convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, 26) so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.

This verse underscores the fact that as long as one continues to live and breathe, God still has a purpose for him or her. It is purpose and/or duty that gives meaning to our lives.

Paul was confident that his trial would not result in his execution because his mission with the Philippians was not yet at a point where they could survive his absence. He did not come to this conclusion because he was arrogant, but because he knew how

much God loved the Philippians and He would not stymie their SPIRITUAL PROGRESS advance nor leave them unprotected.

PROGRESS – Paul brought up this issue in his first letter to Timothy:

(NAS) **1 Timothy 4:15 Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your PROGRESS may be evident to all.**

(NKJV) **1 Timothy 4:15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your PROGRESS may be evident to all.**

(ESV) **1 Timothy 4:15 Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your PROGRESS.**

(NIV) **1 Timothy 4:15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your PROGRESS.**

In all of these translations, the verbs “*Take pains*”, “*be absorbed*”, “*Meditate on*”, “*give yourself entirely*”, “*Practice*”, “*devote yourself*”, “*Be diligent*”, and “*give yourself wholly*”, are all present, active, imperatives.

And what was the purpose for Paul’s commands to Timothy? So that everyone would notice Timothy’s spiritual progress. Why was that so important? His obedience would result not only in his obvious spiritual progress, but his flock’s obvious spiritual progress as well.

What was it that Timothy specifically had to do in order to obey these commands? What were the things he was being urged to do? We find the answer in verse 13:

1 Timothy 4:13 Until I come, give attention to (v.pam)
the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching
[Bible Doctrine].

public reading – ANAGNOSIS, ἀνάγνωσις, ANA = again, GNOSIS = to know, the process of reading scripture publically after studying it privately over and over again.

Anagnosis is a compound word, which means to know over and over again. This comes to mean to read, to study, to tear apart and to come an understanding of the Word - to exegete the Word. R.B. Thieme notes on Philippians

exhortation - act of emboldening another in belief or course of action, to encourage, This is done primarily by the PT through teaching but also personally.

teaching - the act of teaching, teaching, giving instruction

Every pastor-teacher should spend a great deal of time in all three of these facets of their job. In other words, the job of a pastor is to STUDY and TEACH.

So Paul believed that he needed to remain on earth for a while to continue to mentor Timothy for the sake of those who were depending on him to make spiritual progress.

Another reason Paul was going to stick around was for their **joy in the faith**. What is “joy in the faith”? First we need to see the definition of “joy”.

JOY – 1. a: the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires : DELIGHT

b: the expression or exhibition of such emotion: GAIETY

2. state of happiness or felicity: BLISS

3. source or cause of delight

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

JOY – CHARA, χαρά, n. asf; ① the experience of gladness, ② a person or thing that causes joy, joy, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1077.

LESSON 40 (4-24-18)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVyN2XualGs&feature=youtu.be>

Both “*progress*” and “*joy*” are modified by “*in the faith*”. (vs. 25) That means that both *progress* and *joy* are linked to *the faith*, ie. Bible doctrine. Notice that *spiritual progress* comes before *joy in the faith*. As a believer spiritually matures, his joy escalates.

So do you have joy in the faith? One way to tell is by answering the following questions:

1. Do you look forward to coming to Bible class and church, or do you come out of duty?
2. Do you like to talk about the Lord and BD to others?
3. Do you talk about BD at home?
4. Do you read the Bible and study on your own?

Doctrine is available by live streaming, you-tube, and the CBC website. All the material there can be e-mailed to others.

Paul wanted to stay and minister to the Philippians even though he would rather have gone on to be with the lord because he wanted them to experience *joy in the faith* which comes with spiritual progress/growth. And that, comes from consistently learning the Word from a prepared pastor-teacher.

As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are either growing spiritually or you are retrogressing, falling back into old comfortable habits and attitudes which guarantee misery rather than joy.

Reasons why believers do not growing spiritually is the same as saying Reasons why believers to not have *joy in the faith*:

1. **Self-reliance**:

- I can provide stability, tranquility and contentment for myself and if I don't do it, nobody else will, including God.
- Self-reliance is an admirable attribute but not when God is left out of the picture. Then it becomes arrogance.

2. **Self-absorption**:

- Focusing on one's self; everything is always about me; the attitude of I'm number one, no consideration for others.
- This is an attitude characterized by self-centeredness and selfishness. Rejecting God and His Word, happiness, contentment, and joy are pursued through satisfying the various forms of lust.
- Self-absorbed people are easily offended yet they have no toleration for others. They despise the doctrine of

impersonal / unconditional love.

- We should be passionate about helping others find the joy that we experience through our relationship with the Lord. That is what brings true joy.

3. **Self-deception:**

- I've been attending church for years so I already know enough doctrine.
- I know more about the Bible than most people.
- I don't need to know everything about the Bible because I know I'm going to heaven and that's all I need to know.
- I can't afford to get on the internet. I don't have a computer so I can't access doctrinal websites.
 - * For those who do not have access to the internet, DVDs, CDs, MP3s, and booklets are sent upon request or by mail.

Also, notes can be sent out by e-mail upon request. Audios can be loaded onto mobile devices (Sony Walkman, CD players, thumb drives) to be played while driving, going for a walk, or working around the house.

- I can't find a church that actually teaches the Bible. *
- I'm too busy, I don't have enough time.
- I'm not smart enough. I didn't go to college and I just can't remember things.

LESSON 41 (4-26-18)

*Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this thy grace must give.*

*If life be long, I will be glad,
That I may long obey;
If short—then why should I be sad
To soar to endless day?*

J.J. Packer, Knowing God, InterVarsity Press, p. 27

(NASV) ***Philippians 1:26 so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.***

(NKJV) ***Philippians 1:26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.***

(NIV) ***Philippians 1:26 so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.***

(NET) ***Philippians 1:26 so that what you can be proud of may increase because of me in Christ Jesus, when I come back to you.***

(NJB) ***Philippians 1:26 “so that my return to be among you may increase to overflowing your pride in Jesus Christ on my account”***

(ESV) ***Philippians 1:26 so that *in* (through) me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.***

The glory of Christ would be achieved best by Paul's remaining on earth to continue his ministry. As the Philippians matured in their understanding of Christ, their joy in the faith would deepen and would be encouraged. Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, vol. 32, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 86 & 88

As a result of Paul's returning to them, the Philippians' pride and boasting of Jesus Christ could increase because He allowed Paul to live and worked through Paul for their progress, and they would rejoice to be with the Apostle Paul again.

Can you not imagine how they would throw their arms around him and kiss him, and praise the Lord with great joy when he would arrive at Philippi? William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1963.

This is yet another verse that emphasizes the importance of learning BD under your right pastor-teacher. Paul understood this principle and it is why he was willing to stay on earth with all of its hardships and disappointments, rather than going home to be with the Lord which is what he really wanted.

Philippians 1:27-28 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28) in no way alarmed by your opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.

Verses 27–30 form one extended sentence in the Greek text. From these verses to chapter 2 verse 4, Paul strongly urges the Philippians to behave like the royal ambassador they are.

conduct yourselves – POLITEUOMAI, πολιτεύομαι, v. pmm, present tense, middle voice, imperative mood

- ① to be a citizen, have one's citizenship/home
- ② to administrate a corporate body, rule
- ③ **to conduct one's life, live, lead one's life.**

William Arndt et al., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 846.

The ESV Bible translates this word as, “*let your manner of life*”, and the LEB – “*lead your life in a manner*”.

This is a political word which would mean much to the Philippian believers. Literally it means “live as citizens.” Because Philippi was a Roman colony, the Christian inhabitants of the city would appreciate Paul's use of this verb.

Paul is commanding the Philippians to discharge their obligations as citizens or to conduct their lives as citizens, not of Philippi, not of Rome, but of heaven. In *Phil. 3:20* Paul told them that they are “citizens of heaven”.

The term suggests relationship to the polis (“city-state”), that is, the new community of Christ whose origin is heaven. Thus Paul wrote, “Our commonwealth [citizenship NIV] is in heaven”. Paul stated that this citizenship currently exists; it is not only a future hope. As such the term expresses a fundamental orientation and identity of believers.

Roy B. Zuck, A Biblical Theology of the New Testament, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 326.

So he is essentially telling them that since they are citizens of heaven, they should act like it. Of course this is also true for us as well.

Ephesians 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...

Colossians 1:10 so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 ...we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you... 12) so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God ...

Paul's trust in God and gives credibility to his exhortation to this church to suffer and live in a way that rests in God's sovereign work, honors Him, and reflects the heavenly citizenship believers possess (1:27–30). Ibid, p.320.

Despite being in prison after a worldwide ministry, Paul was confident of God's control whether for himself or the Philippians. In 1:6, Paul expressed his confidence that God would finish what he started in Philippi. In fact, Paul regarded such confidence as fully appropriate in light of their participation with him in his own tribulations (1:7–8) and because of his love for them. For Paul, this participation exemplifies the love that the church possesses. It is to abound in conjunction with knowledge, so that righteousness results and God is praised for His great transforming work.

Ibid

Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ;

What does “*the gospel of Christ*” mean here? Believers are to have integrity and live consistent with what they believe. Does the gospel fit my life style? There are some things which may not be sinful or evil but they do not reflect positively on the gospel. We should conduct our lives in such a way that others, especially unbelievers and carnal believers, see Christ in us.

He indwells every believer but that has to do with our positional standing before God, not our experiential standing. It is our experiential standing that others see and which Paul addresses here.

1 Thessalonians 2:12 so that you may *walk in a manner worthy of the God...*

1 Thessalonians 4:1 We instructed you how to *live in order to please God...*

2 Peter 3:14 be diligent to be found by Him (living) *in peace, spotless and blameless,*

The point Paul was making was that our conduct on earth should reveal our heavenly citizenship.

LESSON 42 (5-1-18)

Some people think that every time the word “gospel” is used, it refers to the good news of Christ’s atoning work on the cross for all mankind. Of course it is used that way many times, but not always.

In the New Testament “the message of salvation through Jesus Christ” can hardly be held to a limited scope. And in light of other uses of paradidōmi [walk] in such contexts, it is hardly

correct to limit “faith” to the gospel narrowly conceived; what was passed on by the apostles was the wide range of Christian doctrine and ethics.

so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear (v. pas) ***of you that you are standing firm,***

What can we surmise when children behave themselves even when their parents are not around to observe their behavior?

- They are not misbehaving because they are afraid of getting punished, but because they have actually learned from the training they received
- They have internalized what they have been taught and it has become part of the norms and standards in their heart (kardia).
- They no longer need an authority figure over them to administer discipline because they are exercising self-discipline.
- They have reached a level of maturity where they can be given more freedom and take on more responsibility.

All this is true for the believer who is learning and applying Bible doctrine. They are not obedient because they are afraid if they misbehave they will receive divine discipline, but because they are convinced that doing things God’s way is the best way. It is the only way to have contentment, happiness, joy, security, peace of mind, etc.

This verse is the opposite of the old adage, “*While the cat’s away the mice will play.*” There is another old saying, “*The real you is revealed by how you behave when no one is looking.*”

I may hear (v. pas) *of you that you are standing firm,*

standing firm – STEKO, **στήκω**, v. pai, ② to be firmly committed in conviction or belief, stand firm, be steadfast in something.

Standing firm is not the same as being stubborn. Refusing to be open minded or unwilling to change is simply being obstinate and pigheaded. It is an unjustified and unreasonable refusal to change one’s mind.

Standing firm, as presented here, is a justified and reasonable stance based on the absolute validity of God’s Word. We live in a post-modern world that rejects even the idea of something being absolute. Everything is relative these days.

Most Christians don’t stand firm on the Word of God because they hardly know anything about it.

Sometimes they may be adamant about what someone says about the Bible, but they have no ability to back up their claim. Standing fast not only requires a believer to know what he believes, but also why he believes it. We are to know the Scriptures and be able to use systematic theology well enough to support our claims.

This same Greek word “*steko*” is found again in ***Phil. 4:1, “... in this way, stand fast*** (v. pam) ***in the Lord.***” In that context, Paul was addressing division caused by Euodia and Syntyche. No

ministry can go forward and flourish without stability in relationships.

LESSON 43 (5-3-18) <https://www.prageru.com/videos/control-words-control-culture>

There are three specific ways that Paul encouraged the Philippians to **stand firm**. The first one is to stand firm *in one spirit*. What does that mean?

They were not to stand alone in isolation but **together** in oneness of spirit and mind, **united** for a common goal.

John 17:21 "that **they all may be one**, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You;

Acts 4:32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of **one heart and one soul**; [and one in spirit]

Romans 12:5 So we, being many, **are one body in Christ**, and individually members of one another.

Ephesians 4:1-3 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2) with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love, 3) endeavoring to **keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**.

Many Christians act as if they have no mutual relationship or responsibilities within the body of Christ. But as a colony of heaven, we do... It is our "spirit" which gives us a disposition toward unity. The church of Jesus Christ will be weakened by internal rivalries and discontent. Grace Notes, Lesson 3

Discord and disharmony among believers may be common but it can sound the death knell to a church. It happens in every kind of

church, including Bible churches. Believers may have been taught the doctrine of unconditional/impersonal love, the importance of toleration, patience, and forgiveness, but if those are not practiced, the pain and suffering can still be devastating.

Paul understood that what God asks believers to do in spiritual growth and character, He enables them to accomplish. Failure comes because one does not draw on what God makes available. Thus they must hold fast to the Word of life (Phil. 2:16), since that will enable them to be blameless and to function as lights in the world (Phil. 2:15). Roy B. Zuck, A Biblical Theology of the New Testament, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 320.

*As Paul expressed his affection for the Philippians and his confidence that God would complete His work in them, he also noted that purity and blamelessness of character come through being filled with the fruit of righteousness. **Love, knowledge, and discernment** produce such fruit, but the basis for being able to love unconditionally with knowledge and discernment is understanding the work and example of Christ (Phil. 2:5–11). Ibid p.321*

with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

one mind – PSUCHE, ψυχή, n. dsf; ② seat and center of the inner human life in its many and varied aspects, **soul**.

This phrase focuses on the importance of the church to be like minded. We all have the same Bible, the same spiritual dynamics available to us, the same struggles, and we can't afford to be stymied with petty dissensions. A church that can't agree about the direction the church should go and is divided on

doctrinal issues is a church that is divided against itself and it cannot stand

Trouble develops when a church is not of one mind. It becomes neutralized spiritually and disagreements and dissension arise. Humility and toleration disappears and instead of striving together for the faith, they strive against each other in order to get their own way.

The church was to look and act as though she possessed but “one mind” and one way of thinking. To achieve this the assembly must put away their many petty grievances, jealousies, and disunity. King James Version Study Bible ., electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 1:27.

Believers who are part of a schism are fighting against the gospel. Notice that believers who are of one mind (like minded) do not struggle alone, they struggle together. They share each other's happiness and pain. They care for each other and **they help each other** as they struggle together to be good and faithful servants to Jesus Christ. All of us need the help and encouragement of a friend that is working together with us towards a common goal.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. 10) For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.

striving together for the faith of the gospel;

striving together – SUNATHELO συναθλέω, part. pa; to contend/struggle along with, someone. Sun = together, Athleo =

strive; to strive together. This word is used only two times in the NT and both appear in Philipians. The other time it is in Phil. 4:3.

Philippians 4:3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who *have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel,*

We are all in the same battle, the angelic conflict, and we have a common foe, and we all strive for the same purpose which is to keep the faith of the gospel.

"Striving together" is drawn from the Roman amphitheater. It was used for captives in combat fighting for their lives. This would be called a strategic front in war. The believer is in combat against divisive forces. Keeping the unity of the church is a gladiatorial struggle. It means the life or death of the church. Grace Notes, Lesson 3

Jude 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that *you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*

Also other New Testament uses of "faith" in the objective sense are better taken with a broad meaning (Acts 6:7; Gal. 1:23; Phil. 1:27; 1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9; 4:1, 6; 5:8; 6:10, 11, 21; 2 Tim. 4:7; Titus 1:13). In the absence of limiting qualifiers in this context, "the faith" must be understood as the Christian faith, the body of truth Christians believe, the teaching passed on by the apostles as normative for Christian belief. The word has the same sense in Jude 20. Ibid p. 459

Jude 1:20 But you, beloved, *building yourselves up on your most holy faith* (that which is believed, body of doctrine), *praying in the Holy Spirit;*

striving together for the faith of the gospel;

“*faith of the gospel*” does not refer to the saving faith we had when we believed the gospel, but to that which is believed and applied **after** we are eternally saved.

We are commanded to contend for the faith:

1 Timothy 6:12 *Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

LESSON 44 (5-8-18)

Biblical examples of believers contending for the faith:

Acts 6:9-10 *But some men from what was called the Synagogue... rose up and argued with Stephen. 10) But they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.*

Acts 9:22 *But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.*

Acts 17:2-3 *And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3) explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead,*

Acts 18:4 *And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.*

Acts 18:28 for he *powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.*

1 Thessalonians 2:2 as you know, *we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.*

2 Timothy 4:7 I have *fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;*

Galatians 2:5 But *we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.*

LESSON 45 (5-10-18)

28) in no way alarmed by your opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.

alarmed – PTURO πτύρω, part. pa; to let oneself be intimidated, be frightened, terrified. The KJV says, “*and not in any way terrified...*”

The word translated alarmed/terrified is a strong term that is used of the terror of a frightened bird or a panicked horse.

Believers are defeated more by fear than anything else. Something as trivial as the fear of being embarrassed is enough to neutralize many believers.

1 Peter 4:16 *if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.*

2 Timothy 1:7-8 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. 8) So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God,

In order to be successful in whatever we do, we must be able to think. When fear takes over, emotions take control and we are no longer able to think clearly.

Bible doctrine circulating in our stream of consciousness enables us to continue to think even in stressful situations. Doctrine must be engrained in us to be strong enough to keep our emotions in check.

Isaiah 51:7 Hear me, you who know what is right, you people who have my law in your hearts: Do not fear the reproach of men or be terrified by their insults.

Isaiah 51:12 I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass,

1 Thessalonians 2:2 We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition.

Hebrews 13:6 So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

in no way alarmed by your opponents

opponents – ΑΝΤΙΚΕΙΜΑΙ, ἀντίκειμαι, part. pp; be opposed to someone, be in opposition to

This appears to be a noun in the English but it is a participle. Remember a participle is considered as a verbal. It has aspects of both a verb and a noun. The complete morphology of *antikeimai* – present passive participle, plural, genitive, masculine. **PP**

‘Adversary’ is the literal meaning of the Hebrew word *satan*, and the idea eventually developed that Satan was the adversary.

1 Timothy 5:14-15 Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach; 15) for some have already turned aside to follow Satan.

This doesn't mean that Satan is in view in our verse. It is not referring to him directly, *opponents* is plural. But he is always behind those who oppose the Word of God.

We might as well get use to the fact that wherever we go, there will be people who are opposed to us because we are children of God. We all like to be in harmony with all people but that will not be possible if you talk about Jesus Christ and the gospel.

Christians' Reputation at a Restaurant, Philippians 1:27

*In his book *Just Walk Across the Room*, Bill Hybels shares a portion of a letter he received from a worker at a restaurant that said: “Please let me convey a few things about Christians from a non-Christian waiter’s perspective.... It’s quite well-known among waitstaff that when tables of Christians get seated in your section, it will be anything but a positive*

experience. Christians are demanding. They tend to stay at tables for a long time. They often try to push literature. And they rarely tip generously.”

As I read this quote, I thought about the song we used to sing around the campfire when I was a teenager—“They will know we are Christians by our love.”

—*Jim L. Wilson*

Jim L. Wilson, “Christians’ Reputation at a Restaurant,” in *300 Illustrations for Preachers*, ed. Elliot Ritzema (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015).

Sometimes people are offended when Christians share their faith. We shouldn’t be intimidated by them but we shouldn’t be insensitive either. If someone is upset change the subject and drop it. The fact that there is always a chance that our effort to witness will be rejected, that shouldn’t keep us from trying.

The Philippian believers faced more than just rejection, they could be flogged, imprisoned, or even executed but they remained dogmatic and unyielding in their stand for Christ. These kind of unbelievers are enemies of God but we are not to hate them.

Matthew 5:44 I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

We are not to treat people based on how they treat us, we are to treat people based on how Christ treats us. We treat them in grace because it is more important to obey our Lord than it is to satisfy our natural inclination to treat them the way they treat us.

which is a sign of destruction for them

Their courage would be proof of their confidence in God, the gospel, and the ultimate destruction of their foes. Courage and

confidence in the face of opponents causes them to have an element of doubt again about what they believe. It's a sign that they need to rethink their position.

If unbelievers can't shake you from your faith, it shows them that they are on the wrong road. The road that leads to eternal separation from God and the lake of fire.

Their lack of fear in the face of enemies and their united stand is clear evidence of the reality of their victorious endurance (salvation), which will be evident to all.

Their courageous attitude also signifies the temporal and eternal doom of their adversaries.

Those who oppose God's people are God's opponents and they will be destroyed. Those who choose to be your enemy, become God's enemy.

Exodus 23:22 But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

John Reumann, *Philippians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 33B, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 269.

but of salvation for you,

This salvation is one beyond their initial salvation in Christ. The first salvation was received by simple faith (Eph. 2:8–9), but this one comes by faithful endurance. It consists of Christ being magnified in one's life. This salvation must be "achieved by labor." This is the salvation which he wants them to "work out" in Phil. 2:12. They are to continue to bring honor to Christ

as they boldly respond to their trials. He is exhorting them to victorious endurance. Joseph C. Dillow, *The Reign of the Servant Kings: A Study of Eternity, Security and the Final Significance of Man* (Monument, CO: Paniym Group, 2011), 115–116.

and that [salvation/deliverance] ***too, from God.*** It is God who delivers us from the verbal or physical assaults of those who oppose believers who are not intimidated by them.

We are to be fearless when we engage others about the Word of God and the gospel. We are not to be concerned about being delivered from such situations because that lies in the hands of our Lord.

Philippians 1:29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

When people think of suffering, they don't think of something being granted but something imposed, something to be avoided, or something to be dreaded.

has been granted – CHARIZOMAI, χαρίζομαι, v. api; To give freely as a favor, benevolent. This word comes from the root word *charis* in the Greek meaning “grace”.

Matthew 5:11-12 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12) "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Luke 6:22-23 Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your

name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. 23) Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Suffering in itself is no privilege but suffering for Christ is. No one likes to suffer but the reason why one suffers makes all the difference.

Most of the time, people think about suffering as being related to discipline, and sometimes it is. But suffering for Christ is a sign of His favor. That in itself is enough to endure suffering but we are also rewarded for doing so.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

but also to suffer for His sake,

What does “*believing in Him*” and “*suffering for His sake*” have in common?

- 1) They are both a blessing
- 2) Both involve volition
- 3) God knew about both of these for us in eternity past

Philippians 1:30 experiencing (part. pa) *the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.*

Conflict – AGON, ἄγων, n. asm; a struggle against opposition, struggle, fight. We get our English word “agony” from this Greek word.

The Philippian believers were experiencing the same type of opposition as Paul was experiencing. This is normal for all

believers who are learning and applying God's word to their circumstances.

They had seen attacks on Paul earlier when he was among them in Philippi (*Acts 16:19-40*).

LESSON 46 (5-31-18)

CHAPTER TWO

Verses 1-18 We should strive to be servants like Christ.

*Philippians 2:1-2 Therefore **if** there is any **encouragement in Christ**, **if** there is any consolation of love, **if** there is any fellowship of the Spirit, **if** any affection and compassion, 2) make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.*

The “*Therefore*” carries forward the importance of unity between believers which is mentioned in chapter one (verse 27) with what is stated in chapter two. The Philippians’ biggest battle was not with their external circumstances, which were formidable, but with those internal attitudes that destroy unity.

If is used four times in the first verse and each time it is a first class conditional clause meaning that it is assumed to be true. The sense of this word in the English is understood by substituting the word “since”.

encourage, verb,

1: to inspire with courage, spirit, or hope : HEARTEN

2: to spur on : STIMULATE

3: to give help or patronage to : FOSTER

embolden means to fill with courage or strength of purpose. **encourage** suggests the raising of one's confidence especially by an external agency, **inspire** implies instilling life, energy, courage, or vigor into someone, **hearten** implies the lifting of dispiritedness or despondency by an infusion of fresh courage or zeal. **embolden** implies the giving of courage sufficient to overcome timidity or reluctance. Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

encouragement – PARAKALEO, παράκλησις, n. nsf; ① act of emboldening another in belief or course of action, encouragement, exhortation. The nominative case commonly refers to the subject of the verb.

This Greek word is translated “encouragement” five other times in the NASV. Two times in Acts, two times in Romans, and one time in Hebrews.

Acts 4:36 And Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means, ***Son of Encouragement),***

Acts 15:31 And when they had read it (letter accepting Gentiles), they rejoiced because of its ***encouragement.***

Romans 15:4-5 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the ***encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5) Now may the God who gives perseverance and ***encouragement***...***

Hebrews 6:18-19 ...we may have *strong encouragement*, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. 19) This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, *Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ,*

You may notice that there are two short words at the end of this phrase that have a BIG MEANING! One could safely say that there is more encouragement *in Christ* than everyone else put together. The only reason that one would not be encouraged *in Christ* is because they are not *in Christ* or they don't know Christ.

- 1) A person *in Christ* has eternal life; his eternal destiny is secure, his ticket to heaven is guaranteed. That is the greatest encouragement of all.
- 2) His future is completely secure because it is impossible for him to lose the eternal life he possesses. (Rom. 11:29)
- 3) He is a royal family member in the household of God, he receives **logistical grace** from God, he **possesses God's own righteousness**, he is a **royal ambassador**, a **royal priest**, he can **speak to God** any time he wants to, he has access to the **omnipotent power of God**, his life cannot be taken without God's approval, it is impossible for him to lose **God's love**, he will **not be tested beyond** what he can bear, he will receive a **resurrection body** someday, and if he loves God, He will work all things together for him for good. This is true for every single believer in Jesus Christ. Talk about encouragement!

It is difficult to overstate the importance of encouragement. Fear, worry, and dread probably defeats more believers than anything else. Encouragement infuses courage and zeal into a person who has none. It is like getting a super-duper I.V. of courage and every one of us needs one from time to time.

LESSON 47 (6-5-18)

if there is any consolation of love,

consolation – PARAMUTHION, παραμύθιον, n. nsn; pertains to that which offers encouragement, esp. as consolation, means of consolation, alleviation. This is a hapax legomena, it only occurs here.

Def. CONSOLATION – n. the act or an instance of consoling: the state of being consoled: COMFORT Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

Everyone wants and needs to be loved because being loved brings comfort and reassurance. It is also encouraging to know that others care about you and love you. However, knowing that God loves us is more comforting than anything else.

Paul says in effect, "if the tenderness of God's love has any power to touch you, listen to what I am about to say from verse two and following." Grace Notes

Unlike human love which is finite and fickle, God's love does not depend upon us, it depends upon His capacity to love us with an eternal love that never ends nor diminishes.

So there is great comfort knowing that God's love is unconditional and He will never stop loving us. We can have complete confidence and trust in His infinite, unchanging, undying love.

if there is any fellowship of the Spirit,

fellowship – κοινωνία, n. nsf; ① close association involving mutual interests and sharing, association, communion, fellowship, close relationship.

One might ask, when do I ever have any fellowship with the Holy Spirit? Whenever we are filled with the H.S., we fellowship with Him. Fellowship here has a sense of partnership. We partner with the H.S. to do God's will. When we fellowship with the H.S., then we are ready to fellowship with others.

The last sentence of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians used this phrase:

2 Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and *the fellowship of the Holy Spirit*, be with you all.

if any affection and compassion,

affection – SPLAGCHNON, σπλάγχνον, n. npn; ② as often in the ancient world, **inner body parts** served as referents for psychological aspects of the seat of the emotions. The heart, liver, lungs, and stomach are used to refer to emotions.

Colossians 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a *heart* of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

Splagchnon is translated *heart* – 5 times, *affection* – 4 times, *tender* – 1 time, and *intestines/bowels* – 1 time (this one refers to literal intestines, Acts 1:18).

This word has an element of tenderness and gentleness to it. It carries a sense of thoughtfulness and kindness.

compassion – OIKTIRMOS, οἰκτιρμός, n. npm; display of concern over another's misfortune, pity, mercy, compassion. The consolation and reassurance of those who are in distress, anxiety or need.

This word is translated *mercy* – 3 times and *compassion* – 2 times.

This is the way one expositor explains *Phil. 2:1*:

The Apostle here appeals to the Philippians, by all their deepest experiences as Christians and all their noblest impulses as men, to preserve peace and concord.

'If then your experiences in Christ appeal to you with any force if love exerts any persuasive power upon you, if your fellowship in the Spirit is a living reality, if you have any affectionate yearnings of heart, any tender feelings of

compassion, Joseph Barber Lightfoot, ed., Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd, 1913), 107.

A believer who has come to know Christ has the capacity and motivation to extend affection and mercy to others.

2) make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

make my joy complete – PLEROO, πληρόω, v. aam; ③ to bring to completion that which was already begun, complete, finish.

Notice that Paul wasn't commanding the Philippians to bring him joy or make him happy. He already had these, he wanted them to bring his joy to the maximum level.

His approach shifted from the blessings they shared in Christ to the Philippians' responsibility to Paul, their spiritual father. Paul's joy would be complete when they stood together in unity. His references to joy here suggested the anticipation of presenting a mature group of Christians to the Lord. Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, vol. 32, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 93.

Corresponding to the four realities in verse 1 – (**encouragement in Christ, consolation in love, fellowship in the Spirit, and affection and compassion**) there are six specific ways in which their spiritual unity would be realized.

Beginning in verse 2 and continuing through verse 4, six participles spell out and clearly define what it means to “live in harmony”:

(1) **having the same love** toward one believer as shown toward another, without partiality;

(2) **being of one accord**; that is, they are to be united in spirit;

(3) of **one mind**; that is, the whole church is to have the same values, and goals;

(4) let nothing be done through **strife** or **vainglory**, for **selfish ambition** or **conceit**;

(5) *let each **esteem other better than themselves**; that is, each is to regard his fellow Christian as more important than himself; and*

(6) ***look ... every man also on the things of others**; that is, each is to be just as concerned for the needs and problems of his brother as he is for his own affairs.* King James Version Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 2:2.

being of the same mind - There is great joy for pastors to witness their flock being **unanimous** in their thought and attitude. The first earmark of unity is to be "like-minded". Here, this term means to live in harmony, get along with one another.

To be of one mind is to let the mind of Christ be in you. That permits differences of expressions, differences in gifts, differences in methods of service, even differences in minor doctrines. We won't be beating each other on the head because we disagree on these things. If we have the mind of Christ, we will agree on the major tenets of the faith. J.

Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 300.

LESSON 48 (6-7-18)

I hear comments all the time from people here at CBC about how much they love this church and how wonderful the people are. Why do they say that?

1. The Word of God is taught here and that is what CBC is all about. We have serious Bible students who know the importance of consistently studying the Scriptures.
2. The reason why people love to come here is because we

have harmony and love towards one another. And the reason we do, is because of point number 1.

The congregation of CBC is also unanimous in our belief on major doctrines. Eternal salvation is secured by faith alone in Christ alone. We have the same mind in understanding that our point of reference with God is His grace. We call it grace orientation.

We all strive to have an attitude of being good servants to our Lord and we all strive to please Him in everything we think, say, and do. We all know that we are subordinate to Him and the Word of God.

In the last chapter of Philippians, a problem of disharmony occurs because there was a break in like-mindedness between two women.

(NKJV) **Philippians 4:2** *I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to **be of the same mind** in the Lord.*

Paul addressed the issue of like-mindedness in other epistles:

Romans 15:5-6 *Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to **be like-minded toward one another**, according to Christ Jesus, 6) that you may **with one mind** and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 1:10 *Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together **in the same mind** and in the same judgment.*

2 Corinthians 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, **be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.**

Romans 12:16 Be of the **same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly, Do not be wise in your own estimation.**

maintaining (part. pa) ***the same love*** (agape) –

The first thing that we notice is that love must be maintained. Like a house or a car, love will deteriorate and eventually come to ruin if it is not maintained.

Maintaining love requires mutual respect, loyalty, thoughtfulness, forgiveness, humility, encouragement, affection, praise, self-sacrifice, and courtesy.

Believers are to love others in the body of Christ equally—no because they are all equally attractive, but by showing the same kind of sacrificial, loving service to all that was shown to them by Christ. John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1822.

Believers are not the same; some are friendly, easy to talk to, interesting, talented, helpful, and kind, while others are more introverted and shy or overbearing and loud. Some have idiosyncrasies that they are not aware of or can't control. These people are not to be ignored or shunned; they are to be loved as well. We should not discriminate against believers based on how easy or difficult they are to love.

Romans 15:7 Wherefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.

Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

1 John 3:17-18 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18) My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35) By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us...

1 Thessalonians 3:12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all,

John 15:12-13 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13) "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

1 Peter 3:8-9 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9) not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing

The breakdown of mutual love in a church, a family, an organization, a team, etc. is a very serious problem.

We have **personal love** (*phileo*) for each other but we understand that love is maintained and supported by **impersonal/unconditional love** (*agape*).

Unconditional love does not require virtue or attractiveness from the object of our love because it depends on the virtue of the subject, us, the one who's doing the loving.

This is not difficult for believers to understand because this is the type of love God has for us.

Love is more than maudlin sentimentality. Sometimes circumstances call for tough love which has nothing to do with emotions but about doing the right thing. Emotionally driven love with no norms or standards is not biblical love.

LESSON 49 (6-12-18)

united in spirit, SUMP SUCHOS, **σύμψυχος**; adj. npm, SUM = together with, PHUCHOS = soul, Being united in spirit, to be of one accord, souls in harmony with one another. hapax legomena

This refers to everyone having common goals and a common purpose. This is unity of sentiment, everyone having a similar perspective and worldview.

Musical instruments must be in tune if they are to play together in harmony just as souls must be in synch for there to be harmony in relationships.

Musicians use a tuning fork, a pitch pipe, or an electrical device to make sure they are in tune with each other. The tuning instrument God uses to make sure our souls are in harmony is His Word.

intent on one purpose. PHRONEO, φρονέω, part. pa; ① to have an opinion with regard to something, think, form/hold an opinion, judge.

*This does not mean to think the same content from a human point of view. It does not mean that everyone is supposed to hold the same opinion. Nor does it mean that everyone is to interpret everything the same way. This means that we are to think like Christ thinks. We have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16), *Grace Notes**

Romans 15:5-6 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to **be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; 6) that with **one accord** you may **with one voice** glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Psalm 133:1-3

Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4) do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

It appears that this verse starts with a command but the first word “Do” is not there in the Greek, it was added to read more

smoothly in the English.

Paul now addresses self-centeredness which can devastate unity and cause major problems in a relationship.

Do nothing from selfishness – ERITHEIA, ἐριθεία, n. asf; selfishness, selfish ambition, strife, contentiousness.

Def. **SELFISH** adjective

1. concerned excessively or exclusively with oneself : seeking or concentrating on one's own advantage, pleasure, or well-being without regard for others
2. arising from concern with one's own welfare or advantage in disregard of others. <a selfish act>

Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

"Selfish ambition" is the same term used in *Phil. 1:17* for those who opposed Paul. This word is used again in *Phil. 5:20* for a characteristic of the flesh.

LESSON 50 (6-14-18)

Unity and selfish ambition cannot co-exist. We have seen how important being of *the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose* which all speak of unity.

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Ephesians 4:1-3 ... walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one

another in love, 3) being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Matthew 12:25 and knowing their thoughts He said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

Our country has been blessed by God immeasurably but it is in danger of collapse because it is no longer united. We are divided into two parts. Liberals (the left) on one side and conservatives (the right) on the other.

The election of our new president has divided us even more. Both sides have been guilty of being biased and furthering the split among us, but the left has become irrational and fanatic in their hatred for our president and those who support him.

About ninety percent of those in the media publically and proudly denounce our president and conservatives to the point that they don't even pretend to be fair and unbiased in their reporting. They have become cheerleaders for the ultra-liberal left. They take every opportunity to belittle him, mock him, demean him, and disrespect him, in their effort to make him look like a buffoon. They never give him any credit for his achievements and are rude and contemptuous to those in his administration.

Prominent figures from Hollywood are totally comfortable with insulting our president, using crude gestures and vulgarity, shouting out profanities, creating a play where the president is murdered, and holding up a severed head representing his.

Our Congress is spit in half along party lines. Most bills that are presented to the President have 100% backing from conservative politicians and 0% from the liberal side. They are intractable in their positions and they vote along party affiliation rather than what is best for our beloved country. Many on the left would rather see our country go down in flames rather than see our President succeed.

What once were universities where young people went to be exposed to a multitude of different ideas to learn how to think for themselves, now they are hotbeds of identity politics, micro aggression, and safe spaces, that use violence to stop any conservative from expressing his or her view.

Nearly everything has become politicized these days. Sports, talk shows, businesses, award shows, movies, advertisements, universities, news broadcasts, books, music, sitcoms, the Justice Department, the FBI, a number of Judges, Governors, Mayors, City Counsels, and even some in our military.

Only God knows what is in store for our country, but we cannot survive if we continue to hate one another and make decisions based on political party rather than what is right and what is best for our country. If we don't turn to God, obey Him, let go of the hate and hostility towards one another, our country is doomed.

A selfish person is an arrogant person who appropriates to self what belongs to God. The selfish person is the ultimate purpose for his own existence rather than God. We should be the means, not the end.

or empty conceit – KENODOXIA, κενοδοξία, n. asf; ① a vain or exaggerated self-evaluation, vanity, conceit, excessive ambition

This same word is translated a little different in Gal. 5:26, ***Galatians 5:26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.***

People who seek glory and are **boastful** are **weak people**. They **seek recognition** and notoriety because they lack self-esteem. So they try to prove to everyone how great they are because they don't have normal healthy confidence in themselves that most people have.

They are **self-promoters** who are interested in executing their own agenda and no one else's. They are the **opposite of team players**. They can bring down a team, family, church, or organization.

Matthew 23:12 "And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

LESSON 51 (6-19-18)

The two negatives in the first part of this verse are now followed by a positive. Instead of promoting self for self-glory, we should esteem others more than ourselves.

Philippians 2:3 ...but with humility of mind –

TAPEINOPHROSUNE, ταπεινοφροσύνη, n. dsf; humility, modesty this is a compound word, TAPEINOS = that which is low, and PHRONEO = to think, lowliness of mind in regarding self.

This is the opposite of what is taught in our schools these days. Our children are being taught that the world must be sensitive to their wants and needs. Many of them have become self-absorbed hypersensitive brats. They have become the "me first" generation.

Normal self-esteem is healthy but preoccupation with self, is not. What does the Bible say about self-esteem?

Proverbs 26:16 The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give a discreet answer.

Romans 3:10 & 12 as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; 12) All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one."

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Sirach 10:28 - My child, honor yourself with humility, and give yourself the esteem you deserve. (The Sirach is a didactic (teaching/information) book of the Roman Catholic canon of the Old Testament.)

1 Peter 5:5-7 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with **humility (noun tapeinophrosune), toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the **humble** (adj. tapeinos). 6) **Humble** (v. apm, tapeinoo) yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper**

time, 7) casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.

To learn humility is to learn contentment in all circumstances. Humility is not in what we own or achieve, but in maintaining a teachable attitude, a willingness to bend to the will of the Father. **Jan Silvius** Thomas Nelson, The Woman's Study Bible (Nashville Thomas Nelson, 1995), Php 1:7.

What did the Apostle Paul think about himself?

1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1 Timothy 1:15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.

God IS AGAINST THE ARROGANT:

James 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Psalm 138:6 For though the LORD is exalted, Yet He regards the lowly; But the haughty He knows from afar.

BUT HE IS GRACIOUS TO THE HUMBLE:

1 Kings 21:29 "Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days..."

Isaiah 57:15 For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

HUMILITY AND HONOR GO TOGETHER:

Proverbs 29:23 A man's pride will bring him low, But a **humble spirit will obtain **honor**.**

Proverbs 18:12 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, But **humility goes before **honor**.**

Proverbs 15:33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, and before **honor comes **humility**.**

Proverbs 22:4 The reward of **humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, **honor** and life.**

Philippians 2:3 ...let each of you regard one another as more **important than himself;**

This phrase really gives a definition of humility. It's being selfless, putting others before self. Arrogant self-centered people **compete** with friends and family but this verse urges us to be gracious, concerned, considerate, and compassionate toward them.

This does not mean that we are to regard those who are more intelligent, more talented, more educated, more athletic, better known, better looking, better dressed, or better off financially than we are to be more important than ourselves.

This has nothing to do with comparing ourselves to other people. We are to treat all people, the good, the bad, and the ugly, with

deference and grace. This is all about **ATTITUDE!** Attitude is everything in life and is especially important in maintaining our relationships. Our attitude reveals what kind of person we are.

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

A bad attitude is like a flat tire, if you don't change it,
you'll never go anywhere.

You can't have a good day with a bad attitude,
and you can't have a bad day with a good attitude.

ATTITUDE

Think you can or think you can't,
either way – you're right.

Henry Ford

Your Attitude, not your Aptitude, determines your Altitude.

Zig Zigler

Your attitude is like a price tag, it shows how valuable you are.

Galatians 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26) Let us not become boastful, challenging (competing with) *one another, envying one another.*

“Pride is the mother hen under which all other sins are hatched.”

C. S. Lewis

LESSON 52 (6-21-18)

If you have a bad attitude, the best way to change it to a good attitude is to Rebound (1 John 1:9 - acknowledge your sins to GTF). It is quite impossible to be filled with the Holy Spirit and have a bad attitude.

Our default attitude as humans is “Me First”. We are hard wired to consider our self before anyone else, “Always Take care of number one first.” This means that a believer must be spiritual, filled with the Holy Spirit, to put others before himself.

One must do what is described in this verse to be able to execute what doctrine? _____

Philippians 2:4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

It appears that this verse starts with a command but the first word “Do” is not there in the Greek, it was added to read more smoothly in the English.

This verse does not imply that we are to neglect our own personal affairs or interests, but to be sensitive to others who are having problems handling their own affairs and to lend them a hand.

Unfortunately, when it comes to doing things for others, some people stop at nothing!

In our culture, many people have a very difficult time taking responsibility for their own interests much less the interests of others.

They hear about someone they know that needs help and they say, “That’s too bad” and that is the limit of their concern and

compassion. They may be willing to give advice, but there is a big difference between giving advice and lending a hand.

As far as they are concerned, we are to live by the “Law of the Jungle” where only the strong survive. They ignore the fact that everyone needs help from time to time.

An acid test of our Christian life is to be concerned about others and to love them enough to help them out, even if they have no way of paying us back for our kindness. There is a vast difference between wishing someone well and lending them a hand.

You **GET** the best out of life when you **GIVE** your best to others.

(ESV) ***Romans 15:1-2 We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and **not to please ourselves**. 2) Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.***

Some people don't have the time or means to help others, but everyone can do something very important for them – PRAY.

Those who are only concerned about taking care of their own needs, ignoring the needs of others, will never know the phenomenal joy of helping others.

All of us must take care of ourselves and do whatever is necessary to provide for our own needs, but we can't experience the joyfulness of helping others if we are only interested in helping ourselves.

Acts 20:35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the

words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

Philippians 2:5-8 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

These four verses contain 72 English words and is one sentence in the Greek. It is one of the most significant sentences in the entire Bible. It give us a specific description of Jesus Christ, the God man.

(NASV) *Philippians 2:5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,*

Have this attitude (lemma) PHRONEO, φρονέω, (manuscript) PRRONEITE, φρονεῖτε, v. pam 2p; ① to have an opinion with regard to something, think, form/hold an opinion, judge
The NASV uses the Nestle Aland 28 edition manuscript.

(NKJV) *Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*

Let this mind be (lemma) PHRONEO, φρονέω, (manuscript) PHRONEISTHO, φρονείσθω, v. ppm 3s; ① to have an opinion with regard to something, think, form/hold an opinion, judge
The NKJV uses the Textus Receptus manuscript.

LESSON 53 (6-26-18)

We do nothing of spiritual significance until we have the mind of Christ mind, His thinking in us. Every believer's mind must be renewed before it is ready to become a servant who is willing to sacrifice and suffer for the Lord and others..

Romans 12:1 -2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Our thinking determines what kind of attitude we have and that determines what kind of person we are. Right thinking produces right actions. No one is born with right thinking, we are born with a blank slate plus an OSN.

Children may have great parents who teach them good manners, thoughtfulness, kindness, good work habits, morality, gratitude, honesty, loyalty, truthfulness, and self-discipline but that is not the same as having the mind of Christ in them.

Growing up spiritually is a process where we learn to think more and more like Jesus Christ. The only way that can occur is to consistently learn Bible Doctrine.

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, **arm yourselves** [v. amm] **also with the same mind**, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

1 Corinthians 11:1 *Imitate me* [the apostle Paul], *just as I also imitate Christ.*

The present tense of the verb *phroneo* is very important because it reminds us that we must constantly maintain the mind/attitude/thinking of Jesus Christ.

Another way of saying this is we must always strive to think divine viewpoint. No one has to remind us to think human viewpoint (stinking thinking), because that comes natural to us.

The essence of the mind of Christ is humility and sacrificial love for others. The first four verses of chapter two describes what living with the mind of Christ looks like.

Anyone can learn the truth in God's word, but if it is nothing more than academic knowledge, it won't change our attitude. But when the mind of Christ is in us, our attitude changes and we start applying biblical doctrines and principles to our everyday experiences. That's when we see big time changes in our lives.

Our Lord's life was characterized by suffering and sacrifice for others. How could anyone choose to follow that example apart from faith in, and love for, Him? It seems counterintuitive for suffering and sacrifice to be necessary components to living the abundant life, but it comes into focus when recognize that the motivation to suffer and sacrifice is love and grace.

True happiness and contentment are found when we serve, sacrifice, and suffer for others. Of course there is no implicit happiness or contentment in serving, sacrificing, and suffering.

Most people who experience these things are very unhappy, angry, and depressed. So why does it affect people differently?

1. Those whose suffering makes them unhappy, suffer against their will.
2. Those whose suffering makes them happy, suffer willingly.
3. Those suffering against their will focus on themselves.
4. Those suffering willingly, suffer for someone else.
5. Why would someone willingly suffer for someone else?
 - a. Out of personal love.
 - b. Out of impersonal/unconditional love.

Why would someone suffer for someone they don't know or who doesn't deserve such treatment?

Because they love the Lord and desire to please Him by being obedient. It is the love for Jesus Christ that motivates us to love others, regardless of who they are or what they're like.

6. No one will ever find the fulfilment and happiness they long for by living for themselves.
7. Regarding others as more important than ourselves and looking out not only for our own interests, but for theirs as well, doesn't come naturally. It requires believers to have the thinking of Christ in their souls.
8. The only way that can happen is to unfailingly take in the Word of God. This is not just an academic exercise in learning things about God and theology but is the only

method God has given us to change our actions and course of our lives.

As we consistently take in God's Word, we build a foundation of wisdom based on God's thinking which enables us to apply that wisdom to our experience.

LESSON 54 (6-28-18)

We should put no limitations on our willingness to give of ourselves to fellow believers because Christ put no limitations on His willingness to give of Himself, His very life, for us.

Many mistakenly think they can obey the command to have the attitude/mind/thinking of Christ in them by getting into God's Word occasionally. It won't happen! These people have completely underestimated the forces of evil and rebellion in our society and their OSN. No one has the power within himself to resist such overwhelming forces, it takes a super-natural force.

God indwells every believer, He is in us, but that certainly does not mean that Christ's attitude/thinking is in every believer. Most believers don't even know for sure that they have eternal life and even less know how important it is to acquire God's attitude and thinking.

The problem with believers who have a mediocre attitude towards learning God's word have a huge problem they are not aware of – **They Don't Know What They Don't Know.**

They don't know how great life can be when they have enough doctrine to trust God in all things.

All worrying stops. How much better would life be for most folks if they were never plagued anymore with worrying?

Matthew 6:34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

It is wonderful to have confidence that you are doing the right thing based on the infallible Word of God.

Being confused, not knowing if you are doing the right thing or not, just muddling through life hoping that you haven't done the wrong thing can be bewildering. How can anyone have peace of mind if they are always second guessing themselves?

LESSON 55 (7-3-18)

Philippians 2:6 ...who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

Paul affirms that Jesus eternally has been God. The usual Gr. word for "being" is not used here. Instead, Paul chose another term that stresses the essence of a person's nature—his continuous state or condition. Paul also could have chosen one of two Gr. words for "form," but he chose the one that specifically denotes the essential, unchanging character of something—what it is in and of itself. John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1822.

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2) He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Dr J. F. Walvoord, in his book Jesus Christ Our Lord, pp. 138-40 comments concerning the Philippians passage: Christ is described first of all as “existing in the form of God” (v.6, ASV). The word for “existing” is not the usual Greek verb (to be), but hyparchōn which is found in a form used for both the present and the imperfect participle and carries the meaning of continued existence.

The thought is that Christ always has been in the form of God with the implication that He still is. As stated by the apostle, Christ “existing” in the form of God, counted not on being in equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. The attitude of Christ which believers are exhorted to emulate is that He did not grasp at being on equality with God as if it had to be attained by effort.

form of God, morphe, μορφή, theou, θεός, form, outward appearance, shape

The expression form of God may be correctly understood as the essential nature and character of God. To say, therefore, that Christ existed in the form of God is to say that apart from His human nature Christ possesses all the characteristics and qualities belonging to God because He is, in fact, God.

Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php 2:6.

“The verb does not convey the thought of an estate which once was, but no longer is. “It contains no intimation”... Paul is not

telling us here, then, what Our Lord was once, but rather what He already was, or, better, what in His intrinsic nature He is; Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 375.

He is telling us who and what He is who did these things for us, that we may appreciate how great the things He did for us are” (E. B. Warfield, *Biblical Doctrines*, p. 178).

The phrase, “the form—μορφῆ—of God,” has not the meaning of a mere outward appearance; it avers that Christ was essentially and naturally God. Though He was this, He looked not greedily upon that estate. If μορφῆ means here only outward appearance, then Christ left but little to come into this sphere.

Similarly, the word μορφῆ is used in this context as a contrast to describe His servanthood and this, too, was not a mere outward appearance, else His condescension is diminished to naught. Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 375.

The measure of the “grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” is being exhibited by two extremes. To minimize either one, or both, is to falsify that which God solemnly declares to be true. Fortunately, this passage does not stand alone. All Scriptures which present the truth of the pre-incarnate existence of Christ as Deity, seal the force of this declaration that He subsisted on an equality with God, and was God. Thus, also, all passages which affirm His Deity after the incarnation—and there are many—establish the fact that Deity was not surrendered or any attribute thereof when He became flesh.

*A change of position or relationship is implied, but no surrender of essential Being is indicated, nor is such a surrender possible. He is the glorified theanthropic Person and is declared to be “the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). *Ibid*, p. 376*

The fundamental truth that the eternal God cannot cease to be what He is has been demonstrated earlier in this work, and any theory which supposes that God the Son could cease to be what He ever has been and ever will be, is error of the first magnitude... But, it is inquired again. Do not the avowed human limitations (cf. Matt. 8:10; Mark 13:32; Luke 2:52; Heb. 4:15; 5:8) imply the absence of divine perfections? Is it not this double reality of the functioning of two natures in one Person which constitutes His uniqueness? He is the God-man, mysterious, indeed, to finite minds, but none the less actual according to the testimony of the Scriptures.

If He is to serve as the Mediator between God and man, it is to be expected that He will be complex beyond all human comprehension. Ibid, p. 374

He who subsisted immutably as the precise form or reality which God is, assumed that which is human, not in place of the divine, but in conjunction with it. He added to Himself the precise form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. Ibid, p. 378

did not regard equality with God – Jesus Christ did not consider equality with God as something to be seized, as though He did not already possess it, or something to be retained, as though He might lose it. Why would He? He was and is God.

John 5:18 For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

John 10:30-33 I and the Father are one." 31) The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. 32) Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" 33) The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, **being a man, make Yourself out to be God."**

a thing to be (inf. pa) **grasped** - ARPAGMOS, ἄρπαγμός, n. asm; ① a violent seizure of property, robbery, The state of being equal with God cannot be equated with the act of robbery.

The (NKJV) - **did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,**

"For He, though eternally possessing the divine nature, did not regard His existing-in-a-manner-equal-with-God [i.e., His heavenly existence or divine life-style] as something to be [selfishly] maintained", K J V Study Bible ., (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 2:6.

The subordination of self in behalf of others does not require the discarding of self. Christ emptied Himself of self-interest, not clutching His exalted estate, however rightfully His own, as a prize too dear to release in behalf of others. Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 379.

Christ was God in His preexistent state and then became man, the question is, "What did He give up to become man?"

LESSON 56 (7-5-18)

When the pre-ëxistent and eternal Logos took on humanity, He gave up the visibility of His glory. Men could not have looked upon unveiled deity. The kenosis, furthermore,

*implies that Christ gave up, as Strong aptly suggests, the “independent exercise of the divine attributes” (Systematic Theology, p. 382). Christ was possessed of all the essential attributes and properties of deity, but He did not use them except at the pleasure of the Father. We believe just this is meant when Christ declares: “The Son can do nothing of himself” (Jn. 5:19). *ibid*, p. 381*

*[Jesus Christ is] undiminished Deity—none other than the Second Person, whom He eternally is—incorporated into His Being that perfect humanity which He acquired and ever will retain. Of these two natures it may be affirmed from the evidence which Scripture provides, that they united in one Person, and not two; that in this union, that which is divine is in no way degraded by its amalgamation with that which is human; and, in the same manner and completeness, that which is human is in no way exalted or aggrandized above that which is unfallen humanity. *Ibid*, p. 384*

Scripture Evidence of the Deity of Christ::

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call **His name Immanuel.**

Isaiah 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, **Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.**

Isaiah 40:3 A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway **for our God.**

Isaiah 44:6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and its Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And **there is no God besides Me.**

Luke 1:16-17 And he [John the Baptist] will turn many of the sons of Israel back to **the Lord their God.** 17) "It is he who will go as a forerunner **before Him...**

John 8:58-59 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **before Abraham was born, I am.**" 59) Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

John 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and **my God!**"

John 10:30-31 **I and the Father are one.**" 31) The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.

2 Corinthians 5:19 namely, that **God was in Christ** reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Colossians 2:9 For **in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,**

Titus 2:13 Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of **our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,**

Hebrews 1:3 And He (J.C.) is the radiance of His (GTF) glory and the exact representation of His nature (hypostasis), and upholds all things by the word of His power.

Hebrews 1:8 *But of the Son He says, "Your throne, o God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.*

1 John 5:20 *And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God** and eternal life.*

Philippians 2:7 *but **emptied Himself**, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.*

but emptied Himself – KENOO, κενόω, v. aai; ① to make empty, to empty, the divestiture of position or prestige: of Christ, who gave up the appearance of his divinity and took on the form of a slave, divested himself of his prestige or privileges.

Since it is recorded that He "emptied himself," the kenosis inquiry is, of what did He empty Himself? That His Deity was diminished, or that He surrendered any divine attribute, is equally impossible because of the immutability of Deity, nor are such notions sustained by any word of Scripture. Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 378–379.

THE DOCTRINE OF KENOSIS

1. The term kenosis is taken from the Greek word *kenoō* in *Philippians 2:7* which is a part of the well-known passage concerning the "self-emptying" or the kenosis of Christ. In his treatment of the subject, Dr L. S. Chafer (Systematic Theology, vol. I, pp. 373ff) says that "*due to the fact that unbelief has misinterpreted and magnified it (the passage in Phil. 2:5-8) out of*

all proportion, [it] is more fully treated exegetically by scholars of past generations than almost any other in the Word of God.” He says: “The problem centers upon the verb ekenosen which, with reference to Christ, declares that He emptied Himself.”

2. The act of the incarnation is described by the strong word ekenōsen (English, kenosis), from kenoō, meaning “to empty” B.B. Warfield considers the translation “emptied himself” (v. 7, ASV) as an error, apparently preferring the Authorized Version rendering “made himself of no reputation,” that is, emptied Himself of the manifestations of Deity.

3. He isn’t the only one who has adopted a false doctrine of kenosis, claiming that the self-emptying of Christ was the giving up of certain attributes of His deity. But the essence of God is immutable, i.e. it cannot be changed.

4. Orthodox theologians have pointed out that the meaning of this word must be interpreted by the context itself. The passage does not state that Christ ceased to exist in the form of God, but rather that He added the form of a servant. In becoming man, He took upon Himself the form of a Servant, that is, the outward appearance of a Servant and the human characteristics which corresponds to it. This is further defined as manifesting the likeness (Greek, homoiōmati) of man in that He looked and acted like a man. The passage declares in addition that He was “found in fashion as a man” (v. 8), the word “fashion” (Greek, schēmati) indicating the more transient manifestations of humanity such as weariness, thirst and other human limitations.

LESSON 57 (7-10-18)

5. This doctrine has to do with the ministry of the Holy Spirit sustaining the humanity of Christ during His earthly ministry. It means that Christ voluntarily restricted the independent use of some of His divine attributes during the first advent. Certain functions of deity continued to function, such as holding the universe together (Heb. 1:3).

6. While the deity of Christ was united to a perfect true humanity, He was still subject to temptation, distress, weakness, pain, sorrow, limitation, and to more temptations than we will ever face

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

7. In the hypostatic union (Heb. 1:3) the divine and human natures were united without transfer of any attributes.

8. The humanity of Jesus Christ did not call on His divine attributes for help, nor to benefit Himself, to provide for Himself, or to glorify Himself. He relied on the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to fulfill His mission which set the pattern for Church Age believers to follow.

9. Even His miracles were performed in the power of the Holy Spirit and He taught doctrine in the power of the Spirit. Growing up as a child, He learned Bible doctrine by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

10. His reliance upon the power of the Holy Spirit rather than the independent use of His divine attributes is illustrated in Matthew chapter four where it is one of the great issues. His divine

attributes were functional as was seen in the fact that His omniscience knew what the Pharisees were thinking, that He had the power to do things Himself but He did not use His omniscience independently of the Father's plan. His humanity depended upon the Holy Spirit.

11. Another example of Christ's refusal to use His divine attribute is found in Matthew 4:3-4. He resisted the temptation to use His divine attribute of omnipotence to turn stones into bread in order to save Himself from starvation. How did He resist the temptation? He applied BD to the situation. He quoted Deut. 8:3 and Matt. 4:4. *Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*

12. Our Lord veiled the pre-incarnate glory of His deity by giving up the outward appearance of God and voluntarily taking on Himself the form of man. The glory of Christ was veiled, but never surrendered (Matt. 17:2).

13. Understanding the Doctrine of Kenosis gives us a greater appreciation for what our Lord sacrificed and experienced for us. Not only did He provide for our eternal salvation, but also provided a prototype spiritual life which worked for Him so that we can be confident that it will work for us as well.

LESSON 58 (7-12-18)

Philippians 2:8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus Christ looked like a man because He is a man. He didn't have a special appearance that distinguished him from other men. Jesus had the appearance of an average man.

John 6:42 They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?"

People could not see His deity and He didn't have a halo over his head.

Matthew 13:54-56 He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers? 55) "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56) "And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

He humbled Himself— TAPEINOO, ταπεινῶω, v. aai; ② to cause someone to lose prestige or status, humble, humiliate, abase, done especially to slaves.

There is no one in the universe that could humble the Lord Jesus Christ which makes it all more impressive that He humbled Himself.

Jesus Christ could have come to earth as the real Super Man. He could have made super man of the movies look puny. That super man was not omniscient, omnipotent, or immutable. He could have been born in a castle instead of a stable.

He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, he is the biggest celebrity in the universe, in fact, he made the universe and holds it together with the power of His word.

But he came as a servant to serve rather than be served. He was not pressed into this service. He did it of his own volition. In verse six he existed in the "form of God", here he takes on the form of an abject slave. What a contrast! He laid aside his glory and majesty to become an abject slave.

Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

John 13:5 Then He [Jesus] poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

Jesus further humbled Himself in that He did not demand normal human rights, but subjected Himself to persecution and suffering at the hands of unbelievers. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1823.

by becoming obedient to the point of death,

The word *obedient* seems very incongruent when it is used in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:9-10 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10) and in Him you have been made complete and He is the head over all rule and authority;

Where Jesus today and what is His status?

Ephesians 1:19-22 ... These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20) which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22) And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

How important was it that our Lord humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death? Our eternal salvation was at stake

Romans 5:19 or as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

Although He never sinned and did not deserve to die, He chose to die so that the sins of the world could be charged to His account. Subsequently He could credit His righteousness to the account of all who believe in Him (see 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal.

1:4). Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php 2:8.

2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Romans 4:4-6 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5) But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6) just as David also

describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

LESSON 59 (7-17-18)

even death on a cross.

Paul describes the depths of Christ's humiliation by reminding his readers that Christ died by the cruelest form of capital punishment, crucifixion. The Romans reserved the agonizing death of crucifixion for slaves and foreigners, and the Jews viewed death on a cross as a curse from God. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php 2:8.

The most notable feature of crucifixion was the stigma of disgrace that was attached to it. *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1448.

Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")...

Crucifixion was a form of punishment that had been passed down to the Romans from the Persians, Phoenicians, and Carthaginians. Roman crucifixion was a lingering doom—by design. Roman executioners had perfected the art of slow torture while keeping the victim alive. Some victims even lingered until they were eaten alive by birds of prey or wild beasts. Most hung on the cross for days before dying of exhaustion, dehydration, traumatic fever, or—most likely—suffocation... The hands were usually nailed through the wrists, and the feet through the instep or the Achilles tendon (sometimes using one nail for both feet). None of these wounds

would be fatal, but their pain would become unbearable as the hours dragged on. ibid

Jesus knew what was in store for Him when He was in the Garden of Gethsemane.

(NASV) **Matthew 26:38** - "***My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death;***

(NKJV) **Matthew 26:38** "***My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.***

Jesus Christ was very grieved and sorrowful but He was not afraid. Fear of what might happen in the future is a sin. Even a mental attitude sin such as fear would have disqualified our Lord from being our substitute on the cross.

The Gospel of Luke adds two verses that are not found in the other Gospels and are not found in the earlier more reliable manuscripts:

Luke 22:43 ***Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. 44) And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.***

Most theologians disregard these verses but some people contend that Christ was so distraught that literal blood was coming out of His skin and falling to the ground.

But notice that these verses do not say that Jesus was afraid or that blood was coming from His skin. The word *like* is used as a simile which is used to compare something that resembles something else.

Jesus went from the highest point imaginable, the "form of God (the essence of God) to the lowest place conceivable, the "death of the cross." We find Christ's humiliation (vv. 6–8), and Christ's exaltation (vv. 9–11).

Philippians 2:9-11 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10) so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11) and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

For this reason - What reason was Paul referring to? It was because Jesus Christ remained faithful and obedient to the Father's plan even while He voluntarily endured the horrors and humiliation of the cross, that God exalted him.

God highly exalted Him – God did not just exalt His Son, but **highly** exalted Him. No one has even come close to being exalted the way that Jesus Christ has been exalted and that is because no one has ever accomplished even remotely what He accomplished.

Christ's exaltation and His receiving a name that is above every name was the answer to His high-priestly prayer (John 17:5). The exaltation refers to His resurrection, ascension, and glorification at the Father's right hand. Robert P. Lightner, "Philippians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 654.

Acts 5:32-31 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. 31) He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince

and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Ephesians 1:19-21 *and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20) which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and **seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,** 21) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*

LESSON 60 (7-19-18)

The exaltation did not concern Christ's nature or eternal place within the Trinity, but His new identity as the God-Man. In addition to receiving back His glory (John 17:5), Christ's new status as the God-Man meant God gave Him privileges He did not have prior to the Incarnation. The MacArthur Study Bible, (1997), 1823.

John 17:5 *Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

Hebrews 12:1-2 *Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and **has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.***

1 Peter 3:19-22 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20) who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21) Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22) **who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ is so gracious that He shares His exaltation with us:

Ephesians 2:5-6 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and **raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,**

When someone calls us a "name" they place a label upon us. We call this "branding someone" today. When God gave our Lord the name Jesus, He gave Him a very high exalted name.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

People were baptized in the name of Jesus, demons were cast out in the name of Jesus, people taught doctrine in the name of Jesus, people were strengthened in the name of Jesus, people

spoke out boldly in the name of Jesus, people were exhorted in the name of Jesus, and they were healed in the name of Jesus.

10) so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow... and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...

This is a reiteration of Isaiah's prophecy (Isa. 45:23) which demonstrated the singular greatness of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Isaiah 45:23 "I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back. That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.

Isaiah was giving this prophecy to people in the O.T. and it appears that this declaration was referring to both believers and unbelievers. The question is, "When will this prophecy come to pass?" The only reasonable answer seems to be at the Second Advent when Christ comes back to earth to assert His authority and establish His millennial reign.

The following is taken from an article entitled *Christ's Olivet Discourse on the End of the Age* by Dr. John F. Walvoord,

"When Christ returns, it will be too late for those who were not ready for His coming. The Bible reveals plainly that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus Christ as Lord (Isa. 45:23; Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:9–11; Rev. 5:13). But it will be too late for those who have not confessed Him before His coming. Although God is a long-suffering God, not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9), there comes a time when even a

long-suffering God does not wait. This is brought out in Matthew 24 and 25.

The second coming of Christ will come in God's appointed time. When He came the first time, prophecy was literally fulfilled... So when He comes again prophecy will be fulfilled. This time He will not come as a babe in a manger but as King of kings and Lord of lords.

The graphic account of Revelation 19:11–16 describes the majestic armies of heaven, millions of saints and angels attending Christ as He comes from heaven to claim the earth which is His right to rule, the earth bought with His blood, created by His power, and now to be made His footstool, His place of manifesting His sovereignty as He reigns

*There will be those in Israel and among the Gentiles who will have turned to Christ during this time of tribulation. Some of these will have escaped martyrdom and will be living when this event takes place on the earth. They will welcome Christ's return. It is, nevertheless, true that the great majority of the world will have worshipped the beast, the world ruler. They will have received the mark of the beast, blasphemed the name of Christ and spurned His grace. Now their hour of judgment has come. There is no grace for those who have continually **spurned grace**".*

John F. Walvoord, "Christ's Olivet Discourse on the End of the Age: Signs of the End of the Age," Bibliotheca Sacra 128 (1971): 325.

The following is taken from an article entitled *The Doctrine of Christ in Colossians* by Dr. H. Wayne House

Dr. House focuses on Colossians 1:20:

Colossians 1:19-20 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, 20) and **through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.**

*In what sense, however, does Christ reconcile “all things” to Himself? If all things are reconciled by the blood of the Cross, does this teach universal salvation? Either the Bible is in error in numerous places or universal salvation is not what is intended in Colossians 1:20. The reconciliation in this verse points instead to the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the millennium when **every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father** (Phil 2:10; cf. Rom. 14:11). Through Christ all intelligent beings—both obedient and disobedient, and both human (those “on earth”) and angelic (those “in heaven”) —will acknowledge the **sovereignty of God.***

H. Wayne House, “Doctrinal Issues in Colossians Part 2 (of 4 Parts): The Doctrine of Christ in Colossians,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (1992): 186–187.

Def: RECONCILE – verb

- 1 a : to restore to friendship or harmony reconciled the factions)
b : SETTLE, RESOLVE (reconcile differences)
2. to make consistent or congruous (reconcile an ideal with reality)
3. to cause to submit to or accept something unpleasant (was reconciled to hardship)
- 4 a: to check (a financial account) against another for accuracy
b : to account for

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

2 Corinthians 5:19 God was in Christ *reconciling the world to Himself*, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

All unbelievers were reconciled to Christ by His sacrifice on the cross in the sense that their sins are not held against them. That doesn't mean that everyone is saved. The issue is not sin, the issue is whether one accepts His work on the cross or rejects it.

At the Great White Throne, Jesus Christ will settle the accounts, make things right. Unbelievers will be forced to accept His absolute authority and the just action of tossing them into the Lake of Fire will settle the account, reconcile the books.

The following was taken from *THE FIRST "LAST THING": THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST (REV. 19:11–16)** by David J. MacLeod

At the 1927 exhibition of the Royal Academy in London Charles E. Butler unveiled his now-famous painting, "King of Kings." It pictures the Lord Jesus Christ standing at the foot of His cross, receiving the homage of the crowned heads of the world. Louis the Ninth of France offers His crown. Constantine the Roman emperor, kneels before Him. Julius Caesar, Richard the Lionhearted, and Napoleon Bonaparte are all in the worshiping throng.

This painting will be fulfilled in the future at the return of Christ, when every knee will bow to Him (Phil. 2:9–11). Some will bow the knee in glad surrender, but others will bow because they will be forced to do so against their hardened wills. David J. MacLeod "The First 'Last Thing': The Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19:11–16)," Bibliotheca Sacra 156 (1999): 21



When he comes again, Jesus will save those waiting for him and judge those opposed to him, and all flesh will glorify God. Every knee will bow to the triumphant messianic warrior King, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:11). James Hamilton, "The Glory of God in Salvation through Judgment: The Centre of Biblical Theology?," Tyndale Bulletin 57, no. 1 (2006): 83.

The terminology "every knee will bow and every tongue will confess/swear allegiance" is also found in **Rom. 14:11**:

Romans 14:10-12 *But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. 11) For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." 12) So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.*

Paul was rebuking believers for judging one another and reminds them that is not our job, it's Christ's job which He will take care of at the judgment seat of God/Christ.

It seems reasonable to conclude that every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord will take place at the rapture with the judgment seat of Christ following.

LESSON 61 (7-24-18)

Bowing the knee is a big deal in the Bible because it is a physical gesture to show submission or allegiance. Seven thousand Israelites refused to bow their knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:18). Mordeci refused to bow down to Haman (Esther 3:5). Most pagans were into idolatry and bowed down to idols but God forbid bowing down to idols (Ex. 20:4 2nd Commandment, Lev. 26:1, Josh. 23:7). All people will bow down to Jesus Christ in the Millennium (Isa. 66:23).

Bowing the knee has become a big deal recently because some NFL players take a knee rather than stand for our national anthem. It appears they have more allegiance to whatever their cause is for kneeling than they have for our flag and our country.

Most people have a strong opinion about the kneeling going on in the NFL but they are not interested about what the Bible has to say about kneeling. Most don't know, and don't care to know, about the prophecy that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

But we want to know and understand that prophecy.

We find the phrase, "Every knee will bow" in the Bible in the following verses:

Isaiah 45:23 I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.

Romans 14:11 For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."

Philippians 2:10-11 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11) and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Questions:

1. When will this prophecy be fulfilled? That is not specifically given in the Scriptures.
2. Will it occur more than once? This is not specifically given either but it seems that it will. The most reasonable deductions are:
 - a. When Christ returns at **the Rapture** (Rom. 14:11 & Phil. 2:10)
The Judgment Seat of Christ immediately follows the Rapture which is a time of evaluation for C.A. Believers.
 - b. At the **Second Advent** (Isa. 45:23 & Phil. 2:10)
This will be a time of rewards for some OT saints, but will be a time of judgment for unbelievers.
 - c. At the **Great White Throne** (Col. 1:20 / Phil. 2:10)
This will be a time when judgment will be executed on all unbelievers and they will be tossed into the Lake of

Fire.

3. Will both believers and unbelievers bow their knees and confess that Jesus is Lord? Unbelievers will certainly bow their knee and confess that Jesus is Lord at the Great White Throne and possibly at the Second Advent but not at the Rapture.

Philippians 2:10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

The extent of Christ's sovereign authority is delineated in the threefold phrase, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. No intelligent being—whether angels and saints in heaven; people living on the earth; or Satan, demons, and the unsaved in hell—in all of God's universe will escape. All will bow either willingly or they will be made to do so.

Robert P. Lightner, "Philippians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 654.

those who are in heaven – Some believe this refers to all those who have died and gone to heaven plus angels. However, it could also refer only to C.A. believers in heaven who will genuflect at the Rapture.

and on earth – This would refer to everyone on earth which will occur at the Second Advent. It would include believers who survived the Tribulation in their physical bodies and OT saints in their resurrection bodies. It may also include unbelievers who bow their knee and confess Jesus is Lord before they die against their will and then their souls go to hell (Lk. 16:23).

and under the earth – At this time, the only ones under the earth are unbelievers who are in hades and the fallen angels who are in Tartarus. So from this phrase, we know that unbelievers will bow their knees and confess that Jesus is Lord, even though they will not do it willingly.

Some people known as Restitutionalists, believe that the all-inclusiveness of the description given here means that all people will be restored, made good and acceptable to God when they bow their knee and confess that Jesus is Lord. Of course we know that is not true; if it were, they would be saved by something they did and there would be no need for the cross or the Great White Throne judgment.

11) and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Believers will willingly and gladly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and unbelievers will unwillingly confess Jesus Christ is Lord. That is not the same as confessing Him as Savior.

Confessing Jesus Christ is Lord does not mean that one is saved nor is it the way to be saved.

Mark records that “Whenever the unclean spirits beheld Him, they would fall down before Him and cry out, saying, ‘You are the Son of God!’” (Mark 3:11). Mark also records that an unclean spirit cried out, “What do we have to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” (Mark 1:24). After Christ directly and openly rebuked the spirit, Mark says that people were “amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying,

‘What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him’ (Mark 1:27). The terrified response of the demons was to Christ’s unique authority. Reformation and Revival 4, no. 1 (1995): 90.

Some take the following verses to mean that confessing with the mouth that Jesus is Lord is necessary for eternal salvation.

LESSON 62 (7-26-18)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tszfdgp-A9s>

Romans 10:9-11 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, **you will be saved**; 10) for with the heart a person believes, **resulting in righteousness**, and with the mouth he confesses, **resulting in salvation**. 11) For the Scripture says, **"WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED"** (Isa. 28:16 & Rom. 9:33).

The issue is God’s deliverance of Israel. Since “saved” in the first line is talking about phase two deliverance, then “righteousness” must also be talking about phase two or experiential righteousness. Dr. Robert Dean NT- 06, Romans

The following quote came from a book review done by Robert Wilkin on a book written by Bernard Koerselman:

Commenting on Rom 10:9–10, for example, Koerselman actually says, “Note two things we must do to be saved. We must confess that Jesus is Lord, and believe that God raised him from the dead” (p. 107). A few paragraphs later on the

same page he continues, "God requires us to make public the fact that Jesus is our Lord.

To confess Jesus is Lord is not simply to repeat those words. It is a personal confession, not only that Jesus truly is Lord and that he is Lord of all, but that he is my personal Lord." Two sentences later, he comments on the present tense, "He must be and continue to be our Lord.

That's two things a person must do to be saved? Believing is not enough? Public confession must be made? And this confession must continue throughout one's life? While those things are clearly what Lordship Salvation teaches, rarely have

I seen it stated so baldly. Robert N. Wilkin, "Review of What the Bible Says about a Saving Faith by Bernard Koerselman," *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* Volume 7 7, no. 13 (1994): 76.

Following is a quote from Dr. Robby Dean on *Rom. 10:9-10*:

The core meaning of the word SOZO as well as its Hebrew term, YASHA, means to deliver from a predicament. That might mean deliverance from illness, in which case we would translate it healing. It might be deliverance from one's enemies in a battle and we would translate it as deliverance. What we do in Romans is look at this word SOZO and realize Paul does not use it as a synonym for justification. It's used primarily to talk about phase 2 salvation which is the spiritual life and deliverance which in a sense is the whole complete package of phase 1, phase 2, and phase 3 together. It's really talking about the results or consequences of justification.

Dr. Robert Dean NT-06, Romans

LESSON 63 (7-31-18)

PP 3 Phases of God's Plan of Grace

Psalm 18:3 ***I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am **saved** (yasha) from my enemies.***

PP The Duel Meaning of Words

The following came from an article by Dr. John Hart entitled *Why Confess Christ? The Use and Abuse of Romans 10:9–10*

Hodges correctly observes, “Not only does this verse (Rom. 10:9) not say that confession is the result of salvation, it states instead that ‘salvation’ results from confession, while righteousness results from faith!”). We must honestly and directly face Paul’s assertion as it is rather than adjust it to meet our preconceptions.

*What is more, the Gospel of John, written for the precise purpose of clarifying the condition for receiving eternal life (20:30–31), nowhere states that one’s eternal destiny is determined by “confessing with the mouth.” In fact, John writes the very opposite—that one can trust Christ for eternal life (and actually receive it), but fail to confess the Lord publicly. He writes, “Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [homologeō] Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue ...” (12:42). John knows of those who did not openly identify with Christ for fear of persecution and rejection, yet they had come to faith that brings eternal life. John F. Hart, “Why Confess Christ? The Use and Abuse of Romans 10:9–10,” *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* Volume 12 12, no. 23 (1999): 12–13.*

Philippians 2:12-13 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13) for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

This is one of the most misunderstood and abused verses in the Bible because the great majority of believers cannot determine whether a scripture is positional (what God does for us when we believe the gospel) or experiential (what we do **after** we have been saved).

POSITIONAL EXPERIENTIAL ETERNAL

PHASE 1: POSITIONAL What happens at salvation

PHASE 2: EXPERIENTIAL What happens from salvation till death

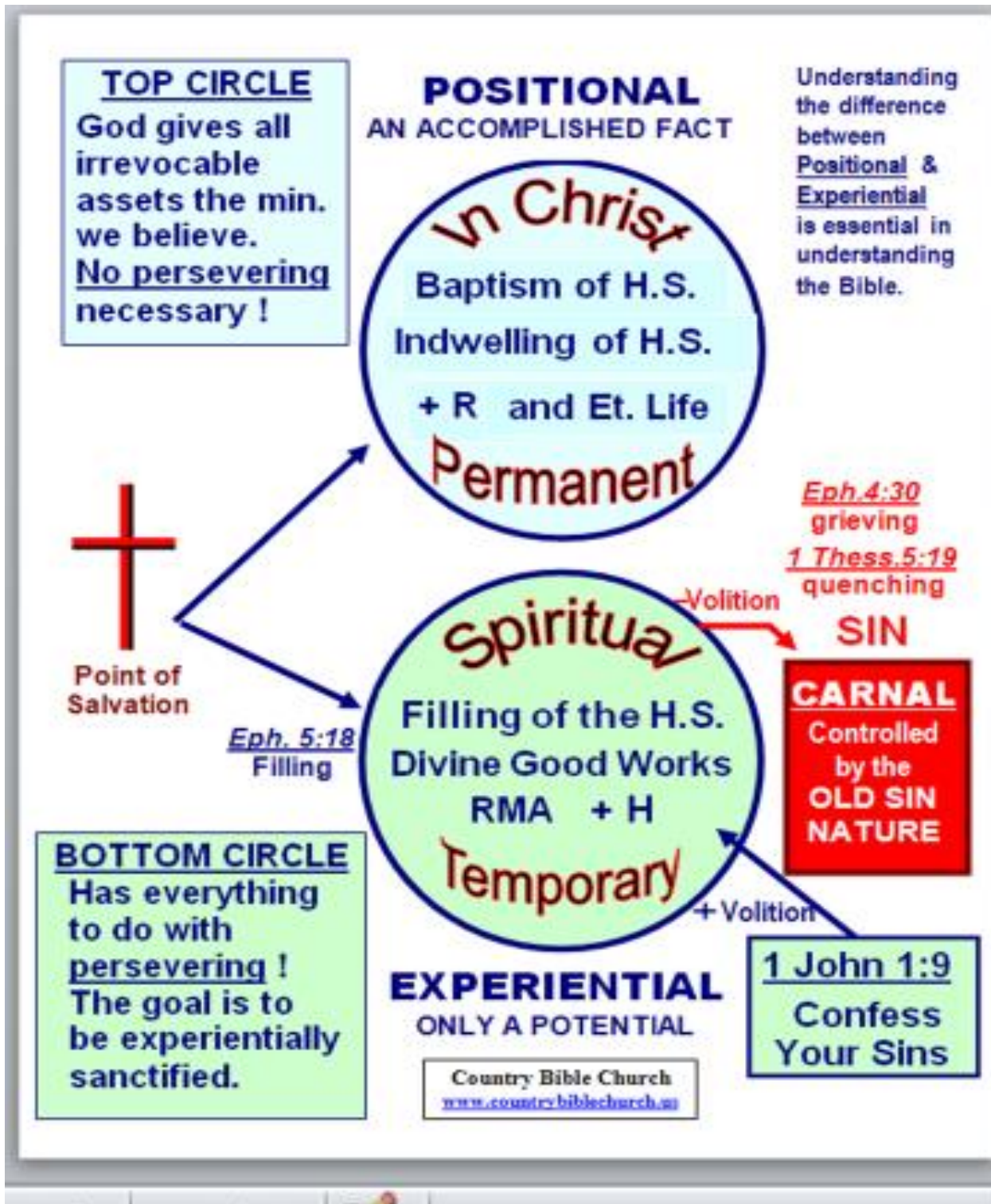
PHASE 3: ETERNAL What happens in eternity

WAYS TO EXPRESS POSITIONAL & EXPERIENTIAL

1) **THE CIRCLES:**

TOP CIRCLE – POSITIONAL - at salvation

BOTTOM CIRCLE – EXPERIENTIAL - after salvation



2) USING SPECIFIC TERMS:

SALVIFIC - Eternal Salvation

NON-SALVIFIC - Deliverance in Time

3) **DISTINCTION BY PHASES:**

PHASE 1 – POSITIONAL occurs in a moment of time

PHASE 2 – EXPERIENTIAL in time; salvation to death

4) **DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENS:**

POSITIONAL – God does at least 40 things for us

EXPERIENTIAL – We learn and apply Bible Doctrine

LESSON 64 (8-2-18)

POINTS:

1. Positional verses always require faith alone, no works.
2. Experiential verses require work or effort of the believer.
3. Experiential verses often mention salvation but it is not salvific; it refers to some kind of physical deliverance.
4. Positional verses refer to all believers, Experiential verses refer only to believers who are good and faithful servants.
5. Experiential verses make promises that are pertinent only to believers who are positive to God and His Word.
6. No one is able to rightly divide the Word of truth, (understand the Bible) unless he can distinguish between what is Positional and what is Experiential.

See if you can determine if the following verses are Positional or Experiential:

1 Timothy 2:14-15 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. 15) But women will be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

1 Peter 2:2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation

Romans 8:16–17 - The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17) and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if^{3rd} indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

1 Timothy 4:16 - Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

Philippians 2:12-13 So then, *my beloved*, just as you have *always obeyed*, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your (own) salvation with fear and trembling*;

my beloved – AGAPATOS, ἀγαπητός, adj. vpm; The vocative is used for direct address. ② refers. to one who is dearly loved, dear, beloved, prized, valued

you have always obeyed – It is necessary to point out here that Paul was addressing believers (called saints in *Phil. 1:1*), and they were obedient saints whom he loved deeply. This needs to be remembered when we get to the phrase, “*work out your salvation...*”

not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence,

This phrase says a lot about the Philippians. They were not being obedient to Paul to impress him, but because they had internalized/metabolized what he taught them about obedience. They did what they were supposed to do, not because they were afraid of getting in trouble, but because it was the right thing to do.

(NKJV) **John 8:31-32 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If^{3rd} you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 3) "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."**

Sometimes the word "abide" can be similar to being obedient. In fact, it would be difficult to find a believer who is consistently obedient if he wasn't abiding in God's Word. The verse above gives a fantastic promise to believers who have obeyed the command to consistently take in Bible doctrine.

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Believers who sporadically attend church and/or Bible class do not fall under the classification of "disciples indeed".

1 Peter 1:14-16 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15) but like the Holy One who called you, be (v. apm) *holy* yourselves also in all your behavior; 16) because it is written,

"**YOU SHALL BE** (v. fmi) **HOLY, FOR I AM** (no verb) **HOLY** (adj. nsm)."

Holy – HAGIOS, ἅγιος, adj. nsm, dedicated or consecrated to the service of God

"**Being holy in all your behavior**" certainly requires one to be obedient.

LESSON 65 (8-7-18)

work out your salvation - This phrase is used in other scriptures using different words but meaning the same thing.

Working out your salvation is the active pursuit of obedience in the process of being experientially sanctified.

work out – KATERGAZOMAI, κατεργάζομαι, v. pmm; ② to cause a state or condition, bring about, produce, create.

your – HEAUTOU, ἑαυτοῦ, pn. gsm; ① indicator of identity with the person speaking or acting, self. Do something of one's own accord.

Notice that nothing is said of *working for your salvation*. There is not one line in the Bible to support that. This "salvation/deliverance was both corporate and individual.

Paul was in prison so he could not deal with the disunity and schisms that had developed in the church, so the Philippian believers would have to *work out their own deliverance* concerning the church.

It is individual in the sense that God has given every believer a specific plan, or one could call it a mission, to fulfill. He has given

us the means to accomplish our mission but it is up to us to *work it out*, i.e. – *complete the mission*

There are a few verses that use a similar phrase as “*work out your salvation*”:

2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves (rebound) **from all defilement of flesh** (OSN) **and spirit** (neg. vol.), **perfecting holiness** (finish or complete experiential righteousness, i.e. – *work out your salvation*) **in the fear of God.**

One of the wonderful things about being a Christian is the knowledge that God has a plan for our lives (Eph. 2:10) and will help us to work it out for His glory. Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 77–78.

No believer can *perfect holiness*, (*work out one's deliverance*) without being humble and having fear/respect for God.

Jesus Christ demonstrated how to perfect holiness through His life lived through the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is available to every C.A. believer, some use it, and some don't.

Perfecting holiness and *working out your salvation*, do not refer to doing good deeds; it refers to learning truth from the Word of God and then applying that truth to your circumstances.

Hebrews 2:10 For it was fitting for Him (GTF) **for whom are all things** (the source), **and through whom are all things** (the agent), **in bringing many sons** (C.A. bels.) **to glory** (glorification), **to perfect** (bring to completion) **the author** (Pioneer, Leader, Champion – J.C.) **of their** (C.A. bels.) **salvation**

(deliverance) **through sufferings** (adversities He faced, not limited to the cross).

He [God] is preparing us for glory. He is preparing us for eternity. That preparation is of such a complex nature that in order to give us what we needed, He had to send His Son not only in terms of sending Him to the cross but in terms of pioneering this tremendous spiritual life. He pioneered that life so that we could in turn follow. Dr. Robert Dean NT-19

LESSON 66 (8-9-18)

Hebrews 2:2-3 For if ^{1st} the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3) how will **we** escape **if we** (believers) **neglect so great a salvation...?**

salvation – Is this word salvific?

if we – AMELEO, ἀμελέω, part. aa; to have no care for, to neglect, be unconcerned about someone or something.

This verse has nothing to do with believing the gospel and receiving eternal salvation. It is warning to C.A. believers that there is a just penalty or punishment for us if we neglect/ignore the deliverance God has provided for us (implementation of spiritual dynamics) which defeats the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Inasmuch as under the Old Covenant, which was instituted through angelic ministration (Gal. 3:19), there were severe penalties for infractions of its demands, the readers could not suppose there would be no penalties for infractions against the

New Covenant. Zane C. Hodges, "Hebrews," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 783.

Hebrews 12:25 **See to it** (imp.) **that you do not refuse** (sub.) **Him** (J.C.) **who is speaking. For if those** (OT believers) **did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we** (Church Age believers), **escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.**

The contrast between the two covenants is now focused as a contrast between a warning given on earth and one that issues from heaven itself. Since those who refused the Old Covenant did not escape, how could those of the New Covenant who turn away expect to do so? (cf. 2:3). *ibid* p. 811

We either depend on the H.S., which J.C. proved to be trustworthy, or we suffer self-induced misery and divine discipline.

The way we are delivered from being defeated from MAS in times of adversity, is by having learned B.D., we depend on the promises of God and the power of the H.S. rather than depend on ourselves.

This church as a whole was in need of salvation in the temporal, experiential sense, not in the eternal sense. They already possessed eternal life. Therefore, the apostle Paul called upon the Philippians to keep on working out (continuously) the "deliverance of the church into a state of Christian maturity. Ron Rhodes, "Repentance and Works in Cultic Theology Part One," *Chaffin Theological Seminary Journal* Volume 6 6, no. 1 (2000): 10–11.

LESSON 67 (8-14-18)

We will now turn our focus to the first few verses of Romans chapter eight which has bearing on the phrase, *work out our your salvation*.

So the issue in Romans 6, 7, and 8 isn't how to move from spiritual death to spiritual life. The issue isn't how to become justified. The issue is, how does a justified person live? So when we get into passages in Romans 6, 7 and 8 that talk about death we have to remember that isn't talking about the spiritual death of the unsaved person. That would mean the solution is justification, regeneration, but the true issue is the death-like experience of the believer who continues to swim in the stream of carnality.

As long as we are living according to the flesh, which is the term Paul will use, then we experience the same consequences of sin that the unbeliever experiences who is spiritually dead. The believer does not become spiritually dead once he is made alive in Christ but he does experience a death-like existence because he's not benefiting from the life-giving blessings and benefits that God has already given to us as believers. Dr. Robert

Dean NT Romans – 06

(NASV) **Romans 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

(NKJV) **Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.**

There is obviously a serious textual problem here which means there are some manuscripts which include the last phrase and there's some ancient manuscripts which don't.

If the phrase at the end is not included, as many people believe, then the verse is limited to talking about there being no condemnation for those who have already been justified, believers who are positionally in Christ Jesus. But all throughout this section, Paul talked about those who were already justified and therefore immune from eternal condemnation. So why would he bring up that issue here?

*Paul is talking about in the phrase "those who are in Christ." They are the ones who do not have the **condemnation** and the ones who are also walking according to the Holy Spirit. It hinges on the meaning of the Greek word for condemnation. It is only used 3 times in the New Testament. It's the word "katakrima" and all three uses are in Romans. Two of them are in Romans, chapter 5 and that tells us that it's in the post-justification section of Romans.*

It's not in the section where he's talking about the sinners back in Romans 1 and 2 where he's talking about being justified from condemnation. It's in the section where he's talking about how justified people live.

And justified people are able to live for the Lord only when they walk by the Spirit and they're free from condemnation which relates to punishment. That's how the word should be translated as punishment and it's not punishment in terms of eternal punishment but temporal punishment or consequences for sin in a person's life. Ibid

Paul was driving home the point that if we're not walking by the Spirit, then we are still acting like we're dead spiritually, so

there are consequences to that, which is present time punishment.

(NASV) **Romans 8:2** *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.*

(ESV) **Romans 8:2** *For THE LAW OF THE (HOLY) SPIRIT OF LIFE has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.*

The word translated Spirit with an upper case as pneuma is used thirteen times in Romans 6 through 8. Now the word is used a couple of other times meaning other things but in terms of meaning the Holy Spirit it's only thirteen of those times and twelve of those are in Romans, chapter 8.

The Holy Spirit is not mentioned at all in Romans 6 and only once in Romans 7 but it's used twelve times in Romans 8. Isn't that interesting? Ibid

The reason the Holy Spirit is used so often in Romans 8, is because it is about how to live as a good and faithful servant to the Lord and that requires the Holy Spirit's help.

As Church Age believers, we are not under the Law of Moses, but we are under the Law of the Holy Spirit of Life. Jesus lived under both Laws; He lived perfectly under the Mosaic Law and tested the Law of the Holy Spirit of Life in order to prove that it was perfectly reliable

The **Law of the Holy Spirit of Life** can be used as a title for the spiritual life of C.A. believers. It is the system that Jesus Christ bequeathed to us so that we would be able to fulfil our mission

by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. It includes the gracious solution of regaining our status of spirituality (1 John 1:9) when we sin.

LESSON 68 (8-16-18)

Romans 8:6-7 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7) because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,

What does **the law of God** refer to in the verse above? We find the answer just five verses earlier - the **Law of the Holy Spirit of Life.**

The way to obey the command to *walk by the Spirit* (Gal. 5:16, Rom 8:4) is by abiding by the Law of the Holy Spirit of Life.

That means we depend on God the H.S. rather than on our-selves to provide the power needed to solve our problems in life.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the (Holy) Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

Living under this C.A. Law has set us free from what? From suffering under the law of sin and death. All believers have eternal life and can be certain that their eternal destiny is secure, even if they choose to live under **the law of sin and death** instead of the **law of the Holy Spirit of life**. But, believers who live by the law of sin and death, ignore God and His word and there are certainly consequences for that. Their life will be very unpleasant because they will suffer self-induced misery and divine discipline.

They may experience:

Temporal Death (*Rom. 8:6*).

Operational Death (*James 2:16*)

Physical Death (*1 Cor. 11:30*)

Everyone is enslaved by the law of sin and death before they are born again. But afterwards, they have two choices:

1. Live by the law of the Holy Spirit of life
2. Live under the law of sin and death

There are no other options and no one can live partially under one law and partially under the other. Pastor R. B. Theime of Berachah Church in Houston taught that there are two dynaspheres.

1. The Divine Dynasphere
2. The Comsmic Dyansphere

Some believe the lie that they are autonomous, that they can live their lives independently, without being influenced by either God or Satan. But there is only two Laws, not three. There is only two Dynaspheres, not three.

The idea that one can live by his own Law or by his own Dynasphere is a myth. We can choose which Law or Dynasphere we will live by, but we can't choose our own.

We are certainly involved in the angelic conflict, but it isn't about us; it's about God and Satan. Every person will decide to follow God or follow Satan. Those who refuse to follow God, follows Satan, and vice versa.

When a believer obeys the Law of the Holy Spirit in Life / the Divine Dynasphere, he is filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit

Therefore, he grows in grace and knowledge and fulfills his duty and mission towards God.

When a believer obeys the Law of Sin and Death / the Cosmic Dynasphere, he lives under the influence of the world (the cosmos), the flesh (OSN), and the Devil. He is haunted by the entire rage of MAS (fear, anger, arrogance, selfishness, lust, etc.). He wastes his life, forfeits not only the joy and blessings he could have while on earth, but also rewards, opportunities, and blessings for all eternity in heaven (It's impossible to lose one's eternal salvation).

Romans 8:2 For the law of the (Holy) Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

Usually, the phrase "in Christ" or "in Christ Jesus" refers to being permanently identified with Christ by the baptism of the Holy Spirit which takes place when one believes the gospel. But sometimes, refers to a believer who is filled with the H.S. (walking by the H.S.) or walking by faith (2 Cor. 5:7) or walking in truth (3 John 1:3).

All believers are **POSITIONALLY IN CHRIST**. Spiritual believers are **EXPERIENTIALLY IN CHRIST** but Carnal believers are **not**.

The following verse is a command to *abide in Him (Christ)*. Certainly the use of "in Him (in Christ)" in this verse has nothing to do with the baptism of the H.S. and our positional standing with God.

1 John 2:28 Now, little children, abide in Him (Christ), so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

The following verses use “**in Christ**” and are used somewhat as a synonym for being in fellowship with God. They refer to being EXPERIENTIALLY IN CHRIST.

Romans 9:1 I am telling the truth **in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit,**

1 Corinthians 4:17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are **in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.**

2 Corinthians 12:19 All this time you have been thinking that we are defending ourselves to you. Actually, it is in the sight of God that we have been speaking **in Christ; and all for your up-building, beloved.**

Back at the start of Lesson 67, you’ll find “the first few verses of Romans chapter eight has bearing on the phrase, work out your salvation” (Phil. 2:12). Hopefully, you see the connection. A believer must obey the Law of the Holy Spirit in Life, (Rom.8:2) in order to work out your salvation.

Philippians 2:12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation **with fear and trembling;**

Most people, including most believers, are afraid of the wrong things. They’re afraid of dying, that people won’t like them, afraid of getting sick or not getting well, of getting laid off or not being able to find a job, afraid of witnessing to others, afraid of standing

up for righteousness, afraid of not having enough to eat, afraid of dentists, shots, doctors, etc...

The point is, we shouldn't be afraid of what man can do to us, but what God can do to us. But unfortunately, people are more afraid of man than they are God. People would never think of being indifferent or impudent to their boss, but they think nothing of being that way to God.

The Scriptures tell us to fear God, not man.

Isaiah 8:12-13 *You are not to say, 'It is a conspiracy!' In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. 13) "It is the **LORD of hosts** whom you should regard as holy. And **He shall be your fear**, and He shall be your dread.*

Isaiah 51:7 *"Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, a people in whose heart is My law; **Do not fear the reproach of man**, Nor be dismayed at their revilings.*

Isaiah 51:12 *"I, even I, am He who comforts you. **Who are you that you are afraid of man** who dies and of the son of man who is made like grass,*

Matthew 10:28 ***Do not fear those who kill the body** but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

1 Peter 3:13-14 *Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14) But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. **AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED,***

Psalm 119:120 My flesh trembles for fear of You, and I am afraid of Your judgments.

Ecclesiastes 8:12-13 Although a sinner does evil a hundred times and may lengthen his life, still I know that *it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly.* 13) But it will not be well for the evil man and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, *because he does not fear God.*

Isaiah 66:2 ...But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and *who trembles at My word.*

Jeremiah 5:22 Do you not fear Me?' declares the LORD. 'Do you not tremble in My presence?...24) They do not say in their heart, "*Let us now fear the LORD our God, Who gives rain in its season, both the autumn rain and the spring rain, Who keeps for us the appointed weeks of the harvest.*" 25) 'Your iniquities have turned these away, and your sins have withheld good from you.

Psalm 111:10 *The fear of the LORD* is the beginning of wisdom...

Proverbs 9:10 *The fear of the LORD* is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

"The fear of the LORD" is used 27 times in the NJKV.

LESSON 69 (8-21-18)

Hebrews 10:23-31 reveals the severity of God's retribution on believers who have no fear of ignoring and disobeying God.

Philippians 2:13 for it is God who *is at work* in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

The word “for” connects what was just said in verse 12 with what is said here, and of course, it is the last part of the same sentence which was started in verse 12.

is at work – ENERGEIO, ἐνεργέω, part. pa; ① to put one’s capabilities into operation, work, be at work, be active, operate, be effective

The *present tense* of the participle means that we all are a work in progress. We should remember that next time we are tempted to judge someone or be unforgiving. God does not give up on us even though many believers have given up on Him.

The principle is this: **God must work IN US before He can work THROUGH US. And if He can’t work IN US, he will have to work ON US.**

God uses people and the vicissitudes (changes) in life, whether they are good or bad, to work **in us** so that He can work **through us** to accomplish His will.

Sometimes God works in a person a long time before he is ready for the task God has for him. He worked in Moses for 40 years before he was ready to take on Pharaoh and the obstinate Israelites.

It is comforting to know that *working out our salvation* is not up to us alone because we can’t do it by ourselves, but we don’t have to, because God the Holy Spirit works in us to accomplish what we can’t do by ourselves.

What a wonderful thought that God is at work in us! That is the only way that any of us are able to do anything that is acceptable to Him. Remember what Jesus said:

John 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for *apart from Me you can do nothing.*

This verse has nothing to do with being born again or accepting the gospel. Jesus said this before the Holy Spirit was given and before He informed His disciples about the coming of the H.S. in John 16: 7-11.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.

Those were the last words our Lord said to His disciples before he ascended into heaven.

The fulfilment of what Jesus promised in regards to the Holy Spirit is recorded in Acts 2:1-4. It occurred fifty days after Christ's resurrection and it's known as the Day of Pentecost.

So the question arises, "How does the Holy Spirit work in us?"

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS IN US

1. **Fills Us** – **Ephesians 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,**

2. **Teaches Us Bible Doctrine** - John 14:26 *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.*

3. **Guides Us** - John 16:13 - *But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.*

LESSON 70 (8-23-18)

4. **Intercedes for Us** - Romans 8:25-26 *But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. 26) In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; 27) and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.*

5. **Produces Fruit of the Spirit** - Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

This may seem a bit confusing because we all know that there are Christians who do not have the will to work for God's good pleasure. They are concerned only about their good pleasure. Does this mean that God's will is thwarted by baby believers who ignore Him? No, His plan is always carried out. Either he will work

in us or he will work on us. Either way He will accomplish his purpose.

Hebrews 13:20a-21 Now may the God of peace... 21) equip you in every good thing **to do His will, working in us** that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 2:5 you also, as living stones, **are being built up** as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Psalms 138:8 **The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;** your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

Colossians 1:11-12 May **you be strengthened with all power,** according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, 12) giving thanks to the Father, **who has qualified you** to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Ephesians 2:10 For **we are his workmanship,** created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

God is working according to a blueprint with all its specifications. With some of us the work is going rather slowly. Therefore, he has to send his "providential agencies." If we do not respond to God's Word then he sends providential situations in our lives to get our attention. It may be a tragic accident, a terrible mistake, a calamity or catastrophe. These are no accidents. Everything is by divine design in the life of the child of

God. God's timing is exquisite. He does not wait for us to approve of his methods either. Grace Notes, Philipians

So what happens to believers who refuse to allow God to work in them? He goes to work on them, which includes divine discipline and the things that are very unpleasant.

Heb. 10:27 ...a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.

Galatians 5:4 You [believer] have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Hebrews 6:7 For ground [positive believers] that drinks the rain [daily intake of doctrine] which often falls on it [consistent teaching from a pastor/teacher] and brings forth vegetation [spiritual fruit] useful to those [owners, in this case God] for whose sake it [the ground/the growing believer] is also tilled [cultivated, pruned], receives a blessing [Super Grace blessing] from God;

Hebrews 6:8 but if it [the ground, negative believer] yields thorns and thistles [human good], it [the ground, reversionistic believer] is worthless and close to being cursed [Sin Unto Death], and it [human good/thorns and thistles] ends up being burned [human good/wood, hay and stubble at the Judgment Seat of Christ].

LESSON 71 (8-28-18)

Philippians 2:14-16 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15) so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16) holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

Philippians 2:14 Do all things (v. pam) without grumbling or disputing;

without grumbling - GOGGUSMOS, γογγυσμός, n. gpm, complaint, displeasure, expressed in murmuring: utterance made in a low tone of voice.

This may well be one of the most difficult commands to obey in the entire Bible. Grumbling is usually done behind the scenes, not openly.

1 Peter 4:9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint.

Grumbling is a verbal expression of a MAS. God does not take kindly to it and there can be devastating consequences to those who grumble/complain.

LESSON 72 (8-30-18)

Num. chapt 16 & 17. (Ex. 16, Num. 11, and Ex. 17:1-6)

There is a well-known saying: “*The squeaky wheel gets the grease.*” That may be true some of the time, but sometimes the squeaking wheel gets replaced.

The word “**grumble**” and its derivatives are used thirty-three times in the NASV. 22 times in the O.T. and 11 times in the N.T. The word “**complain**” is used 12 times, 11 in the O.T. & 1 in the N.T. The word “**complaint**” is used 20 times in the O.T. and 4 times in the N.T. So in total, the total number of times that the Bible uses a word that means to grumble or complain is 65 times.

LESSON 73 (9-4-18)

See **Numbers 14**, **Pslam 106:13-18**

Sometimes it wears out our patience to read of these of the repeated disobediences, but they never proved God to be anything but of long patience and infinitely kind. Just call these events to mind: the murmuring at Marah over the bitter water; the murmuring in the wilderness of Sin for some food like the flesh-pots of Egypt; the striving at Rephidim for water; the worship of the golden calf at Sinai; the murmuring at Taberah; the stubbornness at Kibroth-hattaavah; the contention of Miriam and Aaron with Moses over his Cushite wife; the unbelieving report of ten of the spies who went into Canaan; the consequent rebellion of the people at Kadesh-barnea; their wilfulness and defeat at Hormah; the rebellion of Korah; the murmuring of the people because of the death of Korah and his allies; the striving at the waters of Meribah; their complaint over the wilderness life while compassing the land of Edom in their journeying from mount Hor; and the sin at Peor. Charles Lee Feinberg, “What Israel Means to God,” Bibliotheca Sacra 93 (1936): 308–309.

Let Down Your Bucket

An unforgettable experience of my college days was to hear a series of lectures by George Washington Carver. His life is a chronicle of sacrifice, humility, brilliance, good deeds, and dedication. He stated his personal philosophy in these simple words, "Let down your buckets where you are." He encouraged us and everyone not to go through life dodging issues, complaining, and criticizing, but to contribute something. This was illustrated time and time again in Dr. Carver's own career, but never more dramatically than when he was offered one-hundred-seventy-five thousand dollars a year to work with Thomas A. Edison, and declined. His reason: "I felt that God was not through with me in Tuskegee; there was still plenty of work to do for Him there." G. Curtis Jones, 1000 Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1986), 77.

Complainers Live Longer?

A recent medical survey states that chronic complainers live longer than people who are always sweet and serene. It claims that their cantankerous spirit gives them a purpose for living. Each morning they get up with a fresh challenge to see how many things they can find to grumble about, and they derive great satisfaction from making others miserable.

*I question whether those who complain actually do outlive those who don't. Maybe it just seems that way to everybody around them. —Herbert Vander Lugt *ibid**

*A man once **complained** to Mark Twain that the Bible was all jumbled up, inconsistent, and filled with passages he could not understand. The humorist replied, "I have more difficulty with the passages I do understand than with the passages I do not understand." *ibid*.*

There's no sense in advertising your troubles—there's no market for them. Ibid 257

Grumbling and complaining is an outward manifestation of a bad attitude and self-pity is usually behind the bad attitude. And usually, it is a self-pity that is based on an exaggerated opinion of oneself which is motivated by arrogance.

Romans 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

Once the arrogance is dealt with, the self-pity disappears, then the attitude changes and the grumbling ends as well. No one can be happy who is a chronic complainer.

or disputing – DIALOGISMOS, διαλογισμός, n. gsm; ③ verbal exchange that takes place when conflicting ideas are expressed, dispute, argument

1 Timothy 2:8 Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.

Dissension is translated from the Greek word *dialogismos*. *Lifting up holy hands* – Some people today lift up their hands when they pray but this is used as an idiom for praying while being filled with the Holy Spirit.

dissension - to engage in argument: DEBATE; especially: to argue irritably or with irritating persistence. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

It is OK to have a different view or opinion but it's not OK to argue. Debate is fine but quarreling is not. We must remember that it takes two people to quarrel and when we notice any sign of anger or hostility in someone's tone or body language, it's time to change the subject or bring the conversation to an end.

Everyone is welcome to his own opinion, even when it differs from ours, and becoming argumentative or defensive will usually eliminate any chance of a person to be open-minded or to come around to your way of thinking.

Asking questions works much better than challenging someone about their beliefs. People who ask questions seldom are accused of being argumentative and they learn a lot about the person. Most people do too much talking and not enough listening.

Don't tell people they are wrong; no one likes that and it puts people on their defensive and it nearly always turns a conversation into a debate. Let them present their view and then ask questions about it. Ex. Where did you get that idea? Who said that? Have you checked that out?

Don't get sucked in to an argument by disagreeable people who love to argue and cause other people to get all upset. Just tell them that they are welcome to their opinion and then, move on.

LESSON 74 (9-6-18)

Believers who consistently learn Bible doctrine from pastors who are accurately teaching the Word are rare. Probably less than one percent of the population. We fall into that very small percentage. That means that nearly everyone outside of our circle of friends, family, and church family have a different worldview than we have. If we don't learn how to reach these people with the gospel and biblical truth without turning them off or allowing a conversation to turn into an argument, how can we be effective ambassadors for Christ? The answer is, we can't.

We must learn how to lead them to Christ using questions. We do this by turning statements into questions.

Example:

A person says he does not believe in the Bible.

Rather than giving him all the evidence that shows that the Bible is true (prophecy, scientific statements, archeology, etc.), put the burden of proof on him. Send the ball back into his court, make him defend the statement he just made.

We can do that by simply saying two words – “Why not?”

He may say that the Bible was written over 2,000 years ago so it's no longer relevant to us living in the 21st century.

You could start giving him proof that the Bible is inspired by God and why it is still relevant but he would probably say something like, “I'm still not buying it.”

Or, you could respond to his, “the Bible's too old to be relevant” statement by saying, “Really, have you ever read the Bible?”

Making statements to counter what someone has said often leads into an argument, questions do not. There is a time to make statements and that is usually when someone asks you questions because they are interested in what you think.

Philippians 2:15 so that you **will prove** (v. ams) **your-selves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,**

The words “*will prove*” are translated “*may become*” in most translations. “Become” indicates a process—they are to be growing toward something they do not yet fully possess as children of God.

This verse has to do with our testimony before the world. People look at Christians with an extra measure of cynicism, hoping to see flaws of any kind but especially hypocrisy.

If we are rude, argumentative, insensitive, thoughtless, complaining, or judgmental, in any way, unbelievers will see us as phonies and have nothing to do with us. We must remember that the gospel is at stake when we allow ourselves to ignore the Royal Family Honor Code.

THE ROYAL FAMILY HONOR CODE

1. The Church Age is the dispensation of the Royal Family of God. Therefore we must have royal code to live by.
2. Jesus Christ Himself bequeathed to us the Law of the Holy Spirit in Life (*Rom. 8:2*) which can be used as a general term

or title for the RFHC.

3. The RFHC is a system of spiritual integrity mandated by God to all Church Age believers.
4. It refers to believer's personal integrity in relationship with all other people.
5. It includes the filling of the Holy Spirit; doctrinal orientation; grace orientation; and a personal sense of destiny.
6. Believers develop the RFHC in their lives through the consistent intake of Bible doctrine.
7. The RFHC centers around two words: **Truth** and **Integrity**.
8. **Truth** - Absolute truth will tolerate nothing less than the honor, integrity, and virtue that comes from the intake and application of doctrine while being filled with the Holy Spirit.
9. Absolute truth has prevailed in the past and will prevail in the future. But when people reject absolute truth, there is no understanding of honor and integrity.
10. **Integrity** - Integrity is adherence to spiritual, moral, and ethical principles related to honor.
11. The honor code cannot be executed by believers apart from being filled with the Holy Spirit.
12. The doctrine of **Conditional and Unconditional Love**, also known as **Personal and Impersonal Love**, are part of the RFHC that relates to other people.
13. Believers who violate the royal family honor code are described in **2 Tim 3:2-8**.

so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless –

This word does not mean sinless perfection; it means to be above reproach. It means that you not only have refrained from crime, debauchery, and dishonesty, but also that you are known to be honorable, respected, and trusted. You are a person that has integrity.

All believers are blameless in a positional sense because all believers have the Righteousness of God. And someday, we will be experientially spotless, faultless and flawless when we receive or resurrection body.

Jude 1:24 Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

We are to live our lives in such a way that no one can legitimately point an accusing finger at us. We should all have a reputation of being moral and one who has great integrity and character.

LESSON 75 (9-11-18)

Murmuring, complaining and arguing are manifestations of discontent. Discontent is a sign of rejection or ignorance of Bible doctrine which is characteristic of immature believers. Immature believers do not prove themselves to be blameless.

and innocent, AKERAIOS, ἀκέραιος, adj. npm; innocent, pure, harmless

This word is used only two other times in the N.T.

Romans 16:19 ...but I want you to be wise in what is good and *innocent* in what is evil.

Believers should know all about goodness. They should know the difference between *human good* and *divine good*. They should be experienced in doing good but not so with evil. The main thing they should know about evil is to avoid it and expose it. Sometimes the word *innocent* is translated *harmless*. That translation would fit well in this verse.

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and *innocent* as doves

Our Lord gave a parable in Luke 16 about an employee of a rich man who was not doing his job well but was very shrewd in making plans for his future when he was fired.

Luke 16:8 "And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light."

The master/boss praised his unworthy manager/employee for the shrewd way he handled being fired. Even though he was dishonest, he demonstrated worldly wisdom concerning worldly affairs.

Then Jesus rebuked His followers by pointing out that people who focus on worldly things were shrewder in dealing with other worldly people than the sons of light were. This was a good lesson from a bad example.

We should be original, innovative, and innocent when dealing with unbelievers and believers who are stalled in carnality.

The strategy of asking questions gives us the flexibility to be innovative with our answers rather than sounding like we are reciting a canned speech.

The point is that **innocent** here does not mean gullible or naïve; a person can be shrewd and innocent at the same time.

children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation

There is nothing that we can do or that anybody else can do to change the fact that we are children of God. The idea here is that since we are children of God, we ought to act like it. Children of God should be above reproach.

reproach – AMOMOS, ἄμωμος, adj. npn; ② pertinent to being without fault and therefore morally blameless, unblemished. Reproach is an expression of disapproval, blame, or disgrace.

in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,

*The phrase "in the midst" indicates the believer's relationship to the world is **insulation**, not **isolation**. God does not want us isolated from the world but insulated from its influence. We are in the world but we are not of the world.* Grace Works

We are in the world, but not of the world.

crooked – SKOLIOS, σκολιός, adj. gpf; ② pertinent to being morally bent or twisted, crooked, unscrupulous, dishonest

and perverse – DIASTREPHO, διαστρέφω, part. rp; ② to cause to depart from an accepted standard of oral or spiritual values, make crooked, pervert

Acts 20:29-30 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30) and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking **perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.**

Acts 2:40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this **perverse generation!"**

Read: **Proverbs 2:1-15**

Believers cannot legitimately blame their bad behavior on the crooked degenerate society they live in because this verse challenges us to be blameless and innocent in the midst of such a generation.

LESSON 76 (9-18-18)

among whom you appear as lights in the world,

you appear – PHAINO, φαίνω, v. ppi, ① to shine or to produce light, shine

The fact that this verb is in the passive voice may seem to odd until we remember that we do not generate the light, we reflect it.

Evidently, the believers were complaining to God and each other and arguing with each other. As a result they were a

turnoff to the unregenerate; they were sinning rather than shining.

All unbelievers are darkness and their only chance of becoming light is to believe the gospel.

Ephesians 5:8 ... for you were formerly darkness [unbelievers], but now you are light in the Lord [permanently, positionally]; walk ^(pam) as children of light [experientially, under the filling of the H.S.]

2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

All believers are in light because they all are in Christ, but many are in darkness experientially.

John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15) "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16) "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

It is easy for believers to become discouraged because our society continues to get darker and darker. But the darker the night, the easier it is to see the candle's glow.

The challenge of this passage is that we are to go into the teeth of a "crooked and perverse" generation with the light of God's word with a transparent testimony.

John 12:46 "I have come as *Light* into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."

It is very sad to see how many churches have allowed their light to burn so dim or even go out. The incremental encroachment of darkness in so many churches is shocking. Many churches have women behind the pulpit, homosexuals and lesbian pastors, political correctness and post-modern type teaching, false doctrine, false gospel, divine healers, tongues, Lordship salvation, Preterism, reformed theology, replacement theology, covenant theology, etc.

Living in a society that has turned its back on God and has become degenerate and hostile to God and His Word can be a challenge to growing believers. Over time, morality and standards that once were high, start to slip to the point that people can hardly remember them. Believers must strive to not only remember those standards, but also live by them.

That can be difficult to do because you stand out as a non-conformist and you make a very easy target. However the first phrase in the next verse gives us the solution. We can stand firm, let our little light shine, and have a tremendous influence on those who are in darkness.

Philippians 2:16 holding fast *the word of life*, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

holding fast – This is a present active participle. The active voice means that we produce the action and the present tense means that the action is ongoing; it's continuous.

People's lives reflect what is most important to them and what they spend their time doing and who they do it with. No one can hold fast the word of life if their attitude is:

- I study the Bible when I can fit it in my schedule
- I know enough doctrine already
- I study the Bible for myself, I don't need a pastor
- I'm a believer, I'm going to heaven, what's all this falderal about getting doctrine?

holding fast can also mean to *hold forth*, meaning to offer the Word of truth to others.

2 Corinthians 5:19-20 God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

the word of life – What a wonderful term for the Bible. It's also called the Word of God, the Word of truth, the Word (*John 1:1*) Bible doctrine, all of which produces life. It is a life-giving Word.

Proverbs 4:13 Take hold of instruction (Bible Doctrine); do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.

Hebrews 4:12 For *the word of God is living and powerful*, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Psalm 119:130 The *unfolding of Your words gives light*; It gives understanding to the simple.

LESSON 77 (9-20-18) (wisdom is synonymous with B.D. here)
Proverbs 3:13-18 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains understanding. 14) For her profit is better than the profit of silver and her gain better than fine gold. 15) She is more precious than jewels; and nothing you desire compares with her. 16) Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. 17) Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are peace. 18) She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and *happy are all who hold her fast.*

so that in the day of Christ - the “Day of Christ” (v. 2:16) and; “Day of Jesus Christ” (v. 10), and the “Day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:8), which looks to the final salvation, reward, and glorification of believers. (1 Cor. 3:10–15; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:9, 10).

This is referring to the Rapture and the Judgment Seat of Christ that immediately follows. The Judgment Seat of Christ

is where all C.A. believers will receive their evaluation for what they did with their life.

Romans 14:10, 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Hebrews 6:7-12, 1 John 4:17

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

Pastor-teachers will give an account at the JSC of their service to their congregation. If they have been faithfully and accurately teaching the Word of God, they will receive their evaluation with joy. However if they haven't been faithful or diligent, they will receive his evaluation with groaning and grief, which will not be good for those in their congregation.

The word stresses the leaders' responsibility to watch over and protect their congregations—an appropriate usage in the context of a warning against false teachers. Church rule, which minimizes the biblical authority of elders in favor of a cultural, democratic process, is foreign to the NT (cf. 1

Thess. 5:12, 13). John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1672.

I will have reason to glory – This is the goal of all of us when we receive our evaluation at the JSC is it not?

because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. Paul looked to the end when he would meet the Lord because he was concerned about how the Lord would evaluate his life and we should be concerned as well.

The Christian life is a race in which we compete, but we are not competing against each other but we are competing against our OSN and all the things that would distract us and keep us from living the abundant life that God wants us to live.

Faithfulness is the key.

LESSON 78 (9-25-18)

Your life may be full, but empty. That sounds like a contradiction but it means that you may experience all that life has to offer but if Jesus Christ is not in it, it's empty.

The book of Ecclesiastes describes many of the things that people do to find fulfillment and satisfaction but they all wind up being vanity of vanity. Why? Because Christ is not in them.

Most people, believers included, live their life to please themselves and they never find true joy, comfort, or contentment. Something is always missing. But it's actually not a something, it's a someone – the Lord Jesus Christ.

Only He can give people what they really want but most won't trust Him, or His Word enough to stop relying on themselves and their scheming and conniving to get what they want. They are afraid to totally trust Him with their worries and problems and just wait on Him to provide the perfect solution at the perfect time.

Psalm 55:22 *Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.*

Psalm 27:14 Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD.

Psalm 62:8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Philippians 2:17 But even if ^(1st class) I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.

being poured out – SPENDO, σπένδω, v. ppi; offer a libation/drink-offering

To be offered as a libation or drink offering.” Some connect this with Paul’s future martyrdom, but the verb is in the present tense, which means he is referring to his sacrificial ministry among the Philippians. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1824.

The content of the letter reveals by contrast that Paul assumes he will live (see 1:25) and expects to be released from prison shortly (see v. 24). Thus Paul probably was saying that he was presently being poured out as a living offering on behalf of the faith of the Philippians. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Php 2:17.

upon the sacrifice - means primarily the act of offering something to God.

Webster’s definition of **SACRIFICE**

3 a : destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else

b : something given up or lost (the sacrifices made by parents). Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield,

and service - Paul chooses a Greek term that depicts a person who fulfills the duties of a public office at his or her own expense.

In the Christian context, this word speaks of sacrificially serving others in honor of what God has done for them.

Paul used the same words here, **sacrifice** (thysia) and **service** (leitourgia - We get our word "liturgy" from this Greek word.), that he used in Romans 12:1.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

of your faith, Paul's pouring out his life as a drink offering was a sign or a tribute to the "sacrifice" and "service" that the Philippians made because of their faith.

Read: ***2 Samuel 23:8-23**

Compare the description of the warriors in David's army with our army today. Our military includes homosexuals, trans-genders, women, and sensitivity training. There is a controversy over supplying transgender soldiers with the drugs and supplies they need that are provided at tax-payer's expense. There is a big problem with the number of sexual assaults alleged by females in military service. The social experimentation that has occurred in our military will surely produce bitter fruit in a world that becomes more dangerous every day.

LESSON 79 (9-27-18)

Paul was poured out as a drink offering for churches other than the Philippian Church. He loved the Corinthian Church as well for which he served and suffered even though they didn't seem to appreciate it.

2 Corinthians 12:14-15 *Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 15) **And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.***

Paul continued to the end to suffer and serve those who were his spiritual children:

2 Timothy 4:6-7 *For I am already **being poured out as a drink offering**, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7) **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.***

The Philippians were eager and hungry to grow spiritually and to apply what they learned to their circumstances. Paul was willing to make whatever sacrifice necessary, even if it meant losing his life, to advance their faith.

I rejoice and share my joy with you all.

The words **rejoice** and **joy** are not normally associated with **sacrifice** and **service**.

This phrase is not to be minimized; it demonstrates that a believer can suffer and serve, with his very life in jeopardy, yet still have joy and peace. Paul was in a Roman prison in

chains, not knowing if he would be executed or not, when he said, *“I rejoice and share my joy with you all”*.

What is it that changes sacrifice, which is usually dreaded, into sacrifice that is joyous? A few words come to mind, **Love**, **Trust**, **Purpose**, and **Dedication**.

Love – Love is arguably the most powerful motivating force on earth. We can rejoice while suffering because of God’s love for us and for our love for Him.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8 gives a description what love is and what one’s life is like without it.

Trust – Webster’s Definition: *assured reliance on the ability, character, strength, or truth of someone or something*. Many put their trust in themselves, other people, organizations, or money, but those are not totally reliable. However, putting one’s trust in God enables a person to go through anything or do anything without fear or doubt. He can even rejoice while suffering.

Purpose – What is life without purpose? Purpose gives life meaning. Soldiers are willing to give their life for the freedom and protection of their country. Believers are willing to serve, suffer, and give their life as an expression of their love, faithful-

ness, and gratitude to the Lord. There is no purpose higher than glorifying Him.

Dedication – Just as faith without works is dead (in an experisense), purpose without dedication is meaningless. Most people, including believers, are dedicated to their purpose in life, but their purpose is not to be a good and faithful servant to God, nor is it to glorify Him.

Unbelievers can be motivated to suffer because of the **love** they have for someone or something, for a **purpose** that drives them forward, and be **dedicated** to a cause or purpose that induces them to stay the course even during hard times.

But since they do not put their **trust in God**, they lack the unique comfort and joy that believers have through the Holy Spirit and their faithful study of the word of God. Suffering draws them closer to God because they come to realize that He is their only hope, their Rock, and their faithful Deliverer who provides the perfect solution at the perfect time.

However, when suffering believers do not rely on God and His word, they experience fear and anger that robs them of the comfort and joy that could be theirs. If they acknowledge their sins to God, they could rely on His power rather than their own, then they could relax under pressure, trusting Him to provide a solution.

When a believer casts his burden on the Lord, that burden is no longer his, it is the Lords. Scriptures like (*Joshua 1:9*) and

(1 Cor. 10:13) protect us from the ever present temptation to worry about the future.

Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

1 Corinthians 10:13 No trial has overtaken you that is not faced by others. And God is faithful: He will not let you be tried beyond what you are able to bear, but with the trial will also provide a way out so that you may be able to endure it.

(NASV) ***Philippians 2:18 You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.***

(NKJV) ***Philippians 2:18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.***

(NASV) ***rejoice*** / (NKJV) ***be glad*** - CHAIRO, χαίρω, v. pam; ① to be in a state of happiness and well-being, rejoice, be glad

(NASV) ***share your joy*** / (NKJV) ***rejoice*** - SUGCHAIRO, συγχαίρω, v. pam; ① to experience joy in conjunction w. someone, rejoice with.

The (NKJV) seems to be the better translation here because the word “*urge*” in the (NASV) makes it sound more like a wish or a desire rather than a command. “*Urge*” is in italics since it’s not the manuscript.

LESSON 80 (10-2-18)

Paul loved the Philippians and wanted them to experience the same kind of joy he had. He wanted them to know how exhilarating it is to be truly free from fear and anxiety, to have a joy that is not dependent on how things are going in your life.

One of the main points that is made in the epistle of Philippians is joy, including how to acquire it and how to keep it regardless of what the circumstances may be.

LESSON 81 (10-4-18)

Paul was essentially saying, "If you hear that I am released, rejoice! If you hear that I have been executed, rejoice! It is the will of God that counts." There is no joy outside the will of God.

Grace Notes

There are so many examples of people in the Bible who decided to act independently of God putting their will above the will of God. Two of the most recent ones we have focused on are Eve and Sarai. Think about how much suffering came about because they thought they could manage their lives better than God.

Romans 12:2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

As a Christian is transformed in his mind and is made more like Christ, he comes to approve and desire God's will, not his own will for his life. Then he discovers that God's will is what is good for him, and that it pleases God, and is complete in every way. It is all he needs. But only by being

renewed spiritually can a believer ascertain, do, and enjoy the will of God. *New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Ro 12:1.*

As believers, we are to learn what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Philippians 2:19 But I hope / (KJV) Trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.

hope – ELPIZO, ἐλπίζω, v. pai; ② to look forward to something in view of the measures one takes to ensure fulfillment, expect.

Again, Paul was demonstrating his selflessness and his love and concern for the Philippians; rather than considering his own very precarious circumstances.

He also demonstrated the importance of trusting in the Lord. It is because of that fact that Paul was rejoicing and thinking of others even though his very life could end soon. He knew that the Lord would provide the opportunity and means to send Timothy if it was His will to do so.

The concern Paul demonstrated in sending Timothy was an example for the Philippians and all believers to follow. Not

only did Paul give them the gospel and lead them to Christ, but he also wanted to be sure they were growing spiritually.

Robert P. Lightner, "Philippians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 657.

Timothy was the perfect one to send; he was well known in Philippi and he was with Paul on each of his three visits to that city.

Another reason Paul sent Timothy was to deal with the trouble between believers there which could have caused a split in the church. The trip was necessary even though it was long and dangerous, a 2,000 mile round-trip with dangers from bandits, wild animals, unseaworthy ships, and storms at sea. However,

This wasn't the only time that Paul sent Timothy to troubleshoot:

1 Cor. 4:17 "For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church"

1 Thessalonians 3:1 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, 2) and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,

One takeaway from this is that pastors cannot do it all and they need help from members of their flock who are capable and willing to help out. This is true for members of the flock as

well; they need to mentor and train others so that they will be able to stand in the gap when necessary.

Both Paul's letter and Timothy's visit would certainly be an encouragement to the believers at Philippi and would also encourage him to hear how his beloved flock in Philippi was doing. He knew how vitally important encouragement is.

LESSON 82 (10-9-18)

so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.

Proverbs 25:25 As cold water to a weary soul, so is good news from a far country.

The importance of encouragement is recorded in **Acts 15:19-31**.

Hebrews 3:12-14 Take care (v. pam), brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. 13) But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14) For we have become partakers of Christ, if ^{3rd} we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,

Many believe that the writer of Hebrews was making a distinction between those who claimed to be believers, but weren't, to those who were true believers. However he addressed them as "brethren" which is the same term used in

Heb. 3:1 where they are said to be “*holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling*”.

Verse 13 demonstrates that believers can become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, but consistent encouragement from other believers helps to keep that from happening.

LESSON 83 (10-11-18)

It will behoove us to focus on the ***deceitfulness of sin*** for a moment. Deceitful means to cause one to accept as true that which is false. It is an underhanded method to purposely lead someone astray, give a false impression, to be deceptive.

Deceit with its cognates “deceitful” and “deceitfully” are used 73 times in the NASV.

1 Peter 3:10 For "He who would love life and see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking **deceit**.

deceit - DOLOS, δόλος, n. asm; taking advantage through craft and underhanded methods, deceit, cunning, treachery

Psalm 32:2 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no **deceit**.

Proverbs 12:20 **Deceit** is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy.

Sometimes believers are not deceived from others, but from themselves. The temptation to sin can be so powerful that a believer will deceive himself into succumbing to sin. He uses the same lies and half-truths against himself that a deceitful person would use against him.

Examples:

What was done to me was not fair so I have the right to get even (seek revenge).

Romans 12:19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

The position that I worked very hard to get and which I am most qualified, was given to a brownnoser who is totally unqualified. From now on, I will do just enough to get by instead of knocking myself out for a company that doesn't appreciate my effort.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Those who are deceitful, try to deceive you so they can bring you down. Encouragement is just the opposite of deceit because it is used to build you up rather than tear you down.

*"Instruction does much, but encouragement everything."
(Letter to A.F. Oeser, Nov. 9, 1768)" — Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

"Remember, man does not live on bread alone: sometimes he needs a little buttering up." — John C. Maxwell

*Flatter me, and I may not believe you
Criticize me, and I may not like you
Ignore me, and I may not forgive you
Encourage me, and I may not forget you*

William Arthur

In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity.

Albert Einstein

Psalm 34:18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Acts 11:23 Then when he (Barnabas – son of encouragement, Acts 4:36) arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and **began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord;**

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore **encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.**

1 Thessalonians 5:14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, **encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.**

LESSON 84 (10-16-18)

See **Philippians 2:2** (See Encouragement notes, page 136-138)

LESSON 85 (10-18-18)

See **Philippians 2:2** (See “same mind” notes, page 142-143)

Philippians 2:20 for I have no one else of kindred spirit [NKJV – like minded] who will **genuinely be concerned for your welfare.** (See “same mind”- page 142-143)

kindred spirit – ISOPSUCHOS, ἰσόψυχος, adj. asm; a compound word, ISOS = equal or agreement and PSUCHE =

soul. Having much in common with you, of like soul/mind. This word is a hapax legomena, used only once.

In a number of languages ἰσόψυχος may be rendered as ‘one who thinks the same way’ or possibly ‘one who has the same feelings about.’ In the latter instance, ‘feelings’ would be the equivalent of ‘attitude.’ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 321.

Romans 12:16 Be of the *same mind* toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.

genuinely – GNESIOS, γνησίως, acv. sincerely, genuinely

Why do you think that Paul used this word to describe the people’s concern for the Philippians?

Long before Paul was imprisoned in Rome, he wrote to the church there commending them on their reputation for sharing their faith.

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

Just three years later, the believers in Rome had lost their concern for others and became selfish and self-centered. This can happen to any church because apart from getting a steady diet of B.D., believers will fall back into their old comfortable wheel-tracks of a “Me First” attitude.

Why did Paul have complete confidence that Timothy was the right man to send?

2 Timothy 3:10 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, 11) persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!

Paul knew of no one who cared for people like Timothy. He was others oriented, not focused on self-interests. But evidently the church at Rome was living in a "me generation."

Grace Notes

Philippians 2:21 For they all *seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.*

seek after – ΖΗΤΕΩ, ζητέω, v. pai; ③ to devote serious effort to realize one's desire or objective, strive for, aim (at), try to obtain, desire, wish (for)

1 Corinthians 10:24 Let no one *seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.*

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5) does not act unbecomingly; *it does not seek its own*, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,

Philippians 2:4 *do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

Arrogance, selfishness, contentiousness, jealousy, gossip, and revenge are manifestations of a person who has put himself and his interests above those of anyone else.

A relationship cannot hold up under such discord and neither can a local church.

Too many believers have a selfish self-serving attitude when it comes to helping or making sacrifices for others. They ask – “What’s in it for me?” when they make decisions. They are more than willing to accept the phenomenal grace of God but they are not willing to be gracious to others.

not those [interests] *of* [concerning] *Christ Jesus*.

This is all about putting spiritual matters first. The situation is actually worse than not putting spiritual things first, it’s not even considering them at all. Many, maybe even most believers have no spiritual component working in their lives. They live their lives and make decisions by their emotions with very little, if any, divine viewpoint.

LESSON 86 (10-30-18)

They either don’t know, or are not interested in the promises God has given to those who make their spiritual life their number one priority.

Matthew 6:33 *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

John 6:27 Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you...

Philippians 2:22 But you know of his [Timothy's] proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. 23) Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24) and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly.

1 Corinthians 16:10-11 Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without cause to be afraid, for he is doing the Lord's work, as I also am. ¹¹ So let no one despise him. But send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I expect him with the brethren.

Acts 16:1-3 Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, 2) and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. 3) Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

Paul refused to circumcise Titus – **Gal. 2:5**

Philippians 2:25-26 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my

need; 26) because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.

Since the church had sent Epaphroditus to bring Paul “the gifts” (of money, 4:18) and to discover how things were going with him, they probably intended for him to stay and assist Paul indefinitely. However, the apostle chose to send him back to them. Robert P. Lightner, “Philippians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: 1985), 657–658.

Paul wanted to make sure that the Philippian believers knew how highly he thought of Epaphroditus. He had shared the work and dangers along with the Apostle Paul.

➤ He called him ***my brother***

We use this term very loosely today. Epaphroditus was more than a fellow believer, he was closer to Paul than most biological brothers are.

➤ ***Fellow worker***

People who serve the Lord together have a special fellowship. Many believers have not yet found out that being a faithful servant to the Lord involves work.

1 Corinthians 3:9 - For we are God's fellow worker...

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

➤ ***Fellow soldier***

I've been told that those who have been in battle together have a special bond. They have faced the ultimate in danger, sacrifice, and suffering.

Don't fool yourself, we believers are in a war and the enemy is very real. If we are not alert and prepared, we will become casualties in the Angelic Conflict.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 2:3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

We cannot call every believer a "*fellow soldier*". Only those engaged in spiritual warfare can be called that. That would include those who win souls for Christ; who are on the front lines (missionaries, church workers, and pastors); those who support those on the front lines with their prayers, funds, and time.

➤ ***Your messenger***

The word "messenger" in the Greek is the word "apostle." He was not an apostle of the Lord but an apostle of the church at Philippi. There are no apostles now but we are all believers are apostles in the sense that we all have a message to give to the lost.

➤ A ***minister*** to Paul

Minister – LEITOURGOS, λειτουργός, n. asm; ② one engaged in personal service, aide, assistant, servant. This word can also ① one engaged in administrative or cultic service,

servant, minister, the formal sense. It is the word from which we get our English word liturgy.

Epaphroditus willingly became the servant of Paul. He did not have even a scintilla of jealousy or competitiveness towards Paul. If Epaphroditus did have an administrative office, it did not get in the way of becoming a servant to Paul.

LESSON 87 (11-1-18)

He was the opposite of those referenced in verse 21 who were concerned only about themselves and their interests.

Dr. H.A. Ironside used to tell about a group of believers who thought only of “fellowship.” They had little concern for reaching the lost or for defending the faith against its enemies. In front of their meeting place they hung a sign: JESUS ONLY. But the wind blew away some of the letters, and the sign read—US ONLY. It was a perfect description of a group of people who were not balanced Christians.

Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 82.

This same Greek word (in the dative case) is translated “servant” in Phil. 2:17 referring to Paul’s effort towards his beloved flock.

Epaphroditus means charming, fair, lovely, one devoted to Aphrodite (Venus). Pagans worshiped her as the goddess of love and sex. It appears that before Epaphroditus became a believer, he was probably a follower of Aphrodite. Our English word *Aphrodisiac* comes from the name of this pagan goddess.

Not much is known about Epaphroditus; his name is mentioned only two times in the Bible, here in verse 25 and in 4:18. He is one of the many unsung heroes who was faithful in his sphere of service. But God takes note those types:

Hebrews 6:10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. 11) And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12) so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Philippians 2:26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27) For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow.

Epaphroditus could not wait to see his congregation again. He was homesick.

When a church is what God designed it to be people love to be there. It is the people in the congregation that makes the atmosphere of the church. People who are proud of and happy in their church will attract others. The esprit de corps of a congregation is an essential factor in its growth. Grace Notes

Notice that when Epaphroditus was on what appeared to be his death bed, his concern was for fellow believers, not for himself. He didn't want his fellow believers in Philippi to worry about

him. That's a surprise! Most of us would have been unsettled if no one had heard we were sick or if we didn't receive a card or if no one came to visit. We might come to the conclusion that no one cared about us. We might think twice before going back to that church again. His thoughts were not about himself, he anticipated their hurt for him and he did not want to cause any undue anxiety for them.

His attitude is a good illustration of what our attitude should be to fellow members of our local church. He put them before himself (*Phil. 2:3*).

This attitude should extend to those who are visiting our church as well. Do you speak to new people and make them feel welcome? When we have Fellowship Dinners, do you stick to your own crowd and ignore others who have no one to talk to or to sit with? Do you try to engage people in conversation who may be shy or have a hard time getting to know other people?

27) For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him,

Epaphroditus's condition had been far worse than perhaps the Philippian Church had imagined.

LESSON 88 (11-6-18)

THE TEMPORARY SPIRITUAL GIFT OF HEALING

Mentioned in **1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30.**

a. Just as miracles were designed to authenticate the person, so healing was designed to focus attention on the message of

apostles, prophets, pastors, and evangelists before the New Testament was completed and circulated.

b. Miracles authenticated the person; healing certified the message. So they were different, though they both had the same connotation in that they dealt with supernatural phenomena. A man with the gift of miracles could perform a miracle at will, anytime he chose to do so, and he could heal as well. In fact, people could just touch Paul and they were instantly healed.

c. Healing as a spiritual gift does not exist today, for it ceased with the completion of the Canon. Any healing today must come directly from God, and not through any delegated human authority or intermediary.

d. Healing is not a question of God's power. Healing is not even a matter of someone's faith. It is the wisdom of God's sovereign will in individual situations. God heals today only in special cases in which He has a special purpose, such as extending your life so that you can learn doctrine. But no person has the right to take any credit, should such healing occur. The credit lies with the wisdom and sovereignty of God.

e. Paul had the gift of healing. It was used as a credit card to establish his apostleship. *Acts 19:11-12* tells of the spectacular nature of his healing gift.

Acts 19:11-12 God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, 12) so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

f. But once Paul's apostleship and message was established and generally accepted, God withdrew the gift of healing from him since it was no longer needed. We know this because Paul could not heal two of his closest friends. He solicited prayer on their behalf, but he could not heal them. One was Epaphroditus in Phil 2:27, the other was Trophemus in 2 Tim 4:20; Paul had to leave Trophemus behind because he could not heal him.

Unpublished Notes from R.B.Thieme Jr. – Berachah Church, Houston, Texas

1 Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9) For we know in part (gift of knowledge) **and we prophesy in part** (gift of prophesy). **10) But when that which is perfect** (*teleios* adj. nom. sing. neut. New Testament Canon) **has come, then that which is in part** (temp. sp. gifts) **will be done away** (abolished, phased out, withdrawn).

There is no indication that Paul had the ability to heal him or that he tried to do so. Neither is there any hint that Epaphroditus was sick because of being out of God's will. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 658.

It was God's will for Epaphroditus to be sick. God's greatest grace is often demonstrated through illness. His sickness was not unto death, but for the glory of God. Lazarus' sickness was also for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

John 11:3 Therefore the sisters sent to Him (Jesus) **saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love** (Lazarus) **is sick." 4) When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto**

death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

God is not only glorified in success, he is also glorified in adversity. Do we see adversity as set-backs, or do we see it as an opportunity to glorify God? When our business fails or we lose our health, do we become angry and afraid, or do we see it as an opportunity to show others the faithfulness, greatness, and glory of our God who carries us through difficult times?

SPECIAL - Spiritual Gifts (11-8-18)



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "countrybiblechurch.us/Visuals/Overlays/S/spirtgifts.html". The page content is titled "Spiritual Gifts" and is divided into two columns:

<u>TEMPORARY</u>	<u>PERMANENT</u>
Apostle	Pastor – Teacher
Prophet	Evangelist
Miracles	Administration
Healing	Ministry / Service
Wisdom	Helps
Knowledge	Giving
Faith	Mercy
Exhortation	
Discerning of Spirits	
Tongues	
Interpreting Tongues	

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SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. The Greek noun CHARISMA used for spiritual gifts is based on the word CHARIS, or grace. All spiritual

gifts are a matter of grace!

2. Definition: cha•ris•ma noun, [Greek charisma favor, gift, from charizesthai to favor, from charis - grace; akin to Greek chairein to - rejoice]

1) an extraordinary power (as of healing) given a Christian by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church
2 a) a personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure (as a political leader)

b) a special magnetic charm or appeal (the charisma of a popular actor) Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1996

3. All spiritual gifts are a matter of grace! Therefore, they are never earned, deserved, or developed through any form of emotional experience.

4. A Spiritual gift is given to every believer at the point of salvation.

5. There are two categories of spiritual gifts:

1) TEMPORARY – Operated during the pre-canon period.

2) PERMANENT – Operational from 96 A.D. till Rapture.

6. TEMPORARY SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Apostleship – This was the highest gift that carried with it the most authority. Apostles were men who were sent to give the gospel and to teach the Word.

- 2. Prophets – Those who had divine guidance to warn of coming judgment and make predictions. This gift was used to to authenticate and certify communication gifts in the apostolic age.**
- 3. Miracles - Those who had this gift could do supernatural acts. Miracles authenticated the person; healing certified the message.**
- 4. Healing – One with this gift could heal anyone at will. People would listen to the message of divine healers.**
- 5. Wisdom - Accompanied the gift of knowledge, as the ability to explain and apply Bible Doctrine.**
- 6. Knowledge – Knowing what would be in the completed canon before it was completed.**
- 7. Faith – One would demonstrate faith in a group which was being persecuted to give them confidence or to announce forthcoming deliverance.**
- 8. Exhortation - Gr. *paraklesis* This was used for counseling, comforting, warning, and advising. Today the H.S is our *Paraklete*.**
- 9. Discerning Spirits – This gift was used for the detection of false teachers and false doctrine.**
- 10. Tongues – Designed to warn the Jews of the coming of the fifth cycle of discipline by evangelizing them in Gentile languages. See *Isaiah 28***

11. Interpretation of Tongues - One with this gift would explain what was said by the one who had just spoken in tongues.

7. PERMANENT SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Pastor-Teacher – This gift is given to men only whose job is to study and teach and be the overseer of the flock allotted to him.

2. Evangelists - This gift works outside the local church focusing on winning souls to Christ. “Missionary” is not a spiritual gift; it is a function of the body of Christ.

3. Administration – Possessed by church officers and some deacons who take care of the administrative responsibilities in a local church. Although the prevalent tradition is for the congregation to vote for deacons and church officers, it is the job of the pastor to identify these gifts among men in the congregation and to appoint them as church officers

4. Ministry/Service – This gift functions in the administration of the local church. It does not refer to the office of deacon in the local church. This gift is given to men and women.

5. Helps – This gift is given to men and women and is extremely important. Those with this gift do whatever is necessary to help others and serve Christ. It can function inside or outside the church and functions toward believers and unbelievers alike.

6. Giving - A special spiritual gift given for the extravagant use of earthly possessions in providing for the needs of both believers and Christian institutions, such as the local church, missions, Christian service organizations, to the destitute and needy, and to those who are financially helpless.

7. Mercy – In the 1st century church, it was dangerous to help Christians who were imprisoned or under persecution. Hence, this spiritual gift is always related to courageous acts of mercy. It extends primarily to the afflicted, to the persecuted, and to those who are victims of tyranny among believers and even unbelievers.

LESSON 89 (11-13-18)

BUT GOD had mercy on him,

The difference between ***grace*** and ***mercy***:

Grace is getting what we don't deserve and ***Mercy*** is not giving us what we do deserve.

Each time a "**but God**" occurs, it transforms the situation.

These are possibly the two most powerful words in the Bible.

Whenever we are afraid, lonely, helpless, unloved, or overwhelmed by this life, we need to remember these two words.

"But God" is found 41 times in the NASV Bible.

Obviously, Paul would have healed him if he could, but since he couldn't, they both depended on the mercy of God.

and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow.

This verse is typical of God, showing mercy in healing one man and emotional mercy to another. It was bad enough for Paul to be imprisoned in a rat infested jail with no blankets, pitiful food and ragged clothes. But if Epaphroditus died he would suffer yet another heavy burden.

But God does not allow His children to carry burdens that are more than they can bear. What verse gives us a promise concerning this?

1 Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.*

Philippians 2:28 *Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you.*

Paul's eagerness was not because of his desire to get rid of Epaphroditus which would have been to his own detriment. His eagerness had to do with his empathy for his beloved flock in Philippi.

Just think of how happy the Philippian believers were when they saw Epaphroditus again plus, he was carrying a letter to them from their beloved Paul. Also, he would be comforted to find that Epaphroditus made it there safely and that they would

receive comfort from his letter. That's an all-round win/win situation.

Philippians 2:29 Receive (v. pmm) **him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold** (v. pam) **men like him in high regard; 30) because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.**

high regard – ENTIMOS, ἔντιμος, adj. apm; to being highly regarded because of status or personal quality, honored, respected

Paul commanded the Philippians to show respect for Epaphroditus because he was a leader in the church and because of his character and service.

1 Thessalonians 5:12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction (admonishment), **13) and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.**

Instruction – NOUTHETEO, νοουθετέω, part. pa; to counsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, admonish, warn, instruct

We respect leaders who faithfully and lovingly serve but we are not to put them on a pedestal either. We must remember that leaders are only human and they possess an OSN just like everyone else. Respect for authority in general isn't what it used to be, especially among young people.

Epaphroditus carried the authority of Paul with him and Paul commanded the Philippians to respect it.

Due to the plethora of scandals among Christian leaders in recent years, respect for the offices of ministry has diminished. The multitude of priests being charged with pederasty and the cover-up of these charges is shocking. But it seems to have little effect on the parishioners who still show allegiance to and attend the Catholic Church.

There is also scandals among Protestant Christian leaders:

Jim and Tammy Faye Baker – mishandling of donations

Creflo Dollar – Gulfstream Jet and domestic violence

Jimmy Swaggart – Sex scandal

Robert Tilton – Prosperity Gospel Scandal

Ted Haggard – Homosexual Scandal

Peter Popoff – Fake prophet and fake healer

Jim Jones – Mass murder in Jonestown in Guyana

Tony Alamo – Sexual assault and other crimes

30) because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.

Most of us at one time or another have said, “I nearly worked myself to death” doing such in such. We say that when we are extremely tired, but we really close to death because of how hard we worked. It is just an expression.

But it was more than that for, it was a reality. He was like Paul who did not hesitate to put his life on the line in serving Jesus Christ. Read **Acts. 20:17-21:14**

The entire Philippian church could not go to Rome, so they sent one of their own Epaphroditus, who was willing to risk his life to fulfil his mission.

LESSON 90 (11-15-18)

CHAPTER 3

Philippians 3:1 *Finally, my brethren, rejoice* (v. pam) *in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.*

Chapter 3 begins with encouragement and a series of exhortations to live the Christian life.

rejoice in the Lord – This is the major focus of this entire epistle. The first thing to understand about this phrase is that it has nothing to do with the circumstances that we experience.

Believers need to be weaned off the idea that our circumstances automatically control our disposition. Most people consider this as a fact of life and nothing that can be done about it. So they gripe and complain when things aren't going their way, but their bad attitude is not their fault, it's a natural reaction to tyrannical events that control us. This is why we cite our unpleasant circumstances as an excuse when we are confronted about our persistent grumbling and bellyaching.

If our disposition is enslaved to our circumstances, then the ongoing joy and happiness that God provides for His children could not exist. We would be living under tyranny rather than the freedom that God provides for us.

Our disposition depends on our whether we are **carnal** or **spiritual**, whether we are **thinking divine viewpoint** or **human**

viewpoint, whether we are **trusting in God** or **trusting in ourselves**. .

The idea that one can be positive, secure, confident, content, courageous, joyful and happy even in the midst of suffering, pain, and adversity is completely unknown to most people, including most believers.

To be free from the dependence on pleasant circumstances to be content and have an attitude of gratitude, is to be free indeed! Believers can rejoice in the Lord anytime, no matter what is going on around them. Some would wonder, how can this be? Well, it's not because there is anything inherently good or commendable about believers, but because there is everything good and commendable about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Depending on the conditions around us to have a good day is not broken by a 12 step program. It has nothing to do with self-improvement, commitment, or being a better or stronger person.

The solution is not complicated; it's really quite simple. It's transferring your dependence on circumstances to dependence on the Lord for happiness and contentment.

What does that require? Faith.

Why is it that some believers are able to maintain their contentment and joy regardless of their circumstances while others continue to be enslaved by them? It's because their faith is stronger. Why do some believers have stronger faith than others?

Because their faith has been strengthened by their commitment to learn all they can about God's Word and the spiritual dynamics of the Church Age. They acquire all the things that people long for – love, peace, security, confidence, courage, contentment, happiness, and joy.

They have learned that we can't always rejoice in our circumstances, but we can always rejoice in the Lord.

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

Paul would not have encouraged the Philippians to rejoice so often if they didn't need to be reminded of it. "Rejoice" is used 151 times in the NASB. It is used 8 times in the four short chapters of Philippians.

It's easy for believers to let circumstances discourage them because Satan is the ruler of this world and most of the time we face some kind of unpleasant circumstance.

We do not have the strength or power to rejoice in times of adversity but we can when we access the supernatural strength and power that the Lord provides for us when we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

We can rejoice because we know that our Lord provides for all our needs, not because of who we are, but because of who He is. (Grace Pipeline). We rejoice because we know that He loves us and is more powerful than any negative or horrible thing we can face.

When we concentrate on the problem, we are frightened, insecure, and miserable; when we concentrate on the Lord and His Word, we have courage, confidence, and joy.

LESSON 91 (11-20-18)

To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

What is Paul talking about? **REPETITION!** Most people are not too fond of repetition. It can seem to be tedious, slow, and uninteresting because you have heard it before and you already know it. Or do you really? Often times, we think that we know something only to draw a blank when we try to explain it to someone. We can't apply what we can't remember.

Paul says that repetition is a safeguard for us. The Bible doctrine we have learned is more important than anything we possess.

Proverbs 3:14-15 For her profit [wisdom/doctrine] is better than the profit of silver and her gain better than fine gold. 15) She is more precious than jewels; and nothing you desire compares with her.

Proverbs 20:15 There is gold, and an abundance of jewels; but the lips of knowledge [B.D.] are a more precious thing.

What is the best thing we can do to keep, safeguard, protect, preserve, and maintain the doctrines we have learned?
Review, Review, Review.

They say that when it comes to money, it's not how much you make, it's how much you can keep. When it comes to Bible

doctrine, it's not how much you can learn, it's how much you can remember.

(NASV) **Philippians 3:2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;**

(NKJV) **Philippians 3:2 Beware of the *dogs*, beware of the evil workers, beware of the *mutilation!***

This short scripture contains three commands using the same word – *beware*.

Beware – BLEPO, βλέπω, v. pam, ⑤ be ready to learn about something that is needed or is hazardous, watch, look to, and beware of.

Believers should beware at all times that sometimes people are not what they appear to be. People can be well meaning, sincere, and likable but they can still be dangerous because they can lead you astray and ruin your life. This scripture pulls no punches by calling liars and deceivers, dogs.

Beware of dogs, - Ancient Jews used dogs as a watch for their houses (*Isa. 56:10*), and for guarding their flocks (*Job 30:1*) but most the time they were referred to in a derogatory way. There were also then as now packs of semi-wild dogs that wandered about as scavengers, devouring dead bodies and the garbage of the streets (*1 Kings 14:11; 16:4; 21:19, 23; 22:38; Ps. 59:6, 14*).

Dogs were considered to be unclean animals, the terms “dog,” “dog’s head,” “dead dog,” were used as terms of reproach or of humiliation (*1 Sam. 24:14; 2 Sam. 3:8; 9:8; 16:9*). The psalmist

compares the company of evildoers to a pack of dogs from which he wishes to be rescued (***Psalm 22:16, 20***; cf. *Phil. 3:2*).

Psalm 22:16 For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet.

Deut. 23:18 refers to the wages of a male prostitute as the wages of a dog. The author of Proverbs likens a fool's failure to learn from his mistakes to a dog that returns to its own vomit (*Prov. 26:11*; cf. *2 Pet. 2:22*)

The Jews often called Gentiles dogs but in our verse, Paul called the Judaizers dogs. Judaizers were Jews who during the first century would follow Paul around attempting to impose the Jewish way of life on Gentile Christians.

Paul was chosen to be the apostle to the Gentiles, so after his conversion, he would never call a Gentile a dog, but he didn't hesitate to call anyone a dog who tried to add works to the gospel of grace.

LESSON 92 (11-27-18)

Galatians 2:11-16 But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I (Paul) opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12) For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. 13) The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. 14) But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and

not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? 15)"We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles (The Pharisees always referred to the Gentiles as sinners.); 16) nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

In that passage Paul quotes part of a brief conversation he had with Peter several years earlier: "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews [to Judaize]?" The issue that concerns Paul is not simply whether or not a person follows the Jewish way of life, but whether one erroneously thinks that salvation is attained thereby.

In the early days of Christianity most if not all Christians were Jews prior to their conversion to Christianity. The few who were originally Gentiles, such as Nicolaus of Antioch (Acts 6:5), had converted to Judaism before turning to Christianity. At that time conversion to Judaism was accomplished through three separate steps: (1) circumcision (for males); (2) a ritual bath in water; and (3) agreement to take upon oneself the "yoke of the law," that is, to obey the 613 commands of the Mosaic law as interpreted and expanded in Jewish halakah (rabbinic legal decisions). Following Jewish customs and traditions and observing Jewish religious laws was a normal way of life for Jewish Christians, whether they were Jews by birth or through conversion. For them, belief in Jesus as the Messiah of Jewish expectation enhanced, but did not replace, their Judaism. Christianity was not regarded as a religion distinct from Judaism, but rather as the truest form of Judaism. These Jewish

*Christians had all been circumcised as infants, or upon conversion to Judaism, and they also practiced the kosher dietary laws and rules of ritual purity prescribed in Mosaic legislation and rabbinic tradition. Further, they worshiped at the temple in Jerusalem (Acts 3:1; 21:26) until its destruction by the Romans in AD 70 and in Jewish synagogues scattered throughout the Roman world (Acts 13:5, 14, *42, 43; 14:1; *17:1–5).*

While earliest Christianity began as a predominantly Jewish movement, it soon expanded into the Greco-Roman world. Jewish Christians were forced to leave Jerusalem as a result of persecutions (Acts 8:1; 11:19–24), and they proclaimed the gospel wherever they went. Philip was responsible for bringing the gospel to Samaria, where many Samaritans became Christians (Acts 8:4–25). On the day of Pentecost many Jews from places all over the Roman world became converts to the Christian faith (Acts 2:5–11). Presumably, when these newly converted Jewish Christians returned to their homes, they carried the gospel with them. Although the origin of the Christian community in Rome is shrouded in obscurity, this is probably how the gospel first came to Rome. One of the central concerns of Luke, the author of Acts, is to show how Christianity, which began as a small, persecuted sect of Judaism in Jerusalem, spread throughout the Roman world; in so doing, it was rejected by Jews and embraced by Gentiles. The major turning point in Acts is in chapter 10, where Peter is the means whereby the Roman centurion Cornelius, together with his entire household, accepted the gospel and began to manifest the gifts of the Holy Spirit. According to Acts 10:45, “the believers from among the circumcised who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.” The growing number of gentile converts to Christianity forced Jewish Christians to face a very difficult problem: Must a Gentile

first become a Jew in order to be a Christian? Some Jewish Christians gave a positive answer to this question, and these became known as the circumcision party (Acts 11:2; Gal 2:12). Others, such as Peter and Barnabas, and especially Paul, vigorously disagreed. While these two radically different points of view could have split the early church into two major factions, that possibility did not occur. Luke tells the story of how, after a successful first missionary journey (Acts 13:1–14:28). Paul and Barnabas reported to the church at Antioch how God had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27). Opposition from the Judaizers in the circumcision party was soon felt, however, since some of them had come to Antioch from Judea for the express purpose of advocating the idea that circumcision was absolutely necessary for salvation (Acts 15:1). Many Jewish Christians had, like Paul, once been Pharisees. These former Pharisees were particularly insistent that new converts who were Gentiles be circumcised and charged to keep the Law of Moses (Acts 15:5). They were really demanding that Gentiles become converted to Judaism in order to be Christians. Paul and Barnabas debated with members of the circumcision party before an assembly of apostles and elders in Jerusalem (Acts 15:4–12). The assembly, led by James the Just (the brother of Jesus), listened to both sides and decided to effect a compromise. A letter to the gentile churches was drafted in which it was recommended that gentile converts to Christianity adhere to only a few absolutely essential obligations: (1) abstention from meat sacrificed to idols, (2) abstention from eating blood or blood-saturated meat, and (3) abstention from unchastity (Acts 15:23–29). These three obligations were probably singled out because they were thought to have been important features of those laws regarded as part of the covenant between God and Noah according to Jewish tradition. Since Noah was the ancestor of all mankind, Gentiles as well as

Jews, such laws had universal validity. The Mosaic covenant, on the other hand, was incumbent only upon Jews, not upon Gentiles. For this reason the Jerusalem Council determined that abstention from meat sacrificed to idols, blood-saturated meat, and unchastity applied to all Christians, whereas the obligation of circumcision did not.

*Judging from the remainder of the Book of Acts, it might be supposed that the decision of the Jerusalem Council was satisfactory to the Judaizers of the circumcision party. However, from the details provided by Paul in many of his letters, we find that this was not the case. After Paul briefly summarizes the results of the Jerusalem Council for the Galatian Christians (Gal 2:1–10), he relates how, even after the Jerusalem Council, the Judaizers of the circumcision party were sufficiently powerful to cause even Peter and Barnabas to temporarily isolate themselves from gentile Christians. (According to rabbinic purity laws, one would become religiously impure if one ate with Gentiles.) The major reason Paul wrote the Letter to the Galatians was to combat Judaizers who had apparently invaded the Christian communities in Galatia after his departure. These Judaizers appear to have successfully persuaded some of the Galatian Christians that salvation was available only for those who were circumcised and who kept the Mosaic law (Gal 5:12; 6:13). At least some of the problems experienced by the Corinthian church appear to have been caused by Judaizers (2 Cor 11:12–15, 22), and they had infected the Christian community at Philippi (**Phil 3:2, 3**). Judaizers also appear to have made some progress in the church at Colossae. Therefore, according to Colossians 2:16, 17, “let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.*

Of all the early apostles and elders Paul was the one who most consistently opposed the Judaizers' view that Gentiles must first become Jews in order to be Christians. His dramatic conversion to Christianity, narrated three times in Acts (9:1–9; 22:6–16; 26:12–23) and occasionally referred to by Paul himself (Gal 1:11–17; 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8), convinced him that salvation could only be achieved through faith in Christ. Since Jesus was the only way, all other means by which persons sought to obtain salvation were necessarily invalid and illegitimate. Paul was fully aware that it was not because of the fact that he was an observant Jew that he had become justified before God (Phil 3:2–11), but through faith in Christ. Primarily because of the persistent activity of the Judaizers, Paul had to insist frequently on the invalidity of the Law and the validity of faith as the means of being justified before God. This theme dominates his letters to the Romans and the Galatians.

Toward the end of Paul's life the success of the Christian mission to the Gentiles resulted in the fact that the number of gentile Christians began to exceed the number of Jewish Christians. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, "Judaizers," **Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible** 1988),

LESSON 93 (11-29-18)

Brief Outline of Philippians Chapter 3

Vv. 1–11

Vv. 12–16

Vv. 17–21

Paul's Past

Paul's Present

Paul's Future

the accountant

the athlete

the alien

***"I count"* new values**

***"I press"* new vigor**

***"I look"* new vision**

Philippians 3:2-6 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; 3) for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, 4) although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: 5) circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6) as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

Continuing with verse 2:

beware of the evil workers – This phrase is also referring to Judaizers. These men taught that the sinner was saved by faith plus good works, especially the works of the Law. But Paul states that their “good works” are really evil works because they are performed by the flesh (old nature) and not the Spirit, and they glorify the workers and not Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

beware of the false-circumcision / mutilation –

mutilation – KATATOME, κατατομή, n. asf; mutilation, cutting in pieces.

The Greek is katatomē meaning “those who harshly cut.” A wordplay follows in the Greek of the next verse, where Paul speaks of Christians as being the peritomē (lit., “cut around”

denoting circumcision). Harold W. Hoehner, Philip W. Comfort, and Peter H. Davids, **Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Philemon.**, vol. 16 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), 191.

The words *katatome* and *peritome* form a paronomasia (pun) – words that are similar in sound but not necessarily similar in sense or meaning.

Paul used the term [katatome – mutilation] to describe those Jews who mutilated the gospel by insisting on the need to mutilate the flesh in order to be rightly related to God. What they did was actually evil, even though they may have had good intentions. Robert P. Lightner, “Philippians,” in **The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures**, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: 1985), 659.

Those who would submit to the demands of the Judaizers to be circumcised in order to be saved were no different than those who submitted themselves to pagan mutilation in order to be saved. In both cases, they believed a lie.

Many people reject the lies that salvation rests in false gods such as Allah, Buddha, Krishna, etc., rather than *Elohim*, the God of the Bible. But they are no closer to being saved than those poor deceived souls if they believe the lie that you have to believe in Jesus Christ PLUS you must do good works in order to be saved.

It may be that the underlying motivation of the Judaizers was concerned with Jewish national identity and the forcing of the marks of Jewish identity onto Gentiles. Circumcision, festivals and eating “clean foods” were among the central symbols (along with the temple) that defined Judaism. So the Judaizers felt that their Jewish identity was threatened by Paul’s gospel, which in effect opened up the Jewish religion

to Gentiles without requiring them to accept the defining marks of Judaism and which could be regarded as questioning the importance of those symbols for Jews. I.

Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 213.

The motivation to mutilate the gospel doesn't really matter, the fact remains that anyone who proclaims any gospel other than "***faith alone in Christ alone***", is giving a false gospel.

What did Paul tell the Galatians about anyone who would preach a different gospel?

Galatians 1:6 *I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7) which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8) But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he **is to be accursed!** 9) As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he **is to be accursed!***

is to be – ΕΙΜΙ, εἰμί; v. pam. ***Accursed*** – ANATHEMA, ἀνάθεμα; n. nsn. ② that which has been cursed, accursed, eternally condemned.

Are there Judaizers among us today? Well we don't call them Judaizers but we certainly have a multitude of false teachers who are purveyors of a false gospel among us. I'm not referring to non-Christian religions; I'm referring to Catholicism as well as most mainstream "Christian" denominations, Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, the followers of: Christian Science, Seventh-Day Adventism,

Scientology, Spiritism, Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, and the Worldwide Church of God.

(NASV) ***3) for we are the true circumcision*** (peritome), ***who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,*** (Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus)

(NKJV) ***3) For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,*** (Textus Receptus)

The first characteristic Paul uses to define a true believer. The Gr. word for “worship” means to render respectful spiritual service, while “Spirit” should have a small “s,” to indicate the inner person.

John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1825.

(NASV) **John 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."**

must worship - Jesus is not speaking of a desirable element in worship but that which is absolutely necessary. ***in spirit and truth***. The word “spirit” does not refer to the Holy Spirit but to the human spirit. Jesus’ point here is that a person must worship not simply by external conformity to religious rituals and places (outwardly) but inwardly (“in spirit”) with the proper heart attitude. The reference to “truth” refers to worship of God consistent with the revealed Scripture and centered on the “Word made flesh” who ultimately revealed His Father (14:6).

John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1584.

LESSON 94 (12-4-18)

we are the true circumcision – Notice that the Apostle Paul identified himself with these Gentile believers.

God instituted the rite of circumcision as a sign of the covenant between Him and Abraham's descendants (Gen. 17:9–14, 23–27)...it was intended to mark their entry into the community of faith in Lord. Dan Liroy, "The Faith Journey of Paul: An Exegetical Analysis of Philippians 3:1–14," *Conspectus* Volume 7 (2009): 86–87.

Over time, some Jews began to see circumcision, not as a sign of a relationship with God, but rather as the means to a relationship with Him. This excessive valuation of circumcision carried over into the early church (cf. Acts 15:1, 5; Gal. 2:11–13; 5:2–3). Paul's view was that while Jews were free to decide whether to circumcise themselves and their sons, no one should try to force Gentile Christians to be circumcised. *Ibid*, 87

Most of the Jews had forgotten that circumcision of the flesh was related to spiritual circumcision of the heart. The true circumcision are:

Not those who happen to be born of Jewish parents or who have been literally circumcised, but those who realize that the flesh profits nothing, that man can do nothing in his own strength to win God's smile of approval. William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1971.

Deuteronomy 10:16 So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.

Jeremiah 4:4 "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD And remove the foreskins of your heart, Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Or else My wrath will go forth like fire And burn with none to quench it, Because of the evil of your deeds."

Believers should glory in Christ Jesus alone rather than boasting about their human accomplishments as the Judaizers and Jews were doing.

Romans 2:28 - For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29) But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

People who depend on religion are usually boasting about what they have done. The true Christian has nothing of which to boast (Eph. 2:8–10).

*The popular religious philosophy of today is, “**The Lord helps those who help themselves.**” It was also popular in Paul’s day, and it is just as wrong today as it was then. (By “the flesh” Paul means “the old nature” that we received at birth.)*

The Bible has nothing good to say about “flesh,” and yet most people today depend entirely on what they themselves can do to please God. Flesh only corrupts God’s way on earth. It profits nothing as far as spiritual life is concerned (John 6:63 - It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing). It has nothing good in it (Rom. 7:18 - For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not). No wonder we should put no confidence in the flesh!

A lady was arguing with her pastor about this matter of faith and works. “I think that getting to heaven is like rowing a

boat,” she said. “One oar is faith, and the other is works. If you use both, you get there. If you use only one, you go around in circles.”

“There is only one thing wrong with your illustration,” replied the pastor. “Nobody is going to heaven in a rowboat!” There is only one “good work” that takes the sinner to heaven: the finished work of Christ on the cross (Hebrews 10:12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,). Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 85.

and glory in Christ Jesus – ΚΑΥΧΑΟΜΑΙ, καυχάομαι, part. pm; ① to take pride in something, boast, glory, pride oneself, brag.

Romans 15:17 Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.

Galatians 6:12 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13) For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh [brag about the converts to Judaism they’ve made]. 14) **But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

Read: **Luke 18:9-14**

and put no confidence in the flesh

Before, he (Paul) rested on his laurels in the flesh, his great accomplishments, and rich heritage (3:4–6). His righteousness was his own and came with reference to the law. But in Christ all this had changed. As a result of Him, he viewed those accomplishments as being as worthless as human dung (the meaning of skybala) in comparison to the surpassing worth of knowing Him and experiencing what he now saw as genuine righteousness (3:8–11). Paul wanted to “gain Christ,” that is, to have a righteousness not of his own based on law, but which results from faith in Jesus Christ. This means it is not a life of self-attainment, but of giving and serving from the heart. To know the power of the resurrection is to live a life (a new, transformed life) in which one can even share in sufferings like those Christ experienced and honor God (3:10–11). To become like Him is to serve like Him in humility and perhaps even at cost of one’s life, as did Jesus (2:5–11). Roy B. Zuck, *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 328.

LESSON 95 (12-6-18)

Philippians 3:4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:

Paul listed his stellar credentials so the Judaizers would see that none of them were as zealous in defending the Jewish laws and customs as he had been.

His personal pedigree and professional achievements put all of them in the shade. No one was as qualified to speak as a Jew on matters of observing the Law as was the Apostle Paul.



Like most “religious” people today, Paul had enough morality to keep him out of trouble, but not enough righteousness to get him into heaven! It was not bad things that kept Paul away from Jesus—it was good things! He had to lose his “religion” to find salvation.

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 84.

Philippians 3:5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;

The comment about Paul’s circumcision demonstrates that his parents were devout Jews, who faithfully followed the Mosaic laws (Gen. 17:12) and trained their son in his religious duties from the time he was an infant.

of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin – The Abrahamic covenant was passed down from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) who had twelve sons, two by his beloved wife, Rachel. The older was Joseph, and the younger was Benjamin (Gen. 35:18, 24; Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:33). *One of the twelve tribes of Israel was descended from Benjamin. Israel’s first king was Saul, a Benjamite (1 Sam. 9:1–2; 10:20–21; Acts 13:21). When Israel divided into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah, the tribe of Benjamin remained loyal to the tribe of Judah (1 Kings 12:20–24). Furthermore, Jerusalem and the temple in the holy city were located within the district of Benjamin (Josh. 18:15–16).* Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Pharisees,” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1670

a Hebrew of Hebrews – Paul was part of an elite group who was trained by the well-known Rabbi Gamaliel, one of the most highly respected rabbis in the Pharisee party of that day and was Paul’s mentor (Acts 22:3; 23:6). Paul was a rising star among the Pharisees.

He had an impeccable pedigree, he was not a proselyte, nor was he descended from Ishmael (Abraham’s other son) or Esau (Isaac’s other son). Jews often would boast about their heritage (though they certainly could not take any credit for it).

as to the Law, a Pharisee – Paul had zeal in two directions; 1. Toward being the very best Pharisee that had ever lived. 2. Toward persecuting anyone who would dare reject Judaism for any reason.

To the Jews of Paul’s day, a Pharisee had reached the very summit of religious experience, the highest ideal a Jew could ever hope to attain. If anybody was going to heaven, it was the Pharisee! He held to orthodox doctrine (see Acts 23:6–9) and tried to fulfill the religious duties faithfully (Luke 18:10–14). Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Victor Books, 1996), 85.

However, others saw them differently:

Most Bible dictionaries and similar works of reference depict the Pharisees as greedy, hypocritical, lacking in a sense of justice, overly concerned with fulfilling the literal details of the Law, and insensitive to the spiritual significance of the OT.. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Pharisees,” ***Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*** (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1670

Galatians 1:13-14 *For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; 14) and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.*

Philippians 3:6 *as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.*

as to zeal, a persecutor of the church

He was a super zealot, not only did he denounce the followers of Jesus, but also actively hunted them down in order to imprison and execute them. He wouldn't settle for anything less than the total destruction of the Church (Acts 8:3; Gal. 1:13). Before his conversion, he was even more blind to the truth of the gospel than were the Judaizers.

Paul didn't believe it was good enough to believe the truth, he also believed that he had to persecute those who rejected what he believed. He considered anyone who followed "that pretender," Jesus (Matt. 27:62) to be his enemies. He assisted those who stoned Stephen (Acts 7:54–60), and after that he led the attack against the church in general.

Acts 8:3 *But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.*

Acts 22:3-5 *I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God*

just as you all are today. 4) "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons, 5) as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.

as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless

If the law could produce righteousness in a person, then Paul would qualify, for by any human measure he was blameless in his observance of the Jewish commands and rituals. Dan Liroy, "The Faith Journey of Paul: An Exegetical Analysis of Philippians 3:1–14," *Conspectus* Volume 7 (2009): 89.

LESSON 96 (12-11-18)

Philippians 3:7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

It is easy for us to get wrapped up in "things," not only the tangible things that we can see, but also the intangibles such as reputation, fame, achievement. Paul writes about "what things were gain" to him. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 83.

Many people today are like Paul was, believing that material possessions or intangible things such as those mentioned above will bring the security, contentment, and happiness they long for – but it never does. They have believed a lie. They have been bamboozled by the allure of advertisers promising health, wealth, and happiness if you buy their product.

One may have a sense of euphoria when they drive a new car away from the dealer's parking lot or when one spends their first night in the new home they've just purchased – but the excitement and joy never lasts.

Paul realized a truth that unbelievers and baby believers have not yet comprehended; nothing on this earth can give us the things we truly long for because they simply do not last. They will let you down every time.

Only the Lord Jesus Christ can give you the desires of your heart because He is eternal and he will never let you down!

However, He can't give us what you long for as long as we keep trusting in the things of this world instead of trusting in Him. Nor can He give us what we want if we don't obey Him.

Psalm 37:1-7 Do not fret because of evildoers, Be not envious toward wrongdoers. 2) For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb. 3) Trust in the LORD and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate [feed on His] faithfulness. 4) Delight yourself [refresh oneself, take pleasure] in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart. 5) Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it. 6) He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday. 7) Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.

LESSON 97 (12-13-18)

Psalm 145:18 The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth. 19) He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them.

Possessions can be destroyed or stolen and reputations and fame can be lost but Jesus Christ and His promises will never let you down so we can rejoice in Him always. There is nothing nor anyone else in this world who will never disappoint you or let you down.

Paul put it this way:

Philippians 3:8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things [human good], and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

Now the apostle makes the great renunciation. Here he gives us his own "Profit and Loss Statement." On one side he lists the above-mentioned items... Ancestry, nationality, culture, prestige, education, religion, and personal attainments, the things that had been gain to him. On the other side he writes the single word Christ. William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1972.

I count – ΗΕΓΕΟΜΑΙ, ἡγέομαι, v. pmi; This term is used three times in verses 7 & 8. *This is a business term for "forfeit." All Paul previously trusted in for righteousness (his race and religious performance) he now was counting as "loss."* The Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philippians), vol. Volume 8, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 194.

all things to be loss – refers to everything he had counted on in order to be acceptable towards God – Human Good.

Why can't people see how foolish it is to try to hang on to things they can't keep when they could have something far greater that they can't lose?

The old saying, “*You can't take it with you*”, is true. When unbelievers leave this world, the only thing they have is their soul which is placed in Torments until they will be judged at the Great White Throne.

Believers leave this world with their soul (including B.D.) and spirit which goes instantly into the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

Paul did not regret losing anything that once meant so much to him because he gained so much more in knowing Christ Jesus.

The things he had trusted in could not bring him what every person yearns for: Hope, Courage, Contentment, Confidence, Security, Peace, and happiness.

Matthew 16:26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Read: **Luke 12:13-21**

the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord knowing – GNOSIS, γνῶσις, n. gsf. *The key to Christianity is a personal relationship with Jesus. In Hebrew “know” implies intimate personal relationship, not facts about something or someone (cf. Gen. 4:1; Jer. 1:5).*

The Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philippians), vol. Volume 8, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 194.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 24) but let him who boasts boast of this, **that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.**

John 17:3 "This is eternal life, that they may know (v. pas) You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

*John 3:15 - **eternal life**. This is the first of 10 references to "eternal life" in John's gospel. The same Gr. word is translated 8 times as "everlasting life." The two expressions appear in the NT nearly 50 times. Eternal life refers not only to eternal quantity but **divine quality of life**. It means lit. "life of the age to come" and refers therefore to resurrection and heavenly existence in perfect glory and holiness. This life for believers in the Lord Jesus is experienced before heaven is reached. This "eternal life" is in essence nothing less than participation in the eternal life of the Living Word, Jesus Christ. ~~It is the life of God in every believer,~~ yet not fully manifest until the resurrection (Rom. 8:19–23; Phil. 3:20, 21).*

John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1581.

When a person believes the gospel, he is born again even if he doesn't know any more about Jesus Christ than that He paid the price for his sins on the cross. Unfortunately, many, if not most believers, don't ever learn much more about Him than that.

Yes, they are eternally saved but they never develop a close personal relationship with the Lord. They are content knowing that they will go to heaven, but are not really interested in getting closer to their Maker through studying His Word.

Our society seems to put more emphasis on feelings than it does on knowledge. Consider the following:

“**Know**” is used 945 times in the NASV, “**knowledge**” – 156 times, “**knowing**” – 51 times, “**known**” – 214 times

Compare those numbers with these: “**feelings**” – 4, “**feeling**” – 2, “**feel**” – 16 (5 of those mean to feel with one’s hands), “**felt**” – 17 times

We think we live in a very enlightened sophisticated high-tech world, but consider what Sir Thomas Edison had to say:

Said Thomas A. Edison: “We do not know one-millionth part of one percent about anything. We do not know what water is. We don’t know what light is. We do not know what electricity is. We do not know what gravity is. We don’t know anything about magnetism. We have a lot of hypotheses, but that is all.”

Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times (Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc., 1996), 710.

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 19:2 Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge...

LESSON 98 (12-18-18)

Read: **Hosea 4:1-7**

the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus

There are millions of people who have knowledge about religious things. They faithfully go to church, a synagogue, or a mosque where they pray, do rituals or liturgy, and listen to someone talk about the Bible or a “holy book”. They do this in hopes that they will make it to heaven or into the kingdom.

It may sound surprising that those who go to church are put in the same category as those who go to a synagogue or mosque, but a church that is not grace oriented, basically is no different. People who depend on religion, morality, kindness, etc. to be right with God have believed a satanic lie. They rely on a synthetic, manmade righteousness which is not acceptable to God.

Religious relics of tradition and reliance on rituals are rags of religion that lead to hell, not to heaven. These have nothing to do with the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus.

for whom I have suffered the loss of all things –

have suffered – ZEMIOO, ζημιόω, v. api; ① to experience the loss of something, with implication of undergoing hardship or suffering, suffer damage/loss, forfeit, sustain injury. *Forfeited* would probably be the best translation.

Usually, when one suffers by losing something, it is a time of sadness, but Paul suffered the loss of all things that were important to him and was jubilant.

It isn't easy for religious people to let go of all the human good they've done over the years that they are so proud of and

acknowledge that all of it is worthless. Only common grace and the power of the gospel can penetrate a hardened mind to accept Jesus Christ by faith alone. If Saul of Tarsus (Paul) can be saved, anyone can be saved. He was the chief of sinners (1 *Tim. 1:15*).

Paul willingly renounced all his earthly advantages and Jewish privileges as a means of attaining salvation. One cannot hold on to human good and still be saved. Human good is anything done in the energy of the flesh rather than under the power of the Holy Spirit.

Eternal salvation is **FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE!**

Like Paul, one must let go of *all the things they depended on* to be justified before God before they can be saved.

Romans 3:27-28 Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. 28) For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

Romans 5:1-2 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2) through whom we have gained access (by faith) to this grace in which we stand,

What if a person believes in Jesus Christ and depends on Him for salvation along with:

baptism	or	confirmation
keeping sacraments	or	faithfully attending church
being a good person	or	keeping the Sabbath
doing penance	or	keeping the 10 Commandments

repenting of sins or feeling sorry for sins
taking Communion - **is that person saved?**

NO! Why? Because anything added to faith in Christ for salvation is no longer based on grace; but on merit. If one does anything of merit to gain something, then it can't be received as a gift, it becomes something earned.

All the things listed above are meritorious, they're works! Those who trust in them either don't know or don't believe that God gives eternal life *only as a gift* and the way one receives that gift is by trusting in Christ *alone* for it.

Romans 4:4-5 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5) But to *him who does not work but believes on Him* who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but *the free gift* of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 3:24 being justified *as a gift* by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift* of God; 9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Romans 3:28 For we maintain that a man is *justified by faith* apart from works of the Law.

The following verse says that man is *not justified by the works of the law* three times and it says that man is justified by *faith in Christ* three times.

Galatians 2:16 *knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*

LESSON 99 (12-20-18)

and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

rubbish is a euphemism as is *refuse*. The NET, KJV, and the Message Bible use the word *dung* which is much closer to the meaning in the Greek.

SKUBALON, σκῦβαλον, n. apn; denotes “refuse,” whether (a) “excrement,” that which is cast out from the body, or (b) “the leavings of a feast,” that which is thrown away from the table.

W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr., Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Nashville, TN: T. Nelson, 1996), 180.

Paul communicated in the koine Greek which was the street language of that day. It may be shocking to some but it was the proper term to use when comparing human good to the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ and the gracious opportunity for every believer to know Him in a more intimate way.

When Paul understood the grace of God through Jesus Christ, his status symbols of success, his popularity, all the approbation he received, all his successes that he was so proud of became dung in his estimation. That is what happens

when a person goes from a legalistic perspective to grace orientation.

Hymn #650 – I'd Rather Have Jesus

I'D RATHER HAVE JESUS

I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold;
I'd rather be His than have riches untold;
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or lands;
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand

Refrain:

*Than to be the king of a vast domain
Or be held in sin's dread sway;
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today.*

I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause;
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause;
I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame;
I'd rather be true to His holy name

He's fairer than lilies of rarest bloom;
He's sweeter than honey from out the comb;
He's all that my hungering spirit needs;
I'd rather have Jesus and let Him lead.

Repeat Refrain:

that I may gain Christ – What does this mean?

may gain – KERDAIVO, κερδαίνω, v. aas; ① to acquire by effort or investment, to gain.

We have been looking at the loss of all things from the perspective of a believer who rejected human good (works) in order to gain eternal salvation through faith alone in Christ alone.

Believers must make sacrifices after they are saved, not to maintain their eternal salvation, but to gain Christ. Paul was obviously already a believer, so why did need to "*gain Christ*?" This is what "**may gain Christ**", means; developing a greater relationship with Christ as a believer.

The goal of every believer should be to *gain Christ* in the sense of advancing spiritually far beyond our initial salvation. Paul was not satisfied with just being acquainted with Christ; His aim was to know, be familiar with, the most wonderful Person in the universe.

Another way of saying this is, Paul was not satisfied to be eternally saved alone; he wanted to be a good and faithful servant who would reach the goal of being experientially sanctified as a mature believer who would receive even greater grace.

Every believer has the option of advancing spiritually far beyond his initial salvation. It is sad that so many believers think that the goal of this life is to make it into heaven rather than reaching for the prize of spiritual maturity. They have no idea what they are missing because of their lack of biblical knowledge.

This is the major barrier that keep believers from advancing to spiritual maturity. Believers don't mean for this to happen; little by little something becomes more important than faithfulness in taking in the word and often, they don't even realize that their priorities are out of order.

LESSON 100 (12-27-18)

Review from **Lesson 97**

Make no mistake, no one reaches spiritual maturity without faithfully studying God's Word. There are many things that distract believers from consistently learning doctrine: Family/Children, School, Job/Career/business, Politics, Sports, Hobbies, lack of time.

Many seek wealth but money is hard to keep and it never purchases happiness.

Proverbs 23:4-5 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, Cease from your consideration of it. 5) When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.

Some have made fame their number one pursuit, but fame never lasts.

Sic transit gloria mundi is a Latin phrase that means "*Thus passes the glory of the world*". Teenagers today have no idea who the famous people are who were famous when we were teenagers.

LESSON 101 (1-3-19)

Philippians 3:9 (and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that

which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

This verse begins with a parenthesis that ends with verse 11 which focuses on grace orientation.

may be found in Him – EURISKO, εὐρίσκω, v. aps; ① to come upon something either through purposeful search or accidentally, find.

The English word *eureka* comes from the same Greek word *eurisko* comes from which is *heuriskein*, meaning to find. The exclamation is attributed to Archimedes on discovering a method for determining the purity of gold. Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

The **KJV, JKJV, ESV, NIV, NET**, say “***be found in Him***”; the **NASV**, and the **LEB** say, “***may be found in Him***”.

In all of these versions, the verb is *eurisko*, *is in the subjunctive mood* and that is very important. Many commentators relate this phrase to a believer's position *in Christ* but the subjunctive mood means that *being found in Him* (Christ) is only a potential. Was the Apostle Paul's position *in Christ* only a potential?

If his position *in Christ* was only a potential, how could he, or anyone else for that matter, have Eternal Security?

Before Jesus ascended, He promised that the disciples would be baptized with the Holy Spirit within a few days.

Acts 1:5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

When a person believes the gospel, he is baptized by the Holy Spirit meaning that he is permanently identified with Jesus Christ. He is, and will always be, *in Christ*.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized [permanently identified] into one body [Christ's], whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit [indwelt with the Holy Spirit].

So, whatever ***may be found*** means, we know it cannot be referring to being found *in Christ* positionally.

(CIRCLES PP)

LESSON 102 (1-8-19)

Philippians 3:8-11 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9) and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10) that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11) in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Notice the prevalence of subjunctive moods:

Verse 8 - ***may gain Christ*** (v. aas, to acquire by effort)

Verse 9 – ***may be found in Him*** (v. aps)

Verse 10 – ***may know Him*** (inf. aa)

Verse 11 – ***may attain to the resurrection*** (v. aas)

Would all these verses use the grammar of a potential rather than certainty if they were referring to one's position in Christ?

The idea here is, how will God find believers like you and me? Are we living a legalistic life of works, depending on the self-righteousness we accumulate by trying to keep the law? Have we abandoned God and His Word and are living a licentious and rebellious sinful life?

Or, are we living a grace oriented life of faith, applying BD to our circumstances, producing experiential righteousness on our way to being experientially sanctified?

Most people hope to be found by Christ having enough good works to be accepted into heaven. Seeking salvation by works leads to hell because no one can keep the law – the law can only condemn, it cannot save. However, faith leads to heaven because eternal life and God's righteousness is imputed on the basis on faith alone in Christ alone.

The Bible speaks of two types of righteousness:

1. **Imputed Righteousness** – Every believer receives this type of righteousness (God's Righteousness +R) the moment he believes the gospel (*Rom. 3:21-22, 4:3, 4:5*). ***Romans 3:21-22*** ***But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22) even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;***
2. **Experiential Righteousness** – This is the righteousness a believer produces under the filling of the Holy

Spirit *after* salvation (Hab. 2:4, Rom. 6:13-19, Gal. 3:11)

Romans 6:12-13 Therefore do not let sin reign (v. pam) **in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13) and do not go on presenting** (v. pam) **the members of your body to sin** (OSN) **as instruments of unrighteousness; but present** (v. aam) **yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God... 16) you are slaves of the one whom you obey** (v. pai), **either of sin** (OSN) **resulting in death, or of obedience** (to God) **resulting in righteousness?**

the dead – NEKROS, νεκρός, adj, gpm; ① pertinent to being in a state of loss of life, dead, ② pertinent to being so morally or spiritually deficient as to be in effect dead.

The genitive is the case that qualifies or restricts a noun by means of a specific characterization. Michael S. Heiser and Vincent M. Setterholm, Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology (Lexham Press, 2013; 2013).

Here, the adjective *nekros*, refers to the **dead ones**. The question is, “Who are the dead ones?”

Seven Types of Death

1. **Spiritual Death** – Rom. 5:12, 6:23, I Cor. 2:14
2. **Physical Death** - Matt. 8:22, II Cor. 5:8
3. **Temporal Death** – Rom. 8:6, Eph. 5:14, I Ti 5:6
4. **Positional Death** – Rom. 6:6-14, Col. 3:3
5. **Second Death** – Rev. 20:12-15

There are two types of death that match the context of Romans 6:12-13 #3 *Temporal Death* & #6 *Operational Death*.

and [present/submit] ***your members as instruments of righteousness to God...***

When believers submit the members of their body to be instruments of righteousness to God, what do they produce?

What kind?

LESSON 103 (1-10-19)

16) you are slaves of the one whom you obey (v. pai), ***either of sin*** (OSN) ***resulting in death, or of obedience*** (to God) ***resulting in righteousness?***

Notice that we have only two choices: 1) submit to sin (OSN) or 2) submit to God. There is no third option.

However, there are many believers who think there is a third option. They think they can refuse to submit to God and it's not really sinning. Example:

- a. Refusing to assemble together for the purpose of worship and Bible study (*2 Tim. 2:15, 2 Pet. 3:18, Heb. 10:25*).
- b. Couples living together outside of marriage (*2 Cor. 6:14, Heb. 13:4*).
- c. Refusing to separate from those whom the Scriptures command us to separate (*Rom. 16:17, 2 Thess. 3:6, 2 John 10*).

Believers who continue to submit to their OSN rather than to God may result *in death*. What kind of death?

in death – THANATOS, θάνατος, n. asm;

- ① the termination of physical life, death
- ② death viewed transcendentally in contrast to a living relationship with God, death
 - Ⓐ of spiritual death
 - Ⓑ eternal death

Since we know that Paul was writing to believers, we know that the second definition cannot apply, so it has to be referring to physical death, more specifically, the Sin Unto Death.

or of obedience (to God) **resulting in righteousness** – Of course this is not referring to the Righteousness (+R) God imputed to us when we believed the gospel. It refers to the righteousness produced *after* salvation which we call *experiential righteousness* (+r).

Experiential Righteousness is produced by believers who are filled with the Holy Spirit. Under His power, we are able to produce divine good by applying divine viewpoint to their circumstances.

This is in stark contrast to the self-righteousness (-r) produced by those who are enslaved to their OSN, who fabricate human good from their horribly flawed human viewpoint.

LESSON 104 (1-15-19)

It is interesting that nearly everyone recognizes that the issue of salvation revolves around righteousness; the question that determines the eternal destiny of every person who was born on this planet is – *Will you trust in your own righteousness, or God's righteousness to be saved?*

However, few understand the *imputed righteousness* (+R) of God which is received by faith, and even fewer understand *experiential righteousness* (+r) which is produced by works under the filling of the H.S.

not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law

Paul was no longer depending on his self-righteous works to be accepted by God, but the great masses of the world are

relying on their own works of righteousness to be acceptable to God.

One of Satan's biggest lies is that a person can be accepted by God based on his own good works. Neither **Imputed Righteousness (IR)** nor **Experiential Righteousness (ER)** is obtained by the **Self-Righteous Acts (sr)** of trying to keep the Law.

Once Paul understood the grace of God and the gift of Eternal Life and God's **Imputed Righteousness (IR)**, he repudiated the **self-righteousness (sr)** he produced while trying to keep the Law.

but that which is through faith in Christ –

*Righteousness was the great goal of Paul's life when he was a Pharisee, but it was a self-righteousness, a works righteousness [acceptable to God], that he never really could attain. But when Paul trusted Christ, he lost his own self-righteousness and gained the righteousness of Christ. The technical word for this transaction is imputation (**read Rom. 4:1–8 carefully**). It means "to put to one's account." Paul looked at his own record and discovered that he was spiritually bankrupt. He looked at Christ's record and saw that He was perfect. When Paul trusted Christ, he saw God put Christ's righteousness to his own account! More than that, Paul discovered that his sins had been put on Christ's account on the cross (2 Cor. 5:21). And God promised Paul that He would never write his sins against him anymore. What a fantastic experience of God's grace!*

Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 86–87.

2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Read: **Romans 9:30-10:4**

Paul stopped trusting in his good works to be eternally saved when he believed in Jesus Christ and His perfect work on the cross. “***and may be found in Him, not having*** (part. pa) ***a*** [self] ***righteousness*** [human good] ***of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the*** [imputed] ***righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,*** should be taken in a salvific way.

LESSON 105 (1-17-19)

Much of verse 9 can also be used in an experiential way **after salvation.**

“not having a [self] ***righteousness*** [human good] ***of my own derived from the Law, but that*** [experiential righteousness – divine good under the F/HS] ***which is through faith in Christ.***

Believers must continue to have faith in the living Word (Christ) and the written Word if they are to be delivered from divine discipline, mental attitude sins, and the sin unto death.

The problem with most believers is that they don't know enough about the Word of God to have any faith in it. They don't trust Christ because they don't know Him.

Paul's faith in the promises of God's Word resulted in Confidence, Courage, and Contentment. He was free from

being enslaved by his circumstances, he had a sense of eternal destiny which was a great motivating force for him to endure to the end, resulting in Super Grace blessings in time and rewards, crowns, and decorations in eternity.

LESSON 106 (1-22-19)

Philippians 3:10-11 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death); 11) in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

that I may know Him – GINOSKO, γινώσκω, inf. aa; This verb is variously nuanced in contexts relating to familiarity acquired through experience or association with a person or thing. ① To arrive at a knowledge of someone or something, know, know about

Jeremiah 9:23-24 Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 24) but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.

John 17:2-3 even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. 3) "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13) until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of **the knowledge (epignosis – n. gsf) **of the Son of God**, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.**

2 Peter 1:2-3 - Grace and peace be multiplied to you **in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; 3) seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the **true knowledge** (epignosis – n. gsf) **of Him** who called us by His own glory and excellence.**

It is interesting how many people feel that coming to Christ initially in salvation is all there is to know of him. Initial salvation only introduces us to him. It does not exhaust the wonder of his person. As we grow in grace we will understand him better.

A person may have trusted in Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation but that doesn't mean that they know anything about Him other than He paid for their sins on the cross.

A person may be saved from drowning by someone, but that doesn't mean they know anything about the one who saved them other than what he or she looks like and maybe their name.

Paul's goal was to get to know Jesus better and that should be our goal as well. We are commanded to grow in knowledge of Him:

2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, 18) but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

The question is, "How can we get to know Jesus Christ better?" God has revealed Himself through what He created and through His Word because He wants us to know Him.

1 Corinthians 2:15-16 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. 16) For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

Verse 16 is taken from Isa. 40:13 which declares how uniquely wonderful God is. Of course no one knows fully the mind of the Lord and no one can instruct Him. But we have the mind of Christ – the Scriptures.

It is through the study of the Scriptures that we come to know our Lord Jesus Christ better, but our goal is not to know about Him academically, but to know Him experientially. It is through prayer and by trusting Him enough to step out of our comfort zone and experience His love and faithfulness that we come to know Him personally.

This is in no way minimizes the importance of studying the Scriptures; it is through them that we come to know about Him well enough to have a relationship with Him by trusting and obeying Him.

Our goal as Christians should not be to master the written Word, it should be to become closer to the living Word, but that will never happen if one is ignorant of the written Word.

There are biblical scholars who have studied the Bible their entire life and are not even saved. Biblical knowledge does not save anyone but it reveals the One who can, Jesus Christ.

John 5:39-40 "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; 40) and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.

LESSON 107 (1-24-19)

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death);

It is hard for us to comprehend the power it took for Jesus Christ to rise from the grave; it was more powerful than anything or anyone in the universe.

The power which brought Christ forth from the dead now operates in believers' lives since they have been "raised with Christ" (Col. 3:1). "Power" (dynamis, also used in Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16) means ability to overcome resistance.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 661.

Colossians 3:1 *If then* (since) **you have been raised up** (v. api) **with Christ, keep seeking** (v. pam) **the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.**

All of us, as believers, are identified with Christ in death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. The word since gives the truer meaning of the word. Our exalted position in Christ is not a hypothetical thing, or a goal for which we strive. It is an accomplished fact. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 133.

What are “**the things above**” that we are to seek?

They consist of the 40+ things that are sovereignly bestowed on us at the moment of salvation. It includes our spiritual assets, spiritual dynamics, wisdom, security, courage, the 10 floors of the divine domain, eternal rewards and decorations. When we take in B.D. we are seeking the things above.

Colossians 3:2 *Set your mind* (v. pam) **on the things above (Personal Sense of Eternal Destiny - PSED), not on the things that are on earth.**

Paul’s goal was to experience the power of Christ’s resurrection in his life. This power is available to every Church Age believer.

Before, he rested on his laurels in the flesh, his great accomplishments, and rich heritage (Phil. 3:4–6). His righteousness was his own and came with reference to the law. But in Christ all this had changed. As a result of Him, he viewed those accomplishments as being as worthless as human dung (the meaning of skybala) in comparison to

the surpassing worth of knowing Him and experiencing what he now saw as genuine righteousness (3:8–11). Paul wanted to “gain Christ,” that is, to have a righteousness not of his own based on law, but which results from faith in Jesus Christ.

This means it is not a life of self-attainment, but of giving and serving from the heart. To know the power of the resurrection is to live a life (a new, transformed life) in which one can even share in sufferings like those Christ experienced and honor God (3:10–11). To become like Him is to serve like Him in humility and perhaps even at cost of one’s life, as did Jesus (2:5–11). Roy B. Zuck, *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 328.

The resurrection power of Christ is available to all believers, however, most believers continue to rely on their own power: ***Ephesians 1:18-19 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened*** (part. ra), ***so that you may know*** (inf. ra) ***what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19) and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us*** who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might...

Ephesians 3:14&16 For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father... 16) that He would grant (v. aas) ***you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power*** (dunamis) ***through His Spirit in the inner man;***

Believers often underestimate God’s power. Consider the power that is in the gospel:

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is **the power of God** for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is **the power of God**.

Consider the power of the Word of God:

Jeremiah 23:29 "Is not My word like fire?" declares the LORD, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock?"

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick (alive), and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Jeremiah 5:14 Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, "Because you have spoken this word, Behold, I am making My words in your mouth fire and this people wood, and it will consume them.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this (Peter's message), they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

LESSON 108 (1-29-19)

Believers are commanded to operate on the Lord's power:

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, *be strong* in the Lord, and in the *power* of his *might*.

be strong – ENDUNAMOO, ἐνδυναμόω, v. ppm; this is a compound word: EN = in, DUNAMIS = power ② to become able to function or do something, become strong;
⑥ usually refers to inner or moral strength.

Notice this verb is in the present tense, why is that important? Also notice that it is *not* in the active voice but the passive voice. Why is that important? Also, it is in the imperative mood. Why is that important?

power – KRATOS, κράτος, n. dsn; ① ability to exhibit or express resident strength, might. ⑥ emphasis on the intensity in might.

This word is translated six out of the twelve times it is used as “*dominion*”.

might – ISCHUS, ἰσχύς, n. gsf; capability to function effectively, strength, power, might.

Paul used this same phrase, “***the power of His might***” in **Ephesians 1:19 - *These are in accordance with the working of the strength (power) of His might.***

We were saved by the power of God when we believed the gospel and we are also saved by the power of God from the many land-mines of this life as we execute the Christian way of life.

Romans 5:10 For if (since) when we were enemies we were reconciled (v. api) to God through the death of His Son, much more...." There is something much more than our eternal salvation. ...much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved (v. fpi) by His life.

Every day that we avail ourselves of God's power, we are delivered from the worry, anger and doubt that vex our lives. That power can save us from the gravitational pull of sin, that seduces us all. If Paul could live a life of victory in prison we ought to live a life of victory at home, at school, at work, or wherever we may be.

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

LESSON 109 (1-31-19)

Phil. 3:10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

Most believers like the idea of having access to God's power but they aren't too keen on the idea of sharing in Christ's sufferings.

No one likes to suffer and Paul was no masochist. He had no desire to inflict wounds upon himself for Christ.

The quality of life of the average evangelical today will not stand under pressure. Most people in evangelical churches today are religious spectators. Most do not intend to go to any extraordinary extent to live for Christ. They do not take

their Christianity seriously, "You do not expect me to get involved in a Bible study, do you?" "I cannot share my faith at work, it might affect my business. Do you think that I am a fanatic?" Grace Notes

At the end of life's day when we look back over our lives will we have lived only for me, myself, and I?

1 Peter 4:12-14 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13) but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing (v. pam); so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice (v. pps); with exultation. 14) [If (conditional frame – potential) you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed], because the Spirit of glory and of God rests (v. pmi) upon you.

We get to know Christ better when we obey Him and trust Him. But this invariably causes sufferings. We should face adversity and suffering with the same attitude Jesus did.

Hebrews 12:1-3 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run (v. pas) with **endurance (hupomone' – patience) **the race that is set before us, 2) fixing our eyes on Jesus, (part. pa – thinking & applying BD) the author and perfecter of faith, who for **the joy set before Him** endured the cross (to maintain a belief or course****

of action in the face of opposition, stand one's ground), ***despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3) For consider*** (v. amm) ***Him who has endured*** (part. ra) ***such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary*** (v. aas) ***and lose heart.***

The joy set before Jesus, which helped Him endure the cross, was His desire to please God the Father, to sit down at His right hand, and to provide a grace solution for the penalty of sin for billions of people.

The joy set before us which helps us to endure the suffering we experience is to please our Lord, to demonstrate His sufficiency, love, and faithfulness while we experience pain and suffering, and to receive rewards and decorations at the JSC.

LESSON 110 (2-5-19)

We all need hope (confidence) that the undeserved suffering we experience is necessary and is beneficial for us. The natural reaction to suffering is to complain about it and pray for it to end.

We need something to motivate us to patiently endure undeserved suffering. It is the promises of God that provide the reinsurance and the support we need to keep trusting Him no matter what.

We are tempted to give up on Him and unleash the mental attitude sins of fear, anger, self-pity, envy, bitterness, and impatience. But don't do it! It's never worth it. He guarantees

great blessings and rewards for those who keep trusting the promises of God.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

Matthew 5:11 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12) "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven..."

Undeserved suffering is not pleasant, there is real suffering and pain, but it is bearable and there is abundant comfort available to us, which is not available for those who experience deserved suffering or punitive suffering.

LESSON 111 (2-7-19)

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all **comfort; 4) who **comforts** us in all our affliction so that we may be able (dunamai) to **comfort** those who are in any affliction with the **comfort** with which we ourselves are **comforted** (v. ppi) by God. 5) For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our **comfort** is (v. pai) abundant through Christ. 6) But [if we are afflicted], it is for your **comfort** and salvation; or [if we are **comforted**], it is for your **comfort**, which is effective in the patient enduring (hupomone') of the same sufferings which we also suffer (v. pai); 7) and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing (part. ra) that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our **comfort**.**

being conformed (part. pp) ***to His death***; This does not mean to die on a cross like Christ did. It means to have the same mental attitude Jesus had when he went to the cross.

His main concern was to do the will of the Father. Our main concern should be the same, and to make decisions that please the Father and the Son.

Having a Personal Sense of Eternal Destiny (PSED) is so very important. We make decisions to please the Lord, rather than ourselves, because we recognize that they have an impact on our eternal destiny.

Most of us have heard the couplet:

"Only one life, 'twill soon be past.
Only what is done for Christ will last."

When we experience undeserved suffering and we rely on the power of the Lord to give us the power to stay away from MAS, we are being conformed to His death.

LESSON 112 (2-12-19)

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? 2) May it never be! How shall we who died (v. api) to sin still live in it? 3) Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized (v. api) into Christ Jesus (sp. bapt.) have been baptized (v. api) into His death? 4) Therefore we have been buried (v. api) with Him through (sp.) baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised (v. api) from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk (v. aas) in newness of life.

Most believers have no idea what Retroactive Positional Truth is, nor do they know what Current Positional Truth is. Therefore, they have no confidence that they are able to walk in newness of life, therefore they don't. They make silly excuses like, "Nobody is perfect, I can't help it when I sin, so it's not my fault."

RAPT = identification with Christ's death = died to sin

CPT = identification with Christ's resurrection = walk in newness of life

Philippians 3:11 in order that I may attain (v. aas) **to the resurrection from the dead.**

Did Paul doubt his eternal salvation and that he might not receive a resurrection body? This verse is a continuation of his personal testimony about his spiritual aspirations.

the resurrection – EXANASTASIS, ἐξανάστασις, n. asf; the state or condition of coming up from among the dead, This word is a hapax legomena.

*There is a resurrection of the dead and there is a resurrection from the dead. The resurrection from the dead is the first resurrection of believers to be with their God. The resurrection **of** the dead is the resurrection of non-Christians to face judgment. Everyone will surface in one resurrection or the other. The resurrection of this passage is a resurrection out from among the corpses of non-Christians. Literally, this word means "out-resurrection."*

Grace Notes

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no

power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

All Church Age believers receive a resurrection body whether they die physically or are raptured: (Rom 8:11, 1 Cor. 15:51-52, Phil. 3:20-21, 1 Thess. 4:16-18).

Paul was in prison and knew that he could be executed so he didn't know if he would be around long enough to be raptured (out from the dead) or if he would die and go to heaven and be raptured later.

I may attain – KATANTAO, καταντάω, v. aas; ② to reach a condition or goal

He wanted to attain to (cross the goal line) of being an ultra-super-grace believer, before the rapture occurred or before he would be executed.

Paul wanted to progressively experience more of the believer's resurrection life to be enjoyed now ("newness of life," (Rom. 6:4). He wanted to be a Super-Grace believer in time which meant he would have Surpassing-Grace blessings in eternity.

Few believers have the same kind of goal that Paul had. Unfortunately, for many of them, their goal is to make it to heaven. That stinking thinking comes from negative volition and ignorance which always goes hand in hand.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may

lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

obtained – LAMBANO, λαμβάνω, v. aai; This word has ten meanings. The relevant meaning found in BDAG is number ⑧ to enter into a close relationship, receive, make one's own.

Paul did not believe that he had reached his goal. What was *it*? What was his goal? It wasn't to become perfect in its normal usage. He knew that he had not reached the goals stated in verse 10.

Paul's salvation experience had taken place about 30 years before he wrote to the Philippians. He had won many spiritual battles in that time. He had grown much in those years, but he candidly confessed he had not obtained all this...He still had more spiritual heights to climb. Robert P. Lightner, "Philippians," in **The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures**, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 661.

This reminds every believer that there is no spiritual plateau that can be reached where there is no more height to be climbed. To be dissatisfied with one's spiritual progress is a prerequisite to taking and keeping the high ground of spiritual maturity.

Many Believers have fooled themselves into believing that they have pursued truth and studied BD long enough. They know a lot more about the Bible than most people so they think they can rely on what they already know and every-thing will be just fine. Hah!

That's like a guy who completes his first flying lesson in a Piper Cub and believes he is ready to fly an F-18 fighter jet and land it on an aircraft carrier.

Proverbs 8:33 Heed instruction and be wise, and do not neglect It (Bible doctrine). **34) "Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching *daily* at my gates, waiting at my doorposts** (Describes one who is eager to learn BD every day.).

Acts 17:11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and *examined the Scriptures every day* to see if what Paul said was true.

PP There is no neutral in our spiritual transmission; we are either going forward, growing as we daily take in the Word, or we are going backward, retrogressing back into old comfortable wheel ruts of human viewpoint and daily being defeated by mental attitude sins, lust, and the details of life.

Spiritually, don't fall into a rut, it's a grave with the ends knocked out.

LESSON 113 (2-14-19)

If you want a true picture of where you are spiritually, don't compare yourself with other people, compare yourself with Jesus Christ.

(NASV) ***or have already become perfect,***

(NIV) ***or have already arrived at my goal,***

The word “perfect” in its normal sense, is not found in verse 12 in the Greek but the experiential sense of completion is.

The word “perfect,” as used in the New Testament has the idea, not so much of sinlessness as of maturity, full growth, “perfect” completion. There are “babes” (1 Cor. 3:1, 2), and full grown ones—mature believers. In Hebrews 10:14 we see our standing in Christ is complete. In Hebrews 6:1 we are exhorted to go on unto completeness in the doctrines of Christ, not ever going back to foundational and elementary things, but on to the more complete, more developed doctrines of which Hebrews is so full.

Again, in Philippians 3:12 Paul is thinking of his attainment of, or a complete apprehension of, that for which Christ had apprehended—laid hold of him, and so he presses on toward the prize of the upward calling of God, beginning in regeneration and ending in glory; and then he goes on to exhort those who have, like himself, attained Christian maturity (Phil. 3:13; 1 Cor. 2:6; 14:20), still to press onward to the goal. C. I. Scofield, Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box, ed. Ella E. Pohle (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, 1917), 150–151.

become perfect – TELEIOO, τελειόω, v. rpi1s; ② to overcome or supplant an imperfect state of things by one that is free from objection, bring to an end, bring to its goal/accomplishment.

Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon - to carry through completely, to accomplish, finish, to bring to an end. Add what is yet wanting in order to render a thing full. To bring to an end the proposed (goal).

The perfect tense here means not achieving the goals mentioned in vs. 10 (knowing Christ, the power of His resurrection, sharing His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death) has ongoing repercussions.

In Paul's mind, he hadn't reached his goals, but he made significant progress towards fulfilling them. He had already reached spiritual maturity with its attendant super-grace blessings, but he knew there was still more room to grow and more grace to receive.

Types of Grace:

1. **Common Grace** – The Holy Spirit makes the gospel, clear, lucid, and understandable to a spiritually dead unbeliever.
2. **Efficacious Grace** – The Holy Spirit makes the faith alone in Christ alone effective for eternal salvation.
3. **Logistical Grace** – God provides everything a believer needs in order to fulfill his or her mission on earth.
4. **Super-Grace** – Greater blessings that are available only to spiritually mature believers.
5. **Ultra Super-Grace** – Spiritually mature believers, to whom God places under maximum pressure and persecution where their super-grace blessings are multiplied.
6. **Dying Grace** – Spiritually mature believers experience special blessings at death completely apart from fear or dread.
7. **Surpassing Grace** – Tremendous blessings, rewards, crowns, and privileges for spiritually mature believers in eternity.

Paul was already at #4 Super-Grace and wanted to experience #5 Ultra Super-Grace.

LESSON 114 (2-19-19)

but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that

press on – DIOKO, διώκω, v. pai; ① to move rapidly and decisively toward an objective, hasten, run, press on.

Louw-Nida - to move quickly and energetically toward some objective

These two English words, (one word in the Greek), is so important in the life of every believer. Persistence is one of the major keys to success in any endeavor in life. That is especially true in our spiritual lives. Only believers who are consistent in getting their Daily Dose of Doctrine will reach spiritual maturity.

Here is an adage that is trite but it is also true:

“Quitters never win and winners never quit.”

Perseverance is an admirable and necessary attribute, but stubbornness is not. We must take care to distinguish between the two. Perseverance in reaching a goal is commendable, being stubborn in order to get your own way is not.

“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not, nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not, unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not, the world is full educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The

slogan "Press On!" has solved and always will the problems of the human race." Calvin Coolidge

Paul's motivation was to receive approval from Jesus Christ and hear that wonderful accolade, "*Well done, good and faithful servant*" (Matt. 25:21 & 23).

LESSON 115 (2-26-19)

Spiritual maturity is achieved through becoming more like Jesus Christ. After salvation, every Christian begins the process of spiritual growth, with the intent being to become spiritually mature. According to the Apostle Paul, it's an ongoing process that will never end in this life... Christian maturity requires a radical reordering of one's priorities, changing over from pleasing self to pleasing God and learning to obey God. The key to maturity is consistency, perseverance in doing those things we know will bring us closer to God. These practices are referred to as the spiritual disciplines, and include things such as Bible reading/study, prayer, fellowship, service, and stewardship. No matter how hard we might work on those things, however, none of this is possible without the enabling of the Holy Spirit within us... As we submit more and more to the Spirit's control, we will also see an increase in the fruit of the Spirit in our lives (Galatians 5:22–23). This is characteristic of spiritual maturity. Got Questions Ministries, Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002–2013).

It is disheartening that so many professing believers say that their goal in life is to make it into heaven. Those who say that,

are either unbelievers or very confused and biblically ignorant believers.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

I may lay hold – KATALAMBANO, καταλαμβάνω, v. aas;
① to make something one's own, win, attain. To grasp, understand, comprehend.

Note that Paul was the one who would produce the action and that action of grasping or attaining was not a certainty, it was only a potential. He had to commit to it and make it happen, which he did.

This was Paul's way of saying that he was all in, totally invested in pursuing his goal. He understood what life is about and would not let anything or anyone become a distraction from achieving his goal. Of course he understood that he needed more than a commitment; he also needed the empowerment and guidance from the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

I was laid hold of – KATALAMBANO, v. api; to come to understand something which was not understood or perceived previously.

Jesus Christ laid hold of Paul first, long before Paul laid hold of the goal to know and serve the Lord which became his number one priority.

This is how our wonderful Lord operates, He always seeks us out first so that we can respond to His grace and then we seek Him. This is in harmony with **1 John 4:19 – We love because He first loved us.**

Jesus knew the perfect way to lay hold of Saul (Paul) on the road to Damascus. Paul had to be humbled before he would ever respond to the Grace of God (Acts 9:3-9). God took the chief of sinners and made him the greatest of the apostles.

(NLT) **Philippians 3:12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.**

Life is a learning experience, when a person stops learning, he stops living for the purpose in which he was born. When one spends his time vegetating in a lounge chair, his body deteriorates; when one stops learning, his soul and spirit deteriorates.

God created this wonderful and beautiful earth that we live on and the more we learn about it, the more wonderful and beautiful He becomes. There is so much to learn. People who become bored with life have stopped learning and are arrogant and self-centered.

LESSON 116 (2-28-19)

Proverbs 1:5 A wise man will hear and *increase in learning*, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,

Proverbs 9:9 Give instruction to a wise person, and he will *become wiser* still; teach a righteous person and he will add to his learning.

Psalms 119:71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, That *I may learn* Thy statutes.

Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

Proverbs 17:24 Wisdom is in the sight of him who has understanding, but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

Philippians 3:13-14 Brethren, I do not regard myself as *having* (inf. ra) *laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14) I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Paul knew that he was not at the place he wanted to be spiritually, but that did not cause him to give up or prevent him from pressing on.

but one thing I do –Through this phrase, he was revealing what was most important to him. What he stated next would be absolutely imperative.

Most senior citizens try hard to remember things, not forget them. But forgetting the past sometimes can be good thing if it is something that might get in the way of growing spiritually.

Forgetting – EPILANTHANOMAI, ἐπιλανθάνομαι, part. pm;
① to not have remembrance of something, forget.

The knowledge that Paul had not attained the spiritual status he desired did not deter him from moving in that direction, nor did the fact that he was responsible for persecuting believers who were beat, imprisoned, and even executed.

There are many believers who hide skeletons in their closet. They cannot serve the Lord because they carry guilt in their heart about past sins. Every time they experience life's heartache or pain, they believe it's due to their past sins. Any believer who thinks this way is either ignorant of *1 John 1:9*, or they fail to apply it.

The moment a person puts their faith alone in Christ alone, God forgives ALL of their past sins.

Psalm 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Isaiah 43:25 "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins.

1 John 1:9 and its related verses, is the way of forgiveness for sins committed after one is saved. The ability to confess

a sin and believe that God rendered that sin into oblivion takes confidence in God's promises.

The audacity of those who think that their sins are greater than God's grace! It is an insult to God; it is to allege that Christ's work on the cross was not capable of paying for their sins. Therefore, they go through life trying to atone for their sins, rejecting the grace that is available to them.

Paul could not obliterate the past from his memory, but he refused to let his past obstruct his progress toward his goal. He wanted to forget his self-righteous past (see vv. 4–7). By using the present tense for forgetting Paul was indicating that it was an ongoing process. He might even be implying that he wanted to forget everything so that he would not rest on his past successes in Christ, but continue to labor for the Lord. Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997)

Paul also wanted to forget the spiritual victories he had over the years because he didn't want to be tempted to rest on his laurels. He knew that would be going backwards rather than forward in reaching his goals. One reason God allows us to fail so often is to keep us from the delusion that we are a super-saint.

Paul was making a mental affirmation whereby fallen mankind understands the gospel and chooses to live in light of its new truth and new world view in Christ! Robert James Utley, *Paul Bound, the Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philipians)*, vol. Volume 8, Study Guide Commentary Series, p.196.

Paul did not let the injustices done to him derail his spiritual momentum. Some people cannot move on from the past because they experienced some injustice years ago and they have never got over it. They think about how much better things could be if such in such hadn't happened.

4 Things Every Preacher Should Forget Each Sunday Morning By Leslie Holmes 9-22-14

I've been reflecting on a big moment in Joseph's life. It was just after Joseph's son, Manasseh, was born, and Joseph explains why he gave his son this name: "God has made me forget all my hardship" (Gen. 41:51). Oh, blessed forgetfulness!

God gives each of us a memory with two primary functions. First, our ability to remember is so we can recall the things we need to know. We use our memories to try to remember the flow of our sermon notes each time we preach. Before that, memory helps us remember where the church meets every Sunday morning. The other function of memory is the opposite: We use our memories to forget some things.

There are some things in our memory banks we do better to let go, especially because we preachers and pastors are given the added call to be role models. What things should we ask God to help us remove from our memories?

Forget Your Sins! 1 John 1:9, *Believers who refuse to forgive themselves after they have been forgiven by God, think higher of themselves than they should.*

Forget criticisms! As preachers, we will be the targets of critics no matter what we do. Otherwise, we will find ourselves ministering on the defensive, and that never works! By intentionally forgetting them, we can demonstrate the love and mercy of the One who called us to preach. Forgive your critics, forget the hardship of whatever they said or did, and move ahead.

Forget Your Own Goof-ups! Given the number of times we speak and act in public, it should not surprise us that we will say and do some things that come under the heading of Dumb! Forgive yourself, then move forward.

Imagine what a terrible difference it would have made if Paul had continued to beat himself up emotionally for all the things he did before he encountered Jesus. Instead, he chose to count all those things as rubbish (see Phil. 3:8). Learn your lesson, then intentionally forget what you did and allow the gospel's unique peace to reign in your heart.

Forget Your Successes! We all enjoy recognition and commendations. However, when we bask in past achievements, we become self-centered bores, and our whole future looks as if it happened yesterday. See those great moments as stepping stones to the new successes God has planned ahead. Thank God for what you did, and put your hand in His great hand for what He has in store for you.

We all enjoy recognition and commendations. However, when we bask in past achievements, we become self-centered bores, and our whole future looks as if it happened yesterday. See those great moments as stepping stones to

the new successes God has planned ahead. Thank God for what you did, and put your hand in His great hand for what He has in store for you.

Paul, remembering his successes, said, "One thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

This practice of leaving the past behind is so important in marriage. Couples ruin their marriage by reaching into the garbage can of the past to pull out something their spouse did in order to win an argument or to hurt the one they promised to love for life.

The following is rule number four found in the "Fair Fighting Rules" in the booklet, "You're Married, Now What?"

4) Do not bring up the past! Deal with the issue at hand.

Or it could be that they allow regret to rule their lives. They let a bad decision or a mistake they made in their past become an excuse for their current failures and for their bitterness. We all have done things that are regrettable but so what! GET OVER IT! MOVE ON!

Whatever happened in your past DOES NOT MATTER! It is the present and the future that are important. Just letting go of the past and taking hold of Jesus Christ will completely change one's life.

Don't let the injustices done to you, or your successes, nor your failures hinder your pursuit of becoming a spiritually mature believer. Paul lived in the present with the anticipation

that he would meet his spiritual goals sometime in the future. So should we.

LESSON 117 (3-5-19)

One of the worst things that can happen to a believer is to hold a grudge against someone. It is deadly to our spiritual life bringing a halt to any possibility of producing the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

We all have heard someone say, "Well, I will forgive but I won't forget." Those who say that, die spiritually before our time. Temporal spiritual death occurs in the believer because he/she wants to punish the other person for what they have done. They do not want to release the anger hold against the other person. Growth is impossible with such an attitude. Grace Notes
Philippians #7

Holding a grudge takes time and energy which should be used towards something productive. Forgetting wrongs that others have done against us, liberates us from the bondage of thinking about it. We are then free indeed.

Leviticus 19:18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.

Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

1 John 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know

where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

1 John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21) And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

“Not forgiving is like eating rat poison and then waiting for the rat to die.” Anne Lamott

“When you hold grudges, your hands aren’t free to catch blessings.”

Philippians 3:13-14 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having (inf. ra) laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and **reaching forward** to what lies ahead, 14) I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

reaching forward – ΕΠΕΚΤΕΙΝΟ, ΕΠΚΤΕΙΝΩ, part. pa; to extend or to stretch forward

The term "*reaching forward*" is an athletic term in the Greek meaning to sprint for the finish line. It means to thrust your chest forward in a maximum effort to be the first one to break the tape at the finish line.

We are to run the race of life in a way to win. God has made available everything we need in order to be winners.

The question is, “Will we take advantage of all these wonderful spiritual assets, or will we go through life as spiritual losers?”

Thinking about the future is a motivating force for growing believers because the best is yet to come for the child of God who is hungry for the Word of God.

to what lies ahead, - What lies ahead for you? One thing is for sure, the decisions that you make from this moment on will determine the answer to that question.

Because of God's grace, we have the opportunity to experience super abundant blessings on earth, but even more important are the superlative blessings, outstanding rewards, and unparalleled opportunities available to us for all eternity.

It is nearly unimaginable that believers would not be so excited and motivated by this that they would kick their study of the Word and their service to the Lord into high gear.

But the majority remain mediocre believers who remain confused, defeated, angry, frightened, and worried about the future. Why? Because the things of this life are more important to them than the things of God.

Since they are biblically illiterate, the tremendous promises of God mean nothing to them. They are unable to deal with the pain, disappointment, and heartache of life because they have no spiritual solutions and no power. They are usually chronic complainers who are miserable and blame everyone except themselves for their pitiful life.

LESSON 118 (3-7-19)

Philippians 3:14 ***I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.***

This is the same word used in 3:12

but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that

I press on – ΔΙΟΚΟ, διώκω, v. pai; ① to move rapidly and decisively toward an objective, hasten, run, press on.

Louw-Nida - to move quickly and energetically toward some objective

Remember that believers are either moving forward or backwards in their spiritual lives and pressing on no matter what keeps us moving forward. It is the only way that believers will reach their spiritual goal of getting to know our Lord better and becoming closer to Him.

Two good English words that relate to the phrase “**press on**” is *tenacious* and *perseverance*.

TENACIOUS - *adjective*

1. Holding fast; characterized by keeping a firm hold
2. Holding together; cohesive; not easily pulled asunder; tough. Dictionary.com

PERSEVERANCE - *adjective*

1. Persisting, especially in spite of opposition, obstacles, discouragement, etc.; persevering:
2. Lasting or enduring tenaciously *ibid*

toward the goal – What is the goal for your life? No one can reach a goal if they don't know what it is and no one will receive a prize if he doesn't reach the goal.

The goal was not yet achieved by the Apostle Paul but he anticipated the most wonderful words of our Lord Jesus Christ - **"Well done, thou *good and faithful* servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things" (Matt. 25:21).**

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7) *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;* 8) in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, *but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

These words should inspire us to "press on" toward the goal!

Have you started the race, have you received a spiritual birth from God? If so, have you left the starting blocks? Have you begun to run the Christian life? Have you ever heard the starter's pistol? Have you responded to our Lord's challenge to live a focused life for his glory?

Did you leap off the starting blocks and then slow down? Is your Christian life less robust now than at the beginning? Have you slowed down to a jog? Are you loping along through your Christian life? Some of us may have slowed to a walk. Others may be standing still. Yet others have sat down. Some have even laid down their spiritual life and that is why they are called a "laymen"!

I press on toward the goal for the prize

prize – BRABEION, βραβεῖον, n. asn; an award for exceptional performance, prize, award

God is not like so many of the little league teams around our country that gives a trophy to every player, even those who aren't very interested in the game and who never got off the bench. No believer receives a prize unless he or she has faithfully fulfilled his or her mission on earth.

Man's life on this earth does have ultimate significance. There can be no greater purpose than to live our lives in such way that the one before whom we will one day give an account will say, "Well done!" Joseph Dillow, *Reign of the Servant Kings*, p. 582

Believers who press on toward the goal for the prize are known as "partakers" or Gr. "**metochoi**". They are committed Christians who are in it for the long haul. They get their Daily Dose of Doctrine which strengthens their assurance and keeps their spiritual motivation moving forward.

Metochoi is similar to the Hebrew term "**Jeshurun**" in the O.T. which was a symbolic name for Israel describing her ideal character. It is also used to describe an "upright one".

DOCTRINE OF JESHURUN

1. Moses was the founder of the most dynamic fraternity in all of human history. This fraternity is still operational today and has the most dynamic invisible impact in history. Jeshurun is that unique fraternity of mature believers that think that Bible doctrine is more important than anything else in life.

2. The name of this organization is a Hebrew noun used four times in the Old Testament—JESHURUN. Moses coined this word and took it from the verb JASHER, which meant to go straight to an objective, to be upright, to be blameless, to be righteous, to have integrity. The noun JESHURUN means “righteous ones” and from that comes the fraternity of “upright ones.” The noun is found in Dt. 32:15; 33:5; 33:26 and Isa. 44:2.

3. You enter the fraternity of Jeshurun by becoming a spiritually mature believer. You stay in the fraternity by the consistent use of rebound. Jeshurun is the surname of that group or fraternity of Jews who lived in harmonious rapport with god after salvation. Jeshurun is not formed through physical birth, nor does salvation guarantee it. It is a result of the believer who lives the spiritual life provided for him by God.

Deuteronomy 33:26-27 "There is none like the God of **Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to your help, and through the skies in His majesty. 27) "The eternal God is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms...** (This scripture is great for those who are afraid to fly.)

Isaiah 44:2 Thus says the LORD who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you, 'Do not fear, O Jacob My servant; and you **Jeshurun whom I have chosen.** (Joseph Dillow, Reign of the Servant Kings, pages 585-588)

LESSON 119 (3-14-19)

Hebrews 1:9 "Thou (J.C.) hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed

Thee With the oil of gladness above Thy companions (METOCHOI)."

Hebrews 3:14 For we have become (v. rai) partakers (METOCHOI – partners) of Christ, if ^{3rd} we hold fast the beginning of our assurance (confidence) firm until the end,

The context shows that the assurance or confidence mentioned above is not referring to eternal security. All believers have that whether they are aware of it or not. It is referring to assurance that God will not forget our faithfulness in doing good works (divine good) for others.

Why is maintaining our assurance about that so important? If we start to doubt that our effort to please Him really doesn't matter that much, then it is unlikely that we will continue to work towards that goal.

So what can we do to make sure that we maintain our assurance? You know the answer; keep on being consistent in the intake of Bible doctrine. Those who are faithful in learning God's Word will maintain their assurance and be faithful in serving the Lord through doing divine good.

Hebrews 10:34-36 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one. 35) Therefore, do not throw away (v. aas) your confidence, which has a great reward. 36) For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive (v. ams) what was promised.

Isn't it interesting that our Lord not only rewards us for the divine good we accomplish; He also rewards us for the confidence we have in Him for doing so, just as He has promised.

God does not have to reward us for what we He commands us to do. He is in charge and has every right to expect obedience from us and to discipline us when we disobey Him.

There are millions of parents who interact with their children this way but that is also the way tyrants and dictators interact with the people they abuse. Of course their demands are unjust and they never give any incentives to the people because they operate by intimidation and fear.

Smart parents expect a lot from their children and their expectations are fair and just. They expect obedience and give them encouragement and praise as well as incentives to motivate them to do what they are told to do.

There is a big difference between leaders and managers.

Leaders motivate – managers intimidate.

Leaders incentivize subordinates

Managers minimize subordinates

Of course God is the ultimate Leader and Parent. He expects obedience and gives us encouragement and incentives to motivate us to “go for the gold”. We are offered rewards, crowns, privileges, opportunities, and prizes that are so awesome that we can't even imagine how wonderful they are, and all this, just for doing what we are supposed to do. **IT PAYS TO OBEY!**

Paul used athletic events such as boxing and running races to demonstrate the zeal we should have to be a good and faithful servant to our Lord.

There was a great amphitheater in Ephesus which seated one hundred thousand people, and the Olympic Games were held there at times. Paul was living in Ephesus for three years, and it is difficult for me to believe that he hadn't seen the games, especially since he used so many figures of speech that were taken from those athletic

events. J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 316.

The Christian runner with the spiritual mind realizes that God must work in him if he is going to win the race (Phil. 2:12–13).

Philippians 2:12-13 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out (v. pmm) your salvation with fear and trembling; 13) for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

“Without Me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). God works in us that He might work through us. As we apply ourselves to the things of the spiritual life, God is able to mature us and strengthen us for the race. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 90.

LESSON 120 (3-19-19)

of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

What is the “upward call of God”?

His aim [Paul’s] was to win the prize (brabeion), “a term that is taken directly from the athletic imagery of the games”. The prize is then defined as the “heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” Paul may have been alluding to the practice in the Greek games of when the victor’s name would be announced, along with his father’s name and country; and then the athlete would come and receive a palm branch in his hands. As such, Paul was saying that his prize came from God the Father and his prize was heavenly. Aside from the athletic imagery, Paul was saying he had answered God’s call to pursue Christ. The goal of that pursuit is to know Christ fully, and the prize is to come into the full reality of that knowledge—a reality that will not come into being until the

eschaton. Harold W. Hoehner, Philip W. Comfort, and Peter H. Davids, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Philemon., vol. 16 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), 206.

ESCHATOLOGY, noun, Greek eschatos, 1 : a branch of theology concerned with the final events in the history of the world or of mankind. [future things] Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

ESCHATOS, ἔσχατος, ② pertinent to being the final item in a series, least, last in time. [eschaton – gen. pl. masc.] BDAG. 397

*The **end time** (also called end times, end of time, end of days, last days, final days, or eschaton) is a future time-period described variously in the eschatologies of several world religions (both Abrahamic and non-Abrahamic),*

*which believe that world events will achieve a final climax.
The Free Dictionary, thefreedictionary.com*

eschaton noun, 1. - (New Testament) day at the end of time following Armageddon when God will decree the fates of all individual humans according to the good and evil of their earthly lives. *ibid*

What is stated in the paragraph above is not true. It buys into the myth that the majority of the population of this earth believes, that there will be a day when all people (alive and dead) will be judged according to their behavior.

If that were true, there would be no reason for Jesus Christ to take on the form of a man and die on the cross. God would accept those into heaven whose good works outweighed their sins and those whose sins outweighed their good works, would spend eternity in the lake of fire.

Think about this for a moment. Where is the grace? There is none.

Could anyone know if he or she was good enough to make into heaven? No.

Could God be righteous and just by overlooking the sins of those He allows into heaven but condemning the sins of those He sends to the lake of fire?

How can good works cancel out sins? If a person is arrested for DUI but says he is trying hard not to drink and is going to Alcoholics Anonymous, should he be released? If a man

viciously murdered your friend but turned over a new leaf while in prison, should he be released?

Some support the myth that all individual humans will be judged according to the good and evil of their earthly lives.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad (worthless).

1. The word “bad” is translated Gr. *phaulos* and *kakos*. Both words have “worthless” in the range of meanings.
2. This verse refers only to Church Age believers. Notice, the apostle Paul included himself by using the word “we” in this verse.
3. Sins will not be mentioned at the Judgment Seat of Christ which is an evaluation of the lives of believers to determine whether they will receive rewards and decorations for being good and faithful servants.
4. Sins will not be mentioned at the Great White Throne judgment for unbelievers either. They will all be condemned to the Lake of Fire for rejecting the gift of eternal life through faith alone in Christ alone. (Rev. 20:11-15).

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Believers who answer the upward call of God are those who:

1. Allow themselves to be transformed by the renewing of their mind by getting their Daily Dose of Doctrine.

Proverbs 8:34 Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at my doorposts.

2. Discipline themselves for the purpose of godliness.

1 Timothy 4:7-8 But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, *discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness*; 8) for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

LESSON 121 (3-21-19)

3. Strengthen their relationship and knowledge of Christ.

Philippians 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

4. Are in the process of becoming more Christ-like through learning doctrine, thinking doctrine, and applying doctrine.

Proverbs 8:34-35 Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at my doorposts. 35 "For he who finds me finds life and obtains favor from the LORD.

5. Don't allow the details of life to cause them to forget their number one priority of growing in grace.

2 Peter 3:17-18 ...be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, 18) but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

6. Remember that the things of God are more important than the things of the world.

Colossians 3:1-2 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2) Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

7. Forget what lies behind and reach forward to what lies ahead including rewards, decorations, etc. P-S-E-D

Philippians 3:13-14 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14) I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God *in Christ Jesus*.

in Christ Jesus. It is true that every Church Age believer is ***in Christ Jesus*** positionally, but the context suggests that here, the phrase refers to being in Christ Jesus experientially.

2 Corinthians 13:5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you-- unless indeed you fail the test?

1 John 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

John 15:4-7 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5) "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6) "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 7) "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

LESSON 122 (3-26-19)

Philippians 3:15-16 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16) however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

The ***therefore*** in this verse connects what is said here to the preceding verses. This is a summary statement based on what has been said earlier.

as many as are perfect,

TELEIOS, τέλειος, adj. npm; ② pert. to being mature, full-grown, mature, adult. To be complete, lacking nothing, to be finished.

1 Corinthians 2:6 Yet we do speak wisdom among those who *are mature*...

1 Corinthians 14:20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking *be* (v. pmm) *mature*.

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13) until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to *a mature man*, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food is for *the mature*, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

James 3:2 For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, *he is a perfect man*, able to bridle the whole body as well.

*“Have communion with few, be intimate with one,
deal justly with all, speak evil of none.”*

The New England Primer

have this attitude - PHRONEO, φρονέω, v. pas; ① to have an opinion with regard to something, think, form/hold an opinion, judge

What does “*this attitude*” mean? It’s the attitude that Paul was talking about, the attitude of pursuing the prize of Christlikeness. To have zeal, (*spoudazo*), in our pursuit of becoming spiritually mature.

It is hard to overstate the importance of attitude. Have you ever considered that our attitude toward others, usually determines their attitude toward us?

Our attitude towards life determines the quality of our lives. It takes an attitude of gratitude to have joy in life.

and if in anything you have a different attitude, - This is the same Greek word as before only this time it is a present active indicative. It refers to those who have a different (*heteros*) attitude from Paul as to how to live their lives.

Most believers have less than a robust zealous attitude toward going all out to win the prize. There’re not very committed to answering the upward call of God.

We all have family and friends who have a mediocre, take it or leave it attitude towards the word of God. They just don’t get it. They depend on their circumstances and the things of this world to bring joy and happiness into their lives. But of course, they experience disappointment, discouragement, anger, confusion, anxiety, and fear rather than joy.

We can pray for them and we can be a good example to them but we can’t reach in and turn a switch inside of them to change their negative attitude towards God to positive.

God will reveal that also to you;

(Mature) believers are those who admit they are not perfect in any absolute sense. The apostle urges all mature Philippian Christians to hold his attitude, conceding that none has yet “spiritually arrived” but ever pressing on toward further development. King James Version Study Bible ., electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), Php 3:15.

This is a promise of God that any believer who does not have the right attitude, He will make sure we are aware of it.

The Gr. word for “reveal” means “to uncover” or “unveil.” Paul left in God’s hands those who were not pursuing spiritual perfection. He knew God would reveal the truth to them eventually, even if it meant chastening. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1826.

The worst thing we can do is to try to pressure someone to accept the gospel or to learn Bible doctrine. We can try to persuade them and encourage them but we are never to nag, pester, or annoy them. Even though we mean well, that turns them off and drives them further away.

Motivation is so important in what people decide to do. Unbelievers are motivated to accept the gospel because they don’t want to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

But Paul is addressing believers, what motivates them to press on toward the prize of the upward call to reach spiritual maturity? Certainly the temporal and eternal rewards (crowns), decorations, privileges, and special opportunities available to every believer is a strong motivation to press on toward that goal?

Of course these wonderful super grace blessings cannot motivate believers unless they know about them. It is disgraceful that so many believers don't even know that these super grace blessings are available. To a large degree, pastors are responsible for this, not only because they haven't taught their flock about rewards, but also because they haven't taught the doctrine of eternal security.

“What’s the difference between Christian winners and losers? Motivation. Those who understand what’s at stake are a quadrillion times more likely to be Christian winners. If you wind up as a Christian failure, you will enter Heaven as such. You’ll then have to live out your eternal existence in Heaven knowing that you failed at the first task of eternity, your mortal life.” Lucas Kitchen, ‘Eternal Rewards, It Will Pay to Obey’, p. 30

LESSON 123 (3-28-19)

Think about the “Western Movies” and the “Westerns” on TV, what did they all use to motivate people to bring in criminals? A wanted poster. And what did every wanted poster include to insure they would be brought in? That’s right, a reward.

The rewards God offers are legitimate, not to be confused with the “health and wealth” preachers, the “name it and claim it” preachers, or the “blab it and grab it” preachers. They try to motivate people by appealing to their greed.

1 Timothy 6:9-10 *But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10) For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and*

some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

God never promises that believers who strive to follow Him faithfully and speak about Him publically will be wealthy or have it easy, in fact, He promises just the opposite. But He does promise that it will be worth it.

Notice how important motivation is in the following scripture:

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25) Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26) Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; 27) but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

Most believers have no idea that God gives more grace to believers who are motivated to reach spiritual maturity because of the incentives He offers than to the biblically ignorant stagnant mediocre ones.

Ephesians 2:4-7 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5) even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6) and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7) so that in the ages to

come He might show **the surpassing riches of His grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

James 4:6 But He gives a **greater grace**. Therefore it says, "**GOD IS OPPOSED TO** (Gr. *antitassentai* – to make war against) **THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**"

The 7 Types of Grace – see page 320

There are six categories of **Super Grace Blessings** in time:

1. **Spiritual Blessings**
2. **Temporal Blessings**
3. **Blessings by Association**
4. **Historical impact**
5. **Underserved Suffering**
6. **Dying Grace Blessings**

LESSON 124 (4-2-19)

Generally speaking, rewards in heaven can be defined using these six categories:

1. **Riches**
2. **Recognition**
3. **Rights**
4. **Regalia** (the ensigns or emblems of royalty, as a crown or scepter, royal rights or privileges, fancy or royal clothing)

5. Royalty

6. Relationship *ibid*

We all must learn to prioritize our lives by deciding what we are after, what our goal in life is, what is most important, and then exclude all the things that distract us from achieving that end. The Apostle Paul suffered in more ways than any of us could even imagine. What drove him on; what inspired him to keep going when at any point he could have taken the easier road? He knew he had eternal security so why didn't he dial it back a bit and just coast into heaven?

Some believe the only legitimate motivation for faithfully executing the Christian way of life is gratitude for salvation or love for the Lord. Paul certainly had these but he didn't mention them as the primary force leading him forward to faithfully complete his mission.

Some believe that feeling guilty, or for fear of going to hell is what motivates believers to reach and maintain the status of spiritual maturity. Of course these did not apply to Paul, nor should they apply to us. Fear and guilt are barriers, not motivators, in reaching our goal.

So what was it that motivated Paul to press on no matter what? It was the prize, the rewards that last for all eternity.

1 Corinthians 9:24-25 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run [v. pam] in such a way as to get the prize. 25) Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it

to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

He ran the race to win for the pay off. He knew that it would be worth it all in the end. He was single minded and focused on the goal of winning the race:

(NLT) ***Acts 20:24 But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.***

1 Corinthians 9:26-27 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; 27) but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

Even the great Apostle Paul could have fallen short of the prize if he had slacked off, lost his focus, and not endured till the end.

(NASV) ***Philippians 3:16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.***

(NKJV) ***Philippians 3:16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.***

The writer of Hebrews also encourages us to run the race to win, emphasizing the importance of enduring to the end.

Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside

every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Revelation 3:11 *Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.*

Maintaining our confidence in God and believing that we are capable of winning the prize is of the utmost importance. It is easy to become discouraged because there are so many in the race that can run faster than us so we can lose heart, thinking that there is no chance for us to win.

But we are not competing against other believers, we are competing against our-self, our old self. The world, the flesh, and the devil are our real competitors; they try to tempt us, distract us, and discourage us so that we won't win the prize.

LESSON 125 (4-4-19)

Do you know the spiritual status you have attained? Are you a baby believer, an adolescent believer, or a mature believer?

Characteristics of a spiritually mature believer:

- 1) The things of the world are less important than the things of God.
- 2) They have prioritized their life around being an obedient and faithful servant to the Lord. He comes 1st.
- 3) They automatically make it to church to study Gods Word (or live stream), (unless it's simply not possible).
- 4) They consistently take in the Word on days when Church is not open. (videos, CDs, MP3s, notes, and

booklets)

- 5) They don't go one day without thanking the Lord for something.
- 6) It's SOP (Standard Operational Procedure) for them to apply doctrinal solutions to their problems.
- 7) When under the pressure of adversity, the first thing they do is call on the Lord and utilize Faith-Rest.
- 8) If there is a conflict between how they feel and what the Bible says, the Bible is always right.

No one grows spiritually apart from learning God's Word. It is exciting when one learns Bible doctrine and then applies it to their circumstances and finds that it works. That is the power of God working in you! What a powerful motivation to learn more doctrine. Doctrine already learned is what facilitates future growth. It is what keeps our spiritual momentum moving forward. The Word of God teaches us that we must learn how to think properly first before we can act properly. **Rom. 12:2**

The problem with many believers is when they see a little spiritual growth in their life, they think they have arrived, they have a little doctrine, but they think it is a lot.

This is the awkward adolescent stage of spiritual growth which is the most dangerous period of spiritual development. It's the time when we think we know everything.

Past Bible doctrine that we have learned is the basis for learning future Bible doctrine. Our greatest enemy is arrogance. That is why verse 15 brought up the importance of attitude,

“have this attitude”. What attitude? The attitude of pressing on towards the prize of the upward call of God.

“If we do not keep pressing toward the goal of the upward-call, a static ineptness will creep into our spiritual lives. If we stay static long enough we will stagnate. If we stagnate too long, spiritual dry rot will eat away at the core of our spiritual strength.” Grace Notes

Arrogant believers believe there really is no need to press on because they are satisfied with where they are spiritually. Their goal of spending eternity in heaven has been met (believing in Jesus Christ), so why go through the time, effort, and suffering to reach spiritual maturity?

The stronger our attitudes the stronger the life will be. Paul challenges the Philippians to deepen their understanding of the Word so that they can free themselves from negative attitudes toward others and develop the positive attitude of Jesus (2:5). Are your attitudes changing positively toward others by the absolute standard of the Word? Ibid

LESSON 126 (4-9-19)

Philippians 3:17 *Brethren, join in following my example, and **observe** those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.*

“Join in following my example” could be rendered “become fellow imitators of me.” “Fellow imitators” (summimetaīg, Gk.) is related to the English word “mimics.” Just as Paul mimics Christ, so they should mimic or imitate him. “Pattern” (tupos, Gk.) comes from tuptōg (Gk.), which meant to strike an exact

image upon a blank piece of metal. W. A. Criswell et al., eds., *Believer's Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), *Php* 3:17.

observe – ΣΚΟΠΕΩ, σκοπέω, v. pam; to pay careful attention to, look (out) for, notice

Paul didn't see himself as a super saint but he did want people to follow his tracks because his lifestyle was working for him and it would work for them as well.

Look at the grace of God in Paul's life. He went from persecuting Christians to becoming their greatest hero.

1 Corinthians 4:15-16 For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16) Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me.

1 Corinthians 11:1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

He didn't mean to imitate me in everything he thought, said, or did. He meant, "Imitate me to the degree I imitate Christ. So far as Christ is reflected in my life, follow me."

What about you? Would you like other believers to imitate your life? You're probably thinking, "No way!" But the chances are that you are being imitated by others and don't know it. There may be people who are watching you because they respect you and admire the way that you remain calm even when others are not.

Everyone influences someone. Children and grandchildren are watching you. Even your friend's children and your

neighbor's children are watching you. They listen to you when you have a disagreement with someone. We can't afford to lose our temper and do something stupid because children are watching and they don't forget.

If you are impatient, they will be impatient, if you judge other people and call them names, they will judge other people and call them names. If you use bad language ... you get the picture.

observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

The Philippians could not observe Paul's behavior since he wasn't there so he commanded his flock to pay close attention to mature believers other than himself. Have you ever considered that you are the best Christian that some people know?

You may be the only Christian some people know. People you come into contact with may judge all other believers by you.

You may see this as unwanted pressure but if you have a leadership role as a Christian, the pressure is much greater.

Hebrews 13:7 Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

If you are in a leadership role, you are probably under constant scrutiny. This includes pastors, deacons, missionaries, Junior Class teachers, and those who work

outside the local church such as Good News Club volunteers, Hospice, etc.

One reason that believers should strive to get face-to-face teaching is not only because the personal dimension is so powerful but also the fellowship enables others to learn from the doctrinal inventory in your soul and its application to circumstances.

We should choose to associate with believers who are growing spiritually. If most of your friends are dullards when it comes to learning Bible doctrine, you need to find some new friends.

Philippians 3:18 For many walk, of whom I often told (lego v. iai) you, and now tell (lego v. pai) you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19) whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

This is another illustration of how important repetition is. Paul was not shy about repeating himself over and over again as it is the best way of retaining information.

It is obvious that Paul was passionate about those who he calls “**enemies of the cross of Christ**”. He prefaced this phrase with ***and now tell you even weeping.***

they are enemies of the cross of Christ

enemies - ECHTHROS, ἔχθρός, adj. apm; From a primary echtho (to hate), ② pertinent to being hostile, hating

Of course the question is, were the *enemies of the cross* believers or unbelievers? Which one does the description in verse 19 refer?

Notice some of the examples in the epistle he gave that referred to negative believers:

*“Throughout the letter, Paul employs several negative exemplars in both explicit and implicit terms to sharpen his exhortations on modelling the gospel. He cites the ‘**envious preachers**’ (1:15–17), **Old Testament Israel**, admittedly through allusions (2:12–19), **selfish Christians** (2:21), the **opponents of the gospel** (3:2–3), the ‘**enemies of the cross**’ who caused him ‘tears’ (3:18), and **Euodia and Syntyche** (4:3), all as negative exemplars.”*

Annang Asumang, “Modelling the Gospel in Joyful Partnership: Exemplars and the Uniting Theme of Philippians,” *Conspectus* Volume 13 (2012): 18.

*“The second reference to the opponents in the chapter describes them as living ‘as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things’ (3:18–19). Despite the difficulties in identifying the exact referents, it is evident that these believers avoided the self-sacrifice that the gospel of Christ demanded. *Ibid*, p. 36*

It is true that unbelievers may be found in local churches, including Philippi, but this letter was written to the believers in the church of Philippi. Its thrust was to encourage and exhort believers, not evangelism. So it would seem unlikely that unbelievers would become the center of attention in the midst of encouraging and warning believers.

19) whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

The four negative results of being an enemy of the cross of Christ in this verse can certainly be imposed on believers. The rejection of the gospel is not found in this verse.

whose end is destruction – APOLEIA, ἀπώλεια, n. nsf; ② the destruction that one experiences.

1. apollumi verb, a strengthened form of ollumi, signifies “to destroy utterly”; in middle voice, “to perish.” The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of wellbeing. W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr., Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Nashville, TN: T. Nelson, 1996), 164.

Most believers don’t understand that a person can have eternal life, be born again, and be a child of God yet still have a life that ends in ruin. They just don’t realize how serious God is about His children being obedient and faithful.

Psalm 32:3-4 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4) For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah.

Hebrews 2:1-3 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2) For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3) how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at

the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

Hebrews 12:25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

Hebrews 12:5-6 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; 6) FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.

LESSON 127 (4-11-19)

1 John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.

See **Hebrews 10:23-29**

NASV *whose god is their appetite*, - KOLIA, κοιλία, n. nsf; ③ seat of inward life, of feelings and desires, belly.

AV translates it as "womb" 12 times, and "belly" 11 times. James Strong, Enhanced Strong's Lexicon (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995).

NKJV - *whose god is their belly*

NET - *whose god is their stomach*

GNB - *They are going to end up in hell, because their god is their bodily desires. (This is a horrible paraphrase!)*

DOCTRINE OF EMOTIONS

1. The Greek word *KARDIA* means heart and always refers to the area of thought in the soul.

2. The *kardia* possesses 1. frame of reference which is designed for thought, 2. memory center, 3. vocabulary and categorical storage 4. conscience 5. subconscious and 6. norms & standards. The *kardia* is the dominant portion of the soul and possesses what makes you who you are. You are what you think (*Prov. 23:7*).

3. Emotions are not part of the *Kardia*. The *kardia* contains all thought and standards. The emotion contains nothing.

4. Anatomy in the languages of the ancient world always doubled for the functions of the soul, because they did not have a psychological vocabulary.

5. English words used in the Bible to describe the emotions include: womb, bowels, belly, stomach, reins, and appetite.

6. *KOILIA*, is a Greek word for the emotions and it refers to something that is empty, or hollow. Emotion contains no doctrine, no thought, no common sense, and no ability to reason.

7. Emotions are designed to **respond** to what is in the soul, **not react** to it.

8. There is a wide range of wonderful emotions we experience when we respond to what is in our soul - Joy, happiness, love, peace, etc.
9. When they react to what is in the soul, thinking is terminated and raw emotion takes over. That results in impulsive, irrational, irresponsible, reckless, senseless, and insane behavior.
10. Emotions are the appreciator of the soul; they respond to the *kardia*. They are physiological responses to what is in the soul, what we are thinking.
11. Positive response to the *kardia* produces the spectrum of emotions from being tranquil to being ecstatic. We are happy but how do we know we're happy? Emotions tell us by the physiological response to what we are thinking.
12. Negative reaction to the *kardia* produces the spectrum of misery, mental attitude sins, emotional revolt, instability and wide emotional swings. Since thinking is shut down, there can be no doctrinal application so negative caustic thinking takes over the soul and is acted out in one's behavior.
13. If how you feel becomes the criterion for your life, then you have made your emotions your god. You will not be able to learn Bible doctrine or execute God's plan as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.
14. Unrestrained or uncontrolled emotions are the basis for fear, criminality, violence, hatred, anger, bitterness, vindictiveness, jealousy, implacability, self-pity, rage, and hyper-sensitivity.

15. You will never be stable, secure, confident, at peace, or be able to maintain long term relationships if you don't learn how to control your emotions. You will become your own worst enemy.

LESSON 128 (4-16-19)

NASV *and whose glory is in their shame*

ESV *and they glory in their shame*

NET *they exult in their shame*

NLT *they brag about shameful things*

Instead of giving glory to God, these believers heaped praise on themselves. They were proud of the things they should have been ashamed of.

We all have heard believers brag about how they “lost it” and berated and belittled someone who crossed them. They crow about how they disrespect, gossip about, and undermine the authority of their boss or pastor-teacher they don't like.

We like it when someone gets their “come-up-ins” for mistreating or abusing those under their authority. But the Bible doesn't give us the freedom to excoriate those who have done us wrong. We are to treat them with grace and unconditional love.

Children boast to their friends about how they get by with lying to their parents and how they get their way by throwing a fit when they don't get their way.

People are proud that they are immoral. They do not mind parading their brazen, blatant sin before millions on national television programs. Homosexuals march in "coming out" parades.

Their sense of right and wrong is at odds with the Word of God so they delight in mocking and disparaging Scripture. They tolerate no one who would put a restraint on their desires. Morality is all but dead in our culture and the idea that the end justifies the means rules supreme.

who set their minds on earthly things.

It is not surprising that people use nothing but human viewpoint because our population for the most part are biblically ignorant. Most pastors give feeble bromides to their congregation rather than exegeting the Word, so even churchgoers aren't even exposed to divine viewpoint.

Galatians 4:3 So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Colossians 2:20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to [worldly] decrees,

Colossians 3:1-2 *Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2) Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.*

1 John 2:17 *The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.*

Philippians 3:20-21 *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21) who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.*

For our citizenship is in heaven, POLITEUMA, πολίτευμα, n. nsn; citizenship, Enhanced Strong's Lexicon - a state, commonwealth, the commonwealth of citizens.

cit•i•zen•ship noun

1 : the status of being a citizen

2 a : membership in a community (as a college)

b : the quality of an individual's response to membership

in a community. Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

Citizen: ■ noun

1. a legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth.

2. an inhabitant of a town or city. —derivatives **citizenry**

noun **citizenship** noun.

Concise Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

“The people of Philippi were living there as colonists while their citizenship was in Rome. Similarly Christians, while living on earth, have their citizenship elsewhere—in heaven”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 662.

Just as Philippi was a colony of Rome on foreign soil, so the church is a “colony of heaven” on earth. Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 92.

Our citizenship is in heaven because heaven is our home. We are just sojourning on this earth, it is our temporary residence until we die or until the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

John 14:2-3 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3) "And if 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.

We belong to our heavenly King first and foremost; we obey His law above all others; and our heavenly citizenship is superior to all others.

The city of Philippi was a Roman colony. In Philippi the laws of Rome were enforced. The people wore the same kind of styles that were worn in Rome. They spoke Latin.

Everything in Philippi was like Rome because it was a colonial city. J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 318.

Church age believers are actually a colony of heaven who are temporary located on earth. We are ambassadors of our Lord Jesus Christ while we are here, but unfortunately, most believers don't act like Jesus' ambassadors.

There was a time in our country that believers took their responsibility of acting like Jesus' ambassadors more seriously than they do today.

“Ignorance is the enemy of liberty—the nurse of despotism Had I a voice that could be heard from New Hampshire to Georgia, it should be exerted in urging the necessity of disseminating virtue and knowledge among our citizens. On this subject, the policy of the eastern States is well worthy of imitation. The wise people of that extremity of the Union never form a new township without making arrangements that secure to its inhabitants the instruction of youth and the public preaching of the Gospel. Hence their children are early taught to know their rights and to respect themselves.

Tolerating Tyranny p. 23

Things have change quite a bit since then:

“Our once Christian-based civil government has become idolatrous by arrogating to itself the God-like power of permeating every aspect and sphere of citizens' lives. But only God has the right to rule over every sphere of the people's lives.

Our once carefully limited and restrictive civil government now claims the unbiblical right of “playing God” by invading our homes, our schools, our churches, and our business, financial, and personal lives. It has become a secular god to

whom all must bow. No sphere, not even one small niche, is sacred any more from the strong hand of civil government as the humanistic state attempts to care for people from the cradle to the grave.”

Tom Rose, *Our Reconstruction and the American Republic, Christianity and Civilization*, Geneva Divinity School Press, 1983, p.309 (emphasis in original), *Tolerating Tyranny*

“The scriptural principle that governs a citizen’s submission to his civil authorities is the same principle that governs his or her submission to any other authority. Why is it only to civil authorities that Christians must give

absolute and total submission?” Timothy Baldwin and Chuck Baldwin, *Romans 13, The true Meaning of Submission*, p. 12

God limits the authority of government, not only in matters of faith but also in matters of freedom. This certainly was the viewpoint of our founding fathers. They believed:

- *God has given all mankind unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and property.*
- *The purpose of government is to respect and protect the rights of its citizens.*
- *When government abuses those rights, it loses its right to govern.*
- *“Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God”, this became the motto of the colonists.*

Tolerating Tyranny, p. 86

LESSON 129 (4-18-19)

Read excerpts from *Tolerating Tyranny*.

When a baby was born in Philippi, it was important that its name be registered on the legal records. When the lost

sinner trusts Christ and becomes a citizen of heaven, his name is written in ["the Lambs Book of Life"]. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 92.

THE BOOKS

Every person has his or her name registered in the Book of Life when he or she is born:

Philippians 4:3 *And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.*

Revelation 20:12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is **the Book of Life**. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.*

Luke 10:19-20 *Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you. 20)*

*"Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but **rejoice that your names are recorded** (v. rpi = r per. p pas. i ind.) **in heaven.**"*

Every person who dies who have rejected the gospel has his or her name removed from the Book of Life.

Psalms 69:27-28 *Do Thou add iniquity to their iniquity, And may they not come into Thy righteousness.*

28) *May they be blotted out of the book of life, And may they not be recorded with the righteous.*

Revelation 3:5 He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and *I will not erase his name from the book of life*, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.

Revelation 17:8 And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, *whose name has not been written in the book of life* from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

Revelation 20:15 - And anyone *not found written in the Book of Life* was cast into the lake of fire.

When a person believes the gospel, his name is entered into the Lamb's Book of Life.

Revelation 13:8 And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world *in the book of life of the Lamb* who has been slain.

Revelation 21:27 And nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into It (the New Jerusalem), *but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Unbelievers will be judged according to their good works which are all recorded in "the books" located in heaven:

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead (unbelievers), *the great and the small, standing before the throne, and*

books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

LESSON 130 (4-23-19)

Most of the people of Philippi were Roman citizens. Roman governors ruled these cities. Roman justice and morals were executed. Roman dress was sported whether they lived in Greece or Israel and they spoke Latin. They never forgot they were citizens of Rome. They remained unalterably and permanently Roman even to the ends of the earth. Grace Notes

We should take our heavenly citizenship just as seriously as they took their Roman citizenship. Many of the members of the Church in Philippi were Roman citizens, but they knew that they were first and foremost citizens of heaven.

Wherever a Christian is and no matter what the issue may be, his decisions and his conduct are to be in accord with his citizenship in heaven. But sometimes, believers who get too wrapped up in the things of this world and forget they are citizens of heaven. They tend to go along with things that go against their heavenly citizenship in order to be accepted or to avoid trouble.

The patriarch Abraham, like most believers, at times would forget about his heavenly code of behavior and would tell a lie. But he remembered that someday he would be in heaven and was looking forward to living in a home whose architect and builder is God

Hebrews 11:8-10 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9) By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Verse 19 warned believers about **setting their minds** on *earthly things*. This phrase is one word in the Greek *phroneo* which is a present active participle. Some believers rarely if ever think about spiritual or heavenly things. Those type of believers have no spiritual momentum, no hope and no inheritance in heaven.

If we restrict ourselves to the interests of time and this world, we will miss out on the wonderful eternal blessings we could have in heaven.

Believers were born in the world but we are not of the world. When we were born again, we became citizens of heaven. Heaven, not the world, is our home and is why we should look forward to going home as we eagerly wait for our Savior to return.

LESSON 131 (4-25-19)

from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

eagerly wait for- ΑΠΕΚΔΕΧΟΜΑΙ, ἀπεκδέχομαι, v. pmi;
"Eagerly wait for" is one word in the Greek. It is double

compound word made up of three Greek words. The words are "from" (AP = *apo*) and "out" (Ek = out) and "wait" (DECHOMAI = wait) The word "from" indicates withdrawal of one's attention from other matters. We need to concentrate on his coming. The second word "out" intensifies the concentration. So far we have a person who is intensely concentrating on the coming of his King. The third part of the word is the word "wait." "Wait" means "receive" or "welcome." This speaks of a welcoming reception. The accumulation of all three of these words means this person is intensely concentrating on giving King Jesus a very welcoming reception.

Paul had taught the Philippian believers well; they had been informed about the rapture and were eagerly awaiting it. They thought that it could occur during their lifetime.

Romans 8:23 ...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, *waiting eagerly* for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

We live on a sin sick fallen world whose ruler for now is Satan. We groan within ourselves under the constant lies, deception, greed, immorality, wickedness, and evil that we are bombarded with every day.

When Jesus returns at the 2nd Advent, everything will change! He will set everything right and we will have a perfect environment and a perfect Ruler who will rule with perfect justice.

Believers have already become sons of God legally when we believed the gospel by faith. However, we still anticipate being adopted as sons when our physical bodies will be redeemed at the rapture and then we will receive a new resurrection body.

Romans 8:25 But if^{1st} we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we *wait eagerly* for it.

There will come a time when there will no longer be any need for hope because we will see everything God has promised come to pass.

One reason so many believers seem to have no zeal or passion in their life is because they aren't eagerly waiting for Christ's return. Why aren't they? Because they have little or no knowledge of eschatology. The future to them is a blank; they know nothing about the rapture, the tribulation, the 2nd Advent, or the tribulation.

What Christian denomination does not believe in the secret rapture? Most Christian churches do not accept this belief, including Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, most Protestants...

https://www.answers.com/Q/What_Christian_denominations_do_not_believe_in_the_rapture

Out of the 1,000 senior Protestant pastors surveyed, only a third (36 percent) believed in a pre-tribulation rapture where Christians disappear at the start of the apocalypse and those left behind suffer tribulation.

Thirty-six percent of pastors say the rapture is not literal, while almost 1 in 5 believe the rapture happens after the tribulation (18 percent).

A third (31 percent) of leaders don't believe in a thousand year reign but they do believe that Jesus already rules in the hearts and minds of Christians. Close to 1 in 10 (11 percent) believe in post-millennialism, the idea that the world will gradually become more Christian until Jesus returns. <https://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2016/april/large-number-of-pastors-dont-believe-in-the-rapture>

It seems that it is safe to assume that most Christians have no idea that there is a crown of reward for believers who wait eagerly for our Lord's return:

2 Timothy 4:8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

We are not by ourselves in waiting for our Savior to return:

Romans 8:19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; - Full designation of his names "the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" converges upon his person and work.

Do you anticipate seeing him? Do you long to see him? On the other hand, is Jesus a necessary nuisance and inconvenience to your life? If the latter is true, deep spiritual

aberration has seeped into your soul. Not only should Jesus be important to us, he should be the core, the center of our lives. Grace Notes

When our Lord returns for us at the rapture, we will see our Lord Jesus Christ face to face, we will exit this world in a fantastic resurrection body, and we will be reunited with all our believing friends and family who have passed away. What a colossal wonderful day that will be!

LESSON 132 (4-30-19)

Philippians 3:21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Hebrews 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

This is a general statement with an allowance for a few exceptions: Enoch and Elijah exited this world without dying.

Church Age believers are unique in many ways, one of the ways is that the ones who are alive when Jesus Christ returns will leave this earth without experiencing physical death. That is what this verse is describing.

LESSON 133 (5-2-19 / much of this is review.)

Nearly all C.A. believers exit this earth through physical death. Only a few, relatively speaking, will exit this earth without dying physically. Resurrection refers to rising from the dead to

receive a resurrection body; being transformed refers to receiving an immortal (resurrection) body instantaneously while still alive.

All believers will receive the same kind of immortal bodies, generally speaking, whether they rise up from the graves or whether their physical bodies are instantly transformed.

All immortal - eternal bodies will have characteristics in common, but some will have limitations and some will not. Those who reached spiritual maturity on earth not only will not have limitations imposed on them, they will enjoy added blessings, benefits, and opportunities.

We find Paul referencing this transformation from a physical body to a resurrection body in 2 Corinthians 5:4.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4 For we know that if the earthly tent [physical body] *which is our house is torn down* [dies], *we have a building* [resurrection body] *from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

2) For indeed in this house [physical body] *we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven* [to have the resurrection body to cover our soul];

3) *inasmuch as* [even if] *we, having ~~put it on~~ put it off* [put off our physical body - dies], [we – our souls and spirits] *shall not be found naked*** [body-less, we will have an interim body].**

(NKJV) **3) *if indeed, having been ~~clothed~~ unclothed*** [died physically], ***we shall not be found naked*** [disembodied].

The difference in translation in verse 3 has to do with one translation using the Greek word “*enduo*” (put it on, clothed) and another one using “*ekduo*” (put it off, unclothed). Most translations use “*enduo*” but it seems to make the passage redundant. The 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek text used “*ekduo*” in 2nd Corinthians 5:3.

*“There is also the added problem of a textual variant. The best textual evidence is behind *evdusameno*i (put it on, clothed), but the very similar term *ekdusameno*i (put it off, unclothed) makes more sense in the context. If one chooses by the criteria of (1) better, older Greek manuscripts and (2) the most unusual is probably original, then Paul has written a tautology - (“put off ... naked”).*

© “naked” This word is often used in Greek literature for the preferred disembodied state at death. The Greeks longed for this incipient release from the physical body; however, Christianity, like Judaism, asserts that we (both believers and unbelievers, cf. Dan. 12:1–2; Matt. 25:46; John 5:28–29) will always have a bodily expression. Possibly Paul is again refuting the false teaching (incipient Gnosticism). Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Letters to a Troubled Church: I and II Corinthians*, vol. Volume 6, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2002), 237.

4) For indeed while we are in this tent [body], we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed [die], but to be clothed [receive a resurrection body], in order that what is mortal [physical body] may be swallowed up by life [be instantly transformed into an immortal (resurrection) body].

swallowed up – KATAPINO, καταπίνω, v. aps; to be completely consumed, devoured.

Our temporary mortal bodies which are subject to death, will be completely consumed, swallowed up, replaced by an immortal body having permanent life, if we are still here when Jesus returns.

Paul used a similar expression in his first letter to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 15:54 *But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "**Death is swallowed up in victory.***

swallowed up – KATAPINO, καταπίνω, v. api; to be completely consumed, devoured.

This describes a different “swallowing up” that will take place when Jesus returns. Death will be “swallowed up” in victory because Jesus Christ defeated death when He rose from the grave. What does this mean for us?

1. The fear and dread of death will be completely consumed, devoured, terminated.
2. Death itself will be completely consumed, swallowed up, terminated. Death will be no more.

Philippians 3:21 *who will transform the body of our humble state*

will transform - METASTREPHO, μεταστρέφω, v. fai3s; to cause a change in state or condition, change, alter.

At this transformation, our bodies will no longer have an OSN. It will no longer experience pain, suffering, mourning, or death. We will have means of travel that are not available to us now and our new bodies will never experience fatigue, age, or disease.

It is important to notice the difference between the verb used here, “**will transform our bodies**”, with the command used in **Romans 12:2 – And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed** by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**

“**be transformed**” - METAMORPHOO, μεταμορφόω, v. ppm2p
② to change inwardly in fundamental character or condition, be changed, be transformed.

The transformation of our minds takes place over an extended period of time as we consistently take in B.D. God provides His Word, the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, pastor-teachers, and a local church but we must commit to taking advantage of these in order for the transformation of our minds to occur. This means getting our daily dose of doctrine.

Believers who have a ‘take it or leave it’ attitude towards God and His Word will not have a transformation of the mind. They will experience the transformation of their bodies at the rapture but there will be eternal limitations imposed on their new resurrection bodies as to what they will look like, where they can go, and what they will be able to do.

The transformation of our bodies that takes place when we receive our resurrection bodies is instantaneous and solely the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:50-52 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 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 imperishable, and we shall be changed.

We don't know when this will happen so we need to be ever vigilant so that when He comes we will not be ashamed about The way we've been living.

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

Every C.A. believer, those who have died and those who will still be alive, will receive their immortal (resurrection) body when Jesus returns at the rapture.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 ...even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15) ... [then] we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16) ...and the **dead in Christ shall rise first (resurrected). 17) Then we who are alive and remain **shall be caught up** (transformed) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18) Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

the body of our humble state – Our human bodies are nothing short of phenomenal even though they have been severely weakened since the fall of Adam.

They are so complex that doctors consider our brain, eyes, and ears to be miraculous in the way they function.

Psalm 139:14 I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.

Because of Adam's fall, we age and eventually die, but our body is incredibly complex with an immune system that seems to be miraculous.

Our bodies will heal themselves in most cases, especially if we help it out by staying away from harmful drugs and we eat properly.

As great as our bodies are, they are so inferior to the new resurrection bodies we will receive, that they are not even in the same class.

Our bodies change as they go through the aging process. Our hair usually turns grey and some of us lose our hair, our teeth fall out, our vision degrades and requires glasses, our knees and hip joints wear out and need to be replaced, our strength, good looks, and cognitive abilities (especially our memory) seem to diminish. Aging bodies seem to be more susceptible to disease and accidents.

Our resurrection body will not experience any of these symptoms because it will never age!

into conformity with the body of His glory,

conformity – SUMMORPHOS, σύμμορφος, adj. asn; having a similar form, nature, or style.

Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined (appointed) **to become conformed** (adj. apm) **to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;**

image – EIKON, εἰκὼν, n. gsf; ③ that which represents something else in terms of basic form and features, form, appearance.

The fact that we will receive an eternal resurrection body that will be superior to the bodies we have now is wonderful, but the fact that it will be like Christ's glorious resurrection body goes way beyond wonderful.

1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. 3) And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

One who sets his **hope** (confident expectation) by faith on the Son of God purifies himself – rebounds, obeys, and trusts.

Living in the reality of Christ's return makes a difference in a Christian's behavior. Since Christians someday will be like Him, a desire should grow within the Christian to become like Him now. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1968.

All of this speaks of the doctrine the immanency of our Lord's return. Since there will be no prophecy fulfilled for the Church before Jesus Christ returns, He can return at any moment. If this is was so, then the prophecy would have to be fulfilled first which would mean His return isn't imminent.

Those who believe that Church Age believers will have to go through part, or all of the Tribulation, do not believe in the immanency of Christ's return. They are waiting for the Tribulation, not the return of Jesus. But the Bible never instructs C.A. believers to be looking for the Tribulation, to be prepared for it, or how to survive it.

The Thessalonians received the following instructions:

1 Thessalonians 1:10 to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath [Tribulation] to come.

The only prophecy during the Church age, for the Church, is its termination – the rapture. There is prophecy concerning Israel that will be fulfilled during the Church Age, but none for the Church. That is why Christ's return is immanent.

There is nothing required for believers to do in order to be transformed/translated when Jesus Christ returns. He takes care of everything. It will happen immediately and automatically as a manifestation of His love and His gracious plan for us.

Paul lived approximately two thousand years ago and he thought that the rapture could happen during his lifetime, so it certainly is a possible for it will occur during ours.

Titus 2:13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;

A Christian who truly loves Christ and looks forward to His return will pay any price to bring his life into conformity with his beloved Lord's will, lest he disappoint Him at His return... A full understanding of these things leads inexorably to godly living. Conversely, ungodly living in a Christian is a clear sign that either he does not fully understand these things or he does not actually believe them. A. Duane Litfin, "Titus," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 765.

1 Corinthians 1:7 So that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

LESSON 134 (5-7-19)

Philippians 3:20-21 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21) who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

God will effectively bring all things under the authority and supernatural power of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:22-27 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. 23) But each in his own

order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming [resurrected and transformed at the rapture], 24) then comes the end [of the Millennium], when He [J.C.] delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He [J.C.] has abolished all [Satanic] rule and all authority [fallen angelic hierarchy] and [demonic] power. 25) For He [J.C.] must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. 26) The last enemy that will be abolished is death. 27) For He [GTF] has put all things in subjection under His [J.C.] feet. But when He [GTF] says, "All things are put in subjection," [Psa. 8:6] it is evident that He [GTF] is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him [J.C.]. 28) When all things are subjected to Him [J.C.], then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One [GTF] who subjected all things to Him [J.C.], so that God may be all in all.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Matthew 11:27 "All things have been handed over to Me [J.C.] by My Father;

Psalm 110:1-2 A Psalm of David. The LORD [GTF] says to my Lord [J.C.]: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." 2) The LORD [GTF] will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Thine enemies."

John 3:35 "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.

John 17:2 even as Thou [GTF] gavest Him [J.C.] authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou [GTF] hast given Him [J.C.], He may give eternal life.

1 Corinthians 6:14 Now God [GTF] has not only raised the Lord [J.C.], but will also raise us up through His [J.C.] power.

2 Corinthians 4:14 knowing that he [GTF] who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us [apostles] also with Jesus and bring us with you into his [GTF] presence.

John 17:2 even as Thou [GTF] gavest Him [J.C.] authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou [GTF] hast given Him [J.C.], He may give eternal life.

Psalms 2:7-9 I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD [GTF]: He said to Me, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee. 8 'Ask of Me [GTF], and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. 9 'Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware.'"

LESSON 135 (5-11-19) Ephesians 1:15 – 21 is one sentence, it has 190 words.

Ephesians 1:18-23 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened part. rp, so that you may know inf. ra what is the hope of His [GTF] calling, what are the riches of the glory of His

[GTF] *inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His [GTF] power toward us who believe* part. pa. *These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His [GTF] might 20 which He [GTF] brought about in Christ, when He [GTF] raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His [GTF] right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. 22 And He [GTF] put all things in subjection under His [J.C.] feet, and gave Him [J.C.] as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His [J.C.] body, the fullness of Him [J.C.] who fills* part. pm *all in all.*
Philippians 4:1 Therefore [since we have such a glorious hope (Php. 3:20-21), *my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.*

“**Therefore**” connects what Paul wrote in chapter 3 about experiential sanctification and glorification to what he continues to say here in chapter four.

my beloved – AGAPATOS, ἀγαπητός, adj. npm; ② pertinent to one who is dearly loved, dear, beloved, prized,

Paul used this word 27 times in the 13 epistles that he wrote. He used it 3 times in Philippians, once in 2:12 and twice in this verse. This is the only time he used “beloved” twice in the same verse.

my beloved brethren – He combined two words of endearment to express his affection and great love for the believers of the Philippian Church. They were not his blood kin, but they

were nonetheless his spiritual kin. Often, the ties and bond that exists between spiritual kin is stronger than that of blood kin.

One takeaway we extract from this verse is how Paul was not hesitant to express his love and affection to those he loved. We should never take for granted that people we love, know how much we love them. We need to tell them. Everyone likes to be reassured that they are loved.

This phrase is used only one other time in the N.T. and is very similar to this verse.

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, *my beloved brethren*, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing ^(part. ra) *that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. whom I long to see*, - This is the second time that Paul used this phrase to express his love to those he loved.

Philippians 1:8 For God is my witness, how *I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus*.

1 Thessalonians 2:18 For *we wanted to come to you-- I, Paul, more than once-- and yet Satan thwarted us*.

The old adage is true: “*Absence make the heart grow fonder.*” It is certainly true for all the believers who are anxiously waiting for our Lords return.

my joy and crown – Paul refers to the Philippian believers then, as his joy, and thereafter, as his crown (*stephanos*). He said a very similar thing to the Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For who is our hope or *joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our*

Lord Jesus at His coming? 20 For you are our *glory and joy*.

1 Corinthians 9:25 And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive *a perishable wreath*, but we *an imperishable*.

Our Lord Jesus Christ wore a *stephanos* crown of thorns as the Roman soldiers mocked Him, tortured Him and led Him off to be crucified.

Matthew 27:29-30 And after weaving a *crown of thorns*, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 And they spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head.

Paul refers to his converts as constituting his crown of victory. Their salvation was of course at the Lord Jesus' expense, but also from the Apostle Paul's hard work and sufferings.

LESSON 136 (5-14-19)

Crowns are given for faith, obedience, and hard work.

Crown of Righteousness:

2 Timothy 4:8 in the future there is laid up for me *the crown of righteousness*, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Crown of Life:

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive **the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.**

Revelation 2:10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you **the crown of life.**

Crown of Glory:

1 Peter 5:2 & 4 shepherd the flock of God among you... 4) And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the **unfading crown of glory.**

It appears that faithful pastor-teachers who have believers in their congregations who reach spiritual maturity will receive a crown of glory.

(NASV 1977) **Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.**

so stand firm in the Lord... STEKO, **στήκω**, v. pam; ② to be firmly committed in conviction or belief,

(NASV 1995) **in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.**

(NET) ***stand in the Lord in this way, my dear friends!***

(NIV) **that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear**

friends!

(NLT) *for you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work.*

Paul was expressing his enduring love for them but he was also encouraging them, exhorting them, and maybe even warning them to keep on enduring in the struggle to keep the rewards they had achieved.

Revelation 3:11 'I am coming quickly; *hold fast* what you have, so *that no one will take your crown.*

hold fast - STEKO, στήκω, v. pam; ② to be firmly committed in conviction or belief,

Hebrews 3:6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house whose house we are, if ^{3rd class} we *hold fast* our confidence and the boast of *our hope firm until the end.*

We can't afford to let down our guard for even a moment because Satan and his minions are just waiting for a chance to insert doubt in our confidence in the Lord.

The angelic conflict is raging and we must be alert to catch ourselves whenever we start to allow our emotions to take over or allow the stinking thinking of human viewpoint to replace our divine viewpoint.

Revelation 2:25-26 Nevertheless *what you have, hold fast until I come.* 26 'And he who overcomes, and he who *keeps My deeds until the end*, to him I will give authority over the nations;

Revelation 3:2-3 *Wake up* (v.aam) , and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. 3)

'Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.

1 Corinthians 16:13 *Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.*

The stakes are too high to allow our confidence in the Lord to be shaken.

Hebrews 10:35-36 *Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36) For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.*

Hebrews 3:14 *For we have become partakers (metachoi - partners) of Christ, if 3rd class we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end;*

Galatians 6:9-10 *And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. 10) So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*

There is a link between confidence in God, doing good works, enduring till the end, and reaping rewards.

LESSON 137 (5-16-19)

[NASV] *Philippians 4:2* *I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.*

[NKJV] *Philippians 4:2* *I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.*

I urge – PARAKALEO, παρακαλέω, v. pai; ② to urge strongly, appeal to, urge, exhort, encourage

Euodia – The name means *prosperous journey*. She was one of the two women who labored much with Paul and others in the gospel.

Syntyche – Her name means “*affable*”, “*pleasant*”

They certainly did not live up to their names.

The dispute apparently troubled Paul, because, uncharacteristically, he opened the hortatory portion of his letter to the Philippians by referring to it. Paul J. Achtemeier, Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, Harper’s Bible Dictionary (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 286.

One theory claims that Syntyche ought to be spelled as the masculine Syntyches, and that “he” was actually the jailer at Philippi (cf. Acts 16) and the husband of Euodia. But the Greek feminine plural pronouns in Phil 4:3, which can only refer back to Euodia and Syntyche, require that both names belong to women. . Florence Morgan Gillman, “Euodia (Person),” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 670.

Another theory concerning the identity of Euodia and Syntyche is that one or the other of the two women was in fact the LYDIA of Acts 16, her name there being an adjective indicating her place of origin, i.e., “the Lydian.” The important

role played by Lydia in the founding of the church at Philippi lends some support to this hypothesis. Ibid

To help bring about the reconciliation of Euodia and Syntyche, Paul calls for the intervention of someone referred to simply as “true yokefellow” (Gk gnēsie syzyge). In addressing this latter person, Paul states that Euodia and Syntyche had “labored side by side” on behalf of the gospel with Clement, and the other fellow workers. Ibid

to be of the same mind in the Lord.

same mind PHRONEO, φρονέω, inf. pa; ① to have an opinion with regard to something, to think, form/hold an opinion,

He probably had them in mind when he wrote:

Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4) do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

It appears that these two women got along with each other when they worked with Paul and others in spreading the gospel. But somehow, we don't know the details, a feud developed between them.

This can spell ruin for a group: a family, a local church, a team, a business... Often the tension can spread into opposing factions which is usually caused over a personal conflict. Petty quarrels are like fire, they can get out of control very quickly with the result that friendships and even the church itself can be destroyed.

It is important for people who don't get along to keep talking to each other. Keep communicating. That is the way of reaching a solution. Things fester when communication ends.

When believers don't get along, you can be sure of one thing, one or both of them are out of fellowship with God. Their emotions and pride take over and humility is nowhere to be found.

We all have to tolerate the idiosyncrasies and foibles of others if we are going to have any lasting relationships. You see we all do things that get on the nerves of others – we have to tolerate them and they have to tolerate us.

There are things that we tolerate and things that we don't. The following may be helpful in distinguishing between the two:

We Don't Tolerate:

Abuse of a wife or child
Crime such as theft, assault, etc.
Adultery, Homosexuality, Incest, Pederasty, Bigamy
Children's bad behavior
Intrusion of privacy
On-going bad Language, vulgarity, bullying
Drugs, Drunkenness
Immorality
Tyranny

We Do Tolerate:

Ingratitude
Thoughtlessness
Unfriendliness
Idiosyncrasies
Foibles
Anger, insults
Insensitivity
Forgetfulness
Outbursts of anger
Gossip
Pettiness
Impatience

Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

2 Timothy 2:23 But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

Did your dad or mom ever tell you that it takes two to argue? There are people who love to argue and cause others to lose their cool. They are arrogant fools who are only impressed with themselves. There are two things you can do when someone like that tries to argue with you: 1) Ask them questions. 2) Walk away.

Proverbs 14:7 Leave the presence of a fool, Or you will not discern words of knowledge.

Proverbs 20:3 Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.

Proverbs 18:2 A fool does not delight in understanding, But only in revealing his own mind.

Proverbs 26:4-5 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him. 5) Answer a fool as his folly deserves, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

LESSON 138 (5-21-19)

Do you know the difference between an argument and a debate?

A **Debate** is a discussion about something that people do not agree on. The focus is on the matter at hand and people are not allowed to interrupt or make personal snide remarks to each other.

An **Argument** occurs when people disagree about something and emotions get involved, which usually ends with people raising their voices or shouting. People interrupt each other, try

to talk over each other, and no one is actually listening to the other person. Verbal attacks are often made on the character and/or the intelligence of the one who holds a different view.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back.

Proverbs 27:22 Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his folly will not depart from him.

Ecclesiastes 10:12-14 Words from the mouth of a wise man are gracious, while the lips of a fool consume him; 13) the beginning of his talking is folly, and the end of it is wicked madness. 14) Yet the fool multiplies words. No man knows what will happen, and who can tell him what will come after him?

Isaiah 32:6 For a fool speaks nonsense, And his heart inclines toward wickedness, To practice ungodliness and to speak error against the LORD,

Philippians 4:3 Indeed, *true comrade*, I ask you also to help (v. pmm) *these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.*

true comrade SUZUGOS, σύζυγος, adj. vsm; yoke fellow, or fellow worker, Some say that this is not a proper noun so there is no way to know for sure who Paul was referring to here.

Others believe it is a proper noun and refers to a person, some believe it could have been Epaphroditus.

Clement = mild, a Christian of Philippi, Paul's "fellow-labourer," whose name he mentions as "in the book of life" (Phil. 4:3). It was an opinion of ancient writers that he was the Clement of Rome whose name is well known in church history. M. G. Easton, Easton's Bible Dictionary (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893).

in the book of life. We have studied this recently. Everyone's name is entered into the Book of Life when they are born. But unbeliever's names are blotted out of the Book of Life when they die if they have rejected the gospel (Psa. 69:28, Rev. 3:5, Rev. 20:12-16).

Now Paul shifted from these two believers to address the general population of the church.

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

This short verse is the key-note of this epistle.

rejoice – CHAIRO, χαίρω, v. pam; ① to be in a state of happiness and well-being, rejoice, be glad

We are commanded two times in this verse to rejoice.

This is the seventh and eighth time that "rejoice" is used in this short epistle and will be used one more time in this chapter. It is used twice in the same verse as it is here in chapter one **Philippians 1:18 ...Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice.**

A few things to notice in this verse:

- 1) Repeating a command in such a short verse emphasizes its importance.
- 2) It is possible to obey the command; the Bible never gives us a command that we are unable to obey.
- 3) It doesn't tell us how to obey it. Sometimes it is very easy to rejoice but sometimes it seems impossible.

Paul gave the same command to the Thessalonians in a verse shorter than this one:

1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice *always*;

always – PANTOTE, πάντοτε, adverb; always, at all times. This word is found in both verses and it is what makes this verse difficult.

No one could say, “*That’s easy for you to say*” to Paul, alleging that he lived a life of ease. It seems a bit unusual for this command to come from someone like Paul who was very familiar with suffering, hardship, abuse, and pain. You see, he had learned how to maintain his joy even while enduring adversity.

This verse would be incomprehensible if the words ***in the Lord*** were left out. They bring the verse into focus and enables us to see that it’s possible to obey the command.

Chapter 3 starts with: *Finally, my brethren, rejoice **in the Lord**.*

Paul is not calling here for some kind of general, happy optimism that has no basis. There are no reasons for rejoicing without the Lord, but with him there is no end to such reasons.

Roger Ellsworth, *Opening up Philippians*, Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2004), 83.

LESSON 139 (5-23-19)

We all rejoice when pain, sorrows, and troubles come to an end, but few rejoice in the midst of suffering them. It is **faith in the Lord** (faith/rest) that makes rejoicing even while we are hurting possible. When a believer maintains his composure, contentment, and joy while suffering trials and tribulation, Satan is defeated and God is glorified. It is a victory in the angelic conflict that vindicates God's perfect righteousness and justice.

Apart from Him, there is no joy or rejoicing in pain and suffering. Quite the opposite; worry, fear, dread, grumbling, complaining, anger, bitterness, self-pity, and resentment seem to automatically dominate our soul.

It is normal to think that there can be no joy or happiness until our suffering is greatly diminished or gone all together. It is only the wonderful grace of God and Bible Doctrine that obliterates that negativity and replaces it with hope, gratitude, and joy.

When we learn to focus on the Lord, depend on the Lord, talk to the Lord, and thank the Lord while in the midst of suffering, then we are free indeed. We are no longer shackled by the mental attitude sins that seem to enslave us when we face misfortune and troubling times.

Despair often accompanies sickness and adversity. Sometimes we feel helpless and hopeless but the believer in Jesus Christ is never helpless nor hopeless:

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, *I will help you*, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

Isaiah 41:13-14 For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, *I will help you.*' 14) "Fear not, you worm Jacob, You men of Israel! *I will help you*," says the LORD And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Hebrews 13:6 So we may boldly say: "*The LORD is my helper*; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

Psalms 31:23-24 Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! For the LORD preserves the faithful, And fully repays the proud person. 24) Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, All you *who hope in the LORD*.

Job 4:6 Is not your fear of God your confidence, And *the integrity of your ways your hope?*

Psalms 33:18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those *who hope for His lovingkindness*,

Psalms 42:5 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? *Hope in God*, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence.

Psalm 62:5 My soul, wait in silence for God only, For *my hope is from Him.*

(NET) **Psalm 62:5 Patiently wait for God alone, my soul! For he is the one who *gives me confidence.***

Psalm 71:4-5 Rescue me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, Out of the grasp of the wrongdoer and ruthless man, 5) For You are *my hope*; O Lord GOD, You are *my confidence* from my youth.

my hope – TIQVAH, noun sing fem תִּקְוָה
expectation, hope, optimistic outlook

my confidence – MIBTAH, מִבְּטָח common, sing. construct
trust, reliance

Psalm 71:14 But as for me, *I will hope continually*, And will praise You yet more and more.

Psalm 119:116 Sustain me according to Your word, that I may live; And do not let me be ashamed of *my hope.*

Psalm 130:5 I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, And in His word do *I hope.*

I hope – YACHAL, יָחַל verb, Hif'il, perfect, to wait, translates as "hope" 22 times, "wait" 12 times

Psalm 119:49 Remember the word to Your servant, In which *You have caused me to hope.*

Psa. 146:5, Prov. 10:28, 24:14, 26:12, Jer. 29:11, Lam. 3:21-24, Acts 2:26, 24:14-15, Rom. 5:2, 8:24-25, 15:4, 13, 2 Cor. 1:7, 3:12, Gal. 5:5, Eph. 1:18, Phil. 1:20, Col. 1:5, 23, 27, 1 Thes. 1:3, 4:13, 2 Thes. 2:16, 1 Tim. 4:10, Titus 2:13, Heb. 6:11

Someone may ask, “What is there to be joyful about or to celebrate while we are experiencing pain or duress?”

- 1) We celebrate the fact that our Lord never leaves us or forsakes us when things get tough.
- 2) We rejoice because the Lord cares for us, He loves us, He strengthens us, He fights for us, He teaches us, He forgives us, and He delivers us.
- 3) We rejoice because our confidence in Him grows and we have the opportunity to accelerate our spiritual growth and receive even greater blessings.
- 4) What a joy it is to be completely and totally dependent on the almighty God of the universe and not worry about a single solitary thing.
- 5) What a joy it is to experience the removal of every vestige of fear from our soul and every doubt from our mind.
- 6) It’s difficult to describe the peace and gratitude we experience when the Lord demonstrates His love, power, and faithfulness to us because it is so wonderful.
- 7) All this is revealed to us more clearly when we experience the pain of undeserved suffering than at any other time.

LESSON 140 (5-28-19)

No one can obey the command to rejoice always apart from being under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Unbelievers cannot obey it, nor can carnal believers or the spiritually immature.

The main reason so few believers rejoice always is because so many are biblically ignorant. The inventory of doctrine in their soul is so small, it is unable to offset their emotions and the mental attitude sins which dominate their thinking.

There is a song that most believers know that would be so great if what they sang was true – “*I Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy, Down in My Heart*”. For a few, it is true but most, it feels good when they sing it but it is forgotten soon thereafter.

We seem to be in the era where being a victim can be used to one's advantage. The more one claims to be a victim, the more status he has and the more attention and benefits he receives.

A good portion of the people in our society have learned how to game the system. Many politicians who are women, Hispanic, or black, see themselves as victims and identify with those in our society who also see themselves as victims. This is actually revealing their weakness but they are able to use this to their advantage to get elected

Self-reliance and tenacity are virtues whereas dependency and helplessness are weaknesses. Many, if not most of millennials are not aware of this and the result is “safe spaces”, “triggering warnings”, “micro-aggression”, etc.

Many compete by trying to complain louder and more often that they are victims in order to acquire more power over others. They try to use this false victimhood to their advantage but there is no joy in it. They are chronic complainers and they are arrogant ungrateful people.

All of this is crapola! People who buy into this victimization are either unbelievers or uninformed believers. They have no idea of how to live the abundant life of rejoicing always, relaxing by trusting and obeying God and thanking Him for demonstrating His power, love, and faithfulness through us.

Believers who rejoice always, don't flaunt their suffering. Most people have no idea what they are going through. They don't feel sorry for themselves and they certainly don't seek pity. They just keep trusting in the Lord and are thrilled to see Him work wonders in their lives.

**Philippians 4:5 Let your *gentle* spirit *be known to all men.*
*The Lord is near.***

(NKJV) ***Let your gentleness be known to all men.***

(KJV) ***Let your moderation be known unto all men.*** .

(ESV) ***Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.***

(NIV) ***Let your gentleness be evident to all.***

(NLT) ***Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do.***

gentle – ΕΠΙΕΙΚΗΣ, ἐπιεικῆς, adj. nsn; not insisting on every right of letter of law or custom, yielding, gentle, kind, courteous, tolerant.

Epieikes (“gentleness”) suggests a forbearing, nonretaliatory spirit. Joy, an inner quality in relation to circumstances, may not always be seen; but the way one reacts to others—whether in gentleness or harshness—will be noticed. Why be gentle? Because the Lord is near. This probably refers to the Rapture, not to His presence with His own at all times. Robert P. Lightner, “Philippians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 663.

This word is translated “gentleness” in 2 Cor. 10:1, where it is attributed to our Lord himself.

LESSON 141 (5-30-19)

There is no joy in a selfishness; joy involves an open heart and a generous love. Joy in the Lord tends to make men gentle and pleasant to others.

be known—GINOSKO, γινώσκω, v. apm; ① to arrive at a knowledge of someone or something, know, know about, make acquaintance of.

This verb is in the imperative mood which means we are required to obey it. We are to behave in such a way that everyone we come into contact with will recognize that we are gentle, kind, courteous, tolerant, and friendly.

Some people tend to have a personality that leans it that direction but some do not. Some people, especially men, are concerned that if they treated others that way, they would appear to be weak.

Are we to be so concerned about how we appear to others that we disobey God? It takes humility to obey God and humility demonstrates strength, not weakness. Disobedience comes from arrogance which is always a sign of weakness.

Why do people put up a façade of being tough? Because they are afraid of appearing weak. They haven't learned that being a tough guy is stupid because it invites trouble and offends God, but being humble, kind, and thoughtful pleases Him, so He takes care of those who would harm you or take advantage of you.

When we obey this command, we shouldn't worry about someone taking advantage of us because God protects those who trust and obey Him. So, we can either disobey God by being a jerk, or we can have a gentle spirit towards others and relax because God has our backs.

We need to emphasize the big point—we do have one you know—the big point is the person of Christ. We are His ambassadors and we should make sure that we act like it, especially when it's not easy to do so.

Our old sin nature and the old sin nature of others work together so that we must be on guard all the time to please the Lord rather than ourselves with our tendency to get angry, get even, retaliate, criticize, and prove that we are right and they are wrong at all costs. We are to treat others the way God treats us, not how they treat us.

What makes this command nearly impossible to obey are the two words - *all men*. We are not allowed to be unkind or show hostility in an overt manner to anyone; we're not even allowed to have any MAS about them.

Of course, this requires the power of the Holy Spirit which we have when we are being influenced by Him rather than our OSN.

This command comes with a reminder that helps us to obey.

(NASV) *The Lord is near*. (NKJV) *The Lord is at hand*.

The word *is*, is not there in the Greek, it is added to make the English smoother.

So what does this mean? Is this a warning that we better not ignore this command because the Lord is near and He certainly knows if you disobey? Or, is it an encouragement to remind us that He is near so that He can help us? Or is it neither one? Does it mean that our Lord will be returning soon so we better make it a point to be good and faithful servants while there is still time?

1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. 3) And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

James 5:8-9 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9) Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may

not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

“Paul believed that the Lord Jesus would come at any moment. He was not expecting to enter the Great Tribulation; he says, “The Lord is at hand.” That’s quite wonderful”! J. Vernon Mc Gee, *Through the Bible Commentary*

We must strive to reflect the grace, humility, and kindness of our Lord to everyone.

1 Timothy 3:3 ...not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome,

Titus 3:2 ...to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men..

“This gentleness is to be applied to all people, regardless of their relationship to the Lord, as a witness to His power in the lives of these converted pagans and as a deterrent to unfair criticism by unbelievers (cf. Rom. 12:17; 14:18; 2 Cor. 8:21; 1 Pet. 2:12, 15; 3:16)” Robert James Utley, *Paul Bound, the Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philippians)*, vol. Volume 8, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 201.

Philippians 4:6 *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

“Fret and worry indicate a lack of trust in God’s wisdom, sovereignty, or power. Delighting in the Lord and meditating on His Word are a great antidote to anxiety (Psalm 1:2).” John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1828.

This is not a call to be irresponsible or to dismiss legitimate concerns. Important matters must not be ignored, they must be addressed, but they are not to be a cause of stress, worry, or dread. To care and be genuinely concerned is one thing, to worry is another.

2 Corinthians 11:28 Apart from such external things [sufferings], there is the daily pressure upon me of **concern for all the churches.**

Colossians 4:13 For I bear him [Epaphras] witness that **he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.**

Be anxious for nothing,

ANXIOUS adjective, [Latin anxius; akin to Latin angere to strangle, distress] (circa 1616)

1: characterized by extreme uneasiness of mind or brooding fear about some contingency : WORRIED Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

Be anxious - MERIMNAO, μεριμνάω, v. pam; ① to be apprehensive, have anxiety, be anxious, be (unduly) concerned.

From time to time, all of us find ourselves in the same shape Martha did when she complained to Jesus.

Luke 10:40-42 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." 41) But the Lord

*answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, **you are worried and bothered about so many things;** 42) but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."*

LESSON 142 (6-11-19)

PP So how can a believer stop worrying? What is needed?

1. Humility

2. Prayer

3. Filling of the H.S.

4. Recall and application of B.D.

Here is another way of saying what Paul said:

**“WORRY ABOUT NOTHING;
PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING.”**

Prayer is very powerful weapon against fear and anxiety, we need to use it more often. If you have made it a habit to pray about everything, you probably don't worry about anything.

Praying about everything includes the small things, the relatively insignificant things. We need to remove from our thinking the notion of bothering God with our trivialities.

We need to tell the Lord about things we wouldn't tell anyone else. We can tell Him anything. He is never shocked or embarrassed. We need to tell Him when we're angry, when we're sad, when we're afraid, when we're confused, etc.

Fenelon, one of the mystics of the Middle Ages, which seems to encompass what Paul meant when he said, “Pray about everything.”

Tell God all that is in your heart, as one unloads one’s heart, its pleasures and its pains, to a dear friend. Tell Him your troubles, that He may comfort you; tell Him your joys, that He may sober them; tell Him your longings, that He may purify them; tell Him your dislikes, that He may help you to conquer them; talk to Him of your temptations, that He may shield you from them; show Him the wounds of your heart, that He may heal them; lay bare your indifference to good, your depraved tastes for evil, your instability. Tell Him how self-love makes you unjust to others, how vanity tempts you to be insincere, how pride disguises you to yourself as to others.

If you thus pour out all your weaknesses, needs, troubles, there will be no lack of what to say. You will never exhaust the subject. It is continually being renewed. People who have no secrets from each other never want subjects of conversation. They do not weigh their words, for there is nothing to be held back; neither do they seek for something to say. They talk out of the abundance of the heart, without consideration, just what they think. Blessed are they who attain to such familiar, unreserved intercourse with God.

J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 322–323.

PP Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Logically speaking, verse 6 should come before verse 4, do you know why? Because we can't obey Verse 4 (Rejoice in the Lord always), if we don't first obey Verse 6 (Be anxious for nothing...).

1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7) *casting all your anxiety upon Him*, because He cares for you.

Worrying and trusting God are mutually exclusive. We can do one or the other but we can't do both at the same time. That also goes for focusing on the problem or focusing on the solution. We can do one or the other but we can't do both at the same time.

LESSON 143 (6-13-19)

Anxiety is a form of fear. It is the fear of being placed in suspension between two points. Anxiety is apprehension or worry about what may happen either good or bad. We do not know if the good will come about. We do not know if the bad will occur. We hang in uncertainty as we suspend between the good and the bad. This is anxiety, the fear of uncertainty. Some people would rather encounter the bad predicament rather than suspend in insecurity. Uncertainty to them is the worst of all the bad things that could possibly happen. Security is the core value above all else.

Psalm 16:8-9 I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 9) Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely.

Worry is a sin because it demonstrates a lack of confidence in God to deal with our problems. In fact, worry and trusting God are mutually exclusive. We can choose to worry or we can choose to trust the Lord but we can't do both at the same time.

Focusing on the problem or focusing on the solution are also mutually exclusive. We can choose to focus on the problem or we can choose to focus on the solution but we can't do both at the same time.

We can choose to listen to our OSN and bad advice, or we can choose to listen to God speaking to us through His Word.

Proverbs 1:33 "But *he who listens to me* shall live securely, And shall be at ease from the dread of evil."

Psalm 81:13-14 "Oh that My people *would listen to Me*, That Israel would walk in My ways! 14 "I would quickly subdue their enemies, And turn My hand against their adversaries.

Isaiah 55:3 "*Incline your ear and come to Me*. Listen, that you may live;

Life is fraught with uncertainties and all of us must take a very active role in smothering our doubts, apprehensions, and worries by concentrating on the Lord, his Word, and his essence.

Believers who worry delude themselves into thinking that there is something they can do to control circumstances. That is why they plot, scheme, and connive to do something, anything, in order to better their circumstances so they can stop worrying.

Of course we should all know that we cannot control our circumstances. But God can, so why not trust Him with that and concentrate on what we can control and that is our thinking. We choose what we think about.

Colossians 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Matthew 16:23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, [set their minds on] the things of the Spirit.

1 Samuel 9:20 And as for your donkeys which were lost three days ago, do not set your mind on them, for they have been found.

God would not command us to *set our mind* on something unless we were able to do it. Nor would He rebuke us when we are not thinking about what we should be.

When the troubles and vicissitudes of life occur, we feel like we are under attack, our stability is challenged and it is very easy for us to panic rather than to calmly think things through.

Problems can take over our life. We can be so consumed by them that we can't think about anything else. They can rob us of our happiness, contentment, and joy.

We must remember that the problem is not really the problem. What is meant by that? It means that the problem is not the real issue. The real issue is how we deal with the problem.

Are we going to worry about it? Are we going to get angry about it? Or, are we going to stay calm, talk to God about it and apply the appropriate doctrine to the situation?

When we have a problem we need to learn to recognize it as a spiritual test which carries with it the opportunity to advance spiritually, which carries with it, greater blessings.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication

The very first thing we should do when we face problems or troubles is to pray. ***but in everything*** – It doesn't matter whether it is the Charge of the elephant or the Charge of the mosquito, PRAY!

When you ask God for help, everything changes. The matter is no longer just about you, now it's also about God. His very character is on the line because His promises are for you, so they must be fulfilled.

Psalm 55:22 Cast your burden upon the LORD, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.

Psalm 42:10-11 As with a deadly wound in my bones,

my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, “Where is your God?” 11) Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. Psalm 62:8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.

Psalm 63:6-8 When I remember Thee on my bed, I meditate on Thee in the night watches, 7) For Thou hast been my help, And in the shadow of Thy wings I sing for joy. 8) My soul clings to Thee; Thy right hand upholds me.

LESSON 144 (6-25-19)

1 Corinthians 10:13 No **testing** has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be **tested** beyond what you are able, but with the **testing** will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.

The verse above is from the NASV which uses “*temptation*” rather than “*testing*”. The word *temptation* was replaced by the word *testing* for the reasons stated below.

The word “test” is a translation of the Hebrew verb nasa. “In most contexts nasa has the idea of testing or proving the quality of someone or something, often through adversity or hardship. The rendering tempt, used frequently by the AV and ASV, generally means ‘prove, test, put to the test,’ rather than the current English idea of ‘entice to do wrong.’

“Nasa is used when God tested Abraham (Gen. 22:1) and Hezekiah (2 Chr. 32:31). Such testing by God, however, was

not without intent. It was to refine the character of man that he might walk more closely in God's ways." Jack W. Hayford and Joseph Snider, *Promises and Beginnings: Examining Excellence in the Creator's Ways: A Study in the Book of Genesis, Spirit-Filled Life Bible Discovery Guides* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1994).

PEIRASMOS, πειρασμός, n. nsm; ① an attempt to learn the nature or character of something, test, trial

(NET) **1 Cor 10:13 No *trial* has overtaken you that is not faced by others. And God is faithful: He will not let you be *tried* beyond what you are able to bear, but with the *trial* will also provide a way out so that you may be able to endure it.**

1 Corinthians 10:13 pertains to believers who are filled with the H.S. It does not apply to unbelievers or believers who are in carnality whose suffering can be unbearable.

When we humbly ask God for help, we can relax, knowing the problem is in His hands now and we will not be overwhelmed by it. So why worry about it?

He usually doesn't remove the problem and there is suffering involved, but it is bearable. No one gets through this life without suffering. But when we ask God for help and believe that He will, then, when we experience undeserved suffering we can rejoice for what He does for us.

but in everything by prayer and supplication ... let your requests be made known to God.

God already knows what is needed, but He desires the closeness, intimacy, and trust that is involved in prayer.

Prayer includes confession of sin, thanksgiving, and supplication / requests. Supplication can be for oneself or for others but it is specific for a particular need.

prayer – PROSEUCHE, προσευχή, n. dsf; petition addressed to deity, prayer

supplication – DEESIS, δέησις, n. dsf; urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God, prayer. Petition, entreaty, request, and supplication.

deomai (δέομαι, 1189), “to desire, to long for,” usually representing the word “need,” is sometimes translated “beseech,” W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr., Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 1996), 62.

God wants us to make requests:

Phil. 4:6 ...let your requests be made known to God.

James 4:2 - “We have not because we ask not.”

1 John 5:14-15 And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if^{3rd} we ask v. pms anything according to His will, He hears v. pai us. 15) And if^{3rd} we know v. rai that He hears v. pai us in whatever we ask v. pms, we know v. rai that we have v. pai the requests which we have asked v. rai from Him.

LESSON 145 (6-27-19)

Read: **Psalm 34:1-8**

let your requests be made known to God.

GNORIZO, γνωρίζω, v. ppm; ① to cause information to become known: make known, reveal.

Making our requests known to God is not a suggestion, it is a command. It seems a bit odd that it is in the passive voice. It is similar to the command in Eph. 5:18 for believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit which is also a present passive imperative.

In both cases, the believer is required to make something known to God which would normally be an active voice, but since the believer is dependent on God's response, it is in the divine passive voice. God's act of responding to our humility and obedience is what is emphasized.

Naming our sins to GF is how we receive forgiveness and making our requests known to God is how we receive His help. Neither one of these actions are meritorious, nor can we take any credit for God's gracious response.

passive — The grammatical voice that signifies that the subject is being acted upon; i.e., the subject is the receiver of the verbal action. A verb in the passive voice with God as the stated or implied agent is often referred to as the "divine passive." Michael S. Heiser and Vincent M. Setterholm, Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology (Lexham Press, 2013; 2013).

Since God commands us to be filled with the H.S. and to receive His help; acknowledging our sins and making requests are His preordained method for us to receive His forgiveness and help.

The passive imperative is a command directed to you in which you are not the active doer, but rather the cooperator

and recipient of someone else's doing, and yet you still retain responsibility. <https://conversantfaith.com/2014/01/16/passive-imperatives-in-the-new-testament/>

*The use of the passive imperative μεταμορφοὐσθε [be transformed] is consonant with the truth that, while this transformation is not the Christians' own doing but the work of the Holy Spirit, they nevertheless have a real responsibility in the matter—to let themselves be transformed, to respond to the leading and pressure of God's Spirit... *ibid**

James 5:16 The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

There is one thing still missing, we are to do all this ***with thanksgiving.***

We thank God for the privilege of prayer and for answered prayer. Thanksgiving verifies capacity of soul to appreciate God.

Thanking God means that we have peace about how He will answer or prayer. It doesn't matter whether He answers "yes", "no", or "wait", we thank Him because His answer is not only right, but is always perfect.

Thanksgiving is one of the four categories of prayer. Here they are: 1. Confession, 2. Thanksgiving 3. Intercession 4. Petition
Thanking God is the proper response of faith to a faithful God.

Hebrews 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

LESSON 146 (7-2-19)

Philippians 4:7 *And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Thanksgiving and peace go together:

Colossians 3:15 *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

Prayer and peace go hand in hand. This is the wonderful result of leaving everything in the hands of God by prayer.

And the peace of God, It is the peace of God because He is the source of peace.

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.*

People in the world walk by sight and depend on the externals, but Christians can walk by faith and depend on the eternal.

What are the eternal?

➤ **The Essence of God:**

Love Justice Righteousness Sovereignty

Eternal Life Veracity Immutability

Omniscience Omnipotence Omnipresence

➤ **Spiritual Assets**

The imputation of Eternal Life

The imputation of God's Righteousness
Baptized by the Holy Spirit – We are "In Christ"
Reconciled to God
Justified before God
Positionally Sanctified
Indwelt by the Trinity
Members of the Royal Family of God
Royal Ambassadorship
Royal Priesthood
Eternally Secure
Grace System of Perception
Rebound – Method of recovery from post-salvation sins

When a believer concentrates on the Essence of God and his Spiritual Assets (which cannot be lost or diminished), is when he experiences the peace of God which surpasses all understanding.

No believer in carnality experiences the peace of God because only those who have peace **with** God can have the peace **of** God. Arrogant people experience neither one.

*We have the Spirit within us,
The Savior above us,
and the Word before us!*

What tremendous resources for peace!

Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1
(Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 354.



Isaiah 26:3-4 You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. 4) Trust in the LORD forever, for in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.

“**perfect peace**” is the Hebrew word שָׁלוֹם “shalom” used twice. It is literally “shalom, shalom” or “peace, peace”.

LESSON 147 (7-9-19)

2 Thessalonians 3:16 Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually **grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!**

grant DIDOMAI, δίδωμι, v. aao; ① to give as an expression of generosity, give, donate. **optative** — The mood used by the writer to portray an action as possible, or to express a wish or desire.

Inner friction of soul often results in outer conflict with people. Keeping peace in our heart will keep peace in the church. When we are at peace with God, then we can be at peace with others most of the time:

Romans 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

We cannot live in conflict with others and possess the peace of God at the same time. Discord and peace cannot coexist.

the peace of God – EIRENE, εἰρήνη; n. nsf; ② a state of well-being, peace

which surpasses all comprehension (understanding) ,

The peace of God surpasses every human device as a means of securing tranquility of heart. The love of Christ is also so far beyond our capacity to understand that we cannot fathom it all.

We experience the peace of God from the God of peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the **God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Hebrews 13:20-21 Now the **God of peace... 21) equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Life is so much better when we are able to have no doubts and fears intruding into our soul. Our diet is important, but *it's not what you eat that kills you; it is what is eating at you.*

We are in the midst of a spiritual war known as the angelic conflict. Only by placing the battle in God's hands by faith and leaving it there, can we have inner peace.

shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The peace of God stands guard over our soul. God protects our hearts and minds from inner disturbance when we present our anxieties to him in prayer.

Our heart is the command post of the soul (mentality, norms and standards, etc.). Our mind contains thought which precedes our actions.

When we have the peace of God in our soul, our mind is at rest. We will not be anxious, doubtful, angry, dissatisfied, discouraged, bitter, jealous, selfish, impatient, or afraid. Why? Because the peace of God is stronger than all these. As long as we keep our focus on the Lord and His Word, He will keep us in perfect peace.

Isaiah 26:3 "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You."

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

God doesn't always solve our problems by changing our circumstances.

Sometimes he resolves the problem by changing us.

Most believers who experience hard times and difficult circumstances focus on the problem and what must be done to eliminate it or to mitigate it so that it is manageable. But sometimes the circumstances cannot be changed or ignored. Then what?

What believers need to learn is that the problem is not the adversity we are facing but us, we are the problem. We are not making our requests known to God, so we are not trusting Him to deal with the unpleasant issue because we are dealing

with it on our own. There is no need to speculate on how well that strategy works. We all know the answer to that, don't we?

If we will concentrate on obeying God's command to "be anxious about nothing", but through prayer commit our problems to Him and believe His promise that He will provide a way of escape, we will experience the peace of God that passes all understanding.

The peace of God is a promise to the believer, not a prayer. We access that peace through prayer by trusting Him with all our problems, but peace in itself, is not a prayer.

We have peace even though we know that we will die someday. Why? Because we know that when we leave this world, we will be with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to **be present with the Lord.**

John 14:3 And if 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.**

1 Thessalonians 4:17-18 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus **we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

John 17:24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may **be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.**

Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

We have peace because we know that our Lord will never leave us or forsake us.

Hebrews 13:5 For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

1 Kings 8:57 May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us,

LESSON 148 (7-11-19)

We have peace in knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus:

Romans 8:38-39 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39) nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We live in a fallen and dangerous world where people desperately seek to have peace in their soul.

- Many people seek peace by being well off financially,

Proverbs 23:4-5 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, cease from your consideration of it. 5) When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings, like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.

- some seek it by acquiring power,

Psalm 118:14 The LORD gives me strength and protects me; he has become my deliverer.”

- some seek it by having underground shelters or stockpiling food and ammunition,

Luke 12:18-20 And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19) 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" 20) "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'

- some seek it by acquiring friends in high places.

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus says the LORD, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD.

As you can see, all these are pseudo remedies that cannot bring about peace and certainly not the peace of God. God has a monopoly on that kind of peace and the only way to access it is to humble yourself and let your requests known to Him.

You know how to access the peace of God so why would you keep it to yourself? We ought to be sharing this with anyone who will listen. We should be so excited about this that we cannot keep it to ourselves. It's not complicated; it's all right there in Philippians 4:6-7.

(NKJV) *Philippians 4:8* *Finally, brethren, 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.*

This verse emphasizes the importance of what we think. Everything depends on one's attitude in life.

**TROUBLE CAN BE A PROBLEM OR AN OPPORTUNITY,
IT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT.**

Our attitude determines how we view adversity and doctrine, or the lack thereof, determines what our attitude will be.

Prov. 23:7 *For as a man thinks within himself, so he is...*

Many times we try to hide what we really think from others but we can't hide what we think from God.

Psalms 94:11 *The LORD knows the thoughts of man...*

Psalms 44:20-21 *If we had forgotten the name of our God, or extended our hands to a strange god; 21) Would not God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart.*

1 Corinthians 3:20 - *The Lord knows the reasoning's of the wise [in their own eyes], that they are useless."*

Everything begins with a thought:

Sow a thought, reap an action.

Sow an action, reap a habit.
Sow a habit, reap a character.
Sow a character, reap a destiny!

LESSON 149 (7-16-19)

Believers can control the things we think about. We are commanded to think about the kinds of things that are listed in this verse. God never gives us a command that we cannot obey. So, we cannot avoid accountability by saying, *"I don't have power over what I think about."*

Finally, brethren - "Finally" lets us know that Paul is making his summation. When a believer thinks about the things mentioned in the following list, he displaces the garbage in his soul with God's thinking, which eliminates strife and chaos in our soul. Our attitude changes from being self-centered to being God-centered.

It is not enough to cast out stinking thinking from our minds, it must be replaced with God's inventory of thought.

The mind cannot stand a vacuum; it will always draw something into it, whether good or evil. This verse gives us God's list of things to meditate on which will keep Cosmic thinking out, and God's thinking in.

This passage gives us eight things to meditate on: that which is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, good report, virtue and praiseworthy.

It is simply a way to replace our human viewpoint with divine viewpoint, our thinking with God's thinking. It takes time and a concerted effort to change the way we have always thought about things to something new, something that is unnatural to us, which is God's way of thinking.

The thoughts of Euodia and Syntyche (*Phil. 4:2*) were full of hatred and bitterness towards each other which is the common and natural way for all of us to think. They held those thoughts so long that resentment became a part of their thinking. Resentment became their default attitude.

The way to counter the negative attitudes they developed was by adopting positive biblical attitudes. They needed to focus on the eight things listed herein to develop a positive upbeat attitude.

whatever things are true

True – ALETHES, ἀληθής, adj. npn; ② pert. to being in accordance with fact, true of things, esp. that which is spoken. This is not simply something that is true as over against that which is false. "True" here is truth in a wider sense, true in the sense of valid, reliable or honest.

It includes conduct and motives. "True" involves anything that is reliable or consistent with God's character. God wants us to think about his Word because **only it** has the power to counter

or neutralize the powerful cosmic thinking that pervades our planet.

We live in a culture that thrives on evil thought. Cosmic thinking is extremely antagonistic towards God, His Word, Christians, and absolute truth. Cosmic thinking and God's thinking cannot coexist. They are mutually exclusive.

Cosmic thinking is virulently hostile to truth. The following is a good example of this hostility:

“The principal manifesto of the New Atheist movement was published in 2006. Written by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, “The God Delusion” maintains that post-Darwinian scientific advances have rendered any belief in God irrational and unnecessary.”

“The vitriol that infuses his book suggests an agenda that is not wholly, or even primarily, intellectual: “The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.”

David Horowitz, *The Dark Agenda*, Humanix Books, P.O. Box 20989, West Palm Beach, FL 33416, USA, 2018, p. 14

Think about a teenager who has parents who either go to a legalistic powder puff program ridden denominational church,

or parents who don't go to church at all. They go to a public school that has kicked God, prayer, and the Bible out, that teaches evolution but rejects creationism, that does not teach American history or Civics but focuses on LGBT orientation and facilitate abortion and gender change without informing parents. Morality and virginity are mocked. The current "Bachelorette" could be a poster child for this viewpoint.

Young people have been taught that self-esteem should be their foremost characteristic and they have been indoctrinated with the "I am enough" ideology. That certainly doesn't leave any room for God does it?

Most teenagers have been lied to their entire life. They live in a post-modern society where absolutes supposedly do not exist. How can anyone be stable without absolutes? Why are we surprised when they are confused, angry, disrespectful, or resentful? Is there any hope for them?

Yes! God uses believers like you and me to reach them with His Word which is still alive and powerful. They need to hear that absolute truth does exist and almighty God has a monopoly on it.

There is no such thing as "your truth" or "my truth" there is only "God's Truth". Those who use these terms think saying this makes them appear tolerant, but they sacrifice truth for tolerance and in doing so, become ignorant. God's Truth is unique, inerrant, infallible, inspired, powerful, and eternal.

LESSON 150 (7-18-19)

Psalm 119:160 *The sum of Thy word is truth, And every one of Thy righteous ordinances is everlasting.*

John 17:17 *Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.*

Psalm 12:6 *The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.*

Psalm 19:6-11 *The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8) The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9) The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. 10) They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11) Moreover, by them Thy servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.*

Proverbs 30:5 *Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.*

Psalm 119:160 *The sum of Thy word is truth, And every one of Thy righteous ordinances is everlasting.*

John 18:37-38 *Pilate therefore said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone*

who is of the truth hears My voice." 38) Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no guilt in Him.

Paul addressed this same topic in the epistle to the Romans in a more condensed way:

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

When a believer is meditating on the things listed in Phil. 4:8, he is in a way, fulfilling the mandates in the verse above.

TRUTH as an Acrostic:

TRANSCENDENTAL

This means that truth transcends human nature. We cannot find truth by our own effort because we are blinded by lies.

John 8:44 *"You are from your father the devil... When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."*

REVEALED

Jesus is not here physically, but we have His thinking in written form and we've been given the Spirit of Truth. Jesus said:

John 16:13 *"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth;"*

UNCHANGEABLE

Can you imagine the chaos that would prevail if God's Truth wasn't immutable?

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

Mathew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Transformational

We are all born as slaves to sin. It is the truth of the gospel that sets us free.

John 8:31-32 "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32) and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Truth transforms us from being arrogant, afraid, confused, and insecure into being confident, courageous, content, and secure. This is what happens when one learns how to trust and depend on God rather than self.

Humbling

Sometimes it is hard for us to accept the truth about ourselves. Our default attitude is one of arrogance and no one who is arrogant will accept the truth until he becomes humble. Most people tend to believe the lie that we have control over our lives. The truth is, we will either be controlled by Satan or by God.

James 4:6 He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says,

"God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

2 Timothy 2:24-25 a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25) in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth...

Verses 6 and 7 tell how to obtain God's peace; verses 8 and 9 tell how to keep it

When a thought comes into our minds we should subject it to the test of whether it is true. What standard do most people use to determine if something is true or false?

1. What they were taught growing up in their family.
2. What they learn from their friends.
3. What they learned in school.
4. What they learned in church, synagogue, or cathedral.
5. By adopting the views of prominent people, movie stars, politicians, internet gurus.
6. By what they have learned in life, their experience, the school of hard-knocks.

Only a very small percentage of our population uses the Word of God as their standard of truth in making decisions. Of course, this is because the great percentage of people, including Christians, are biblically ignorant.

It can be very disconcerting to find out as an adult, that

nearly everything you learned growing up was untrue. It usually started with finding out there is really no Santa Claus. Many young people are finding out that getting a college degree is not the silver bullet they were led to believe. Hundreds of thousands of young people who leave college are debt ridden and have difficulty finding high paying jobs.

LESSON 151 (7-23-19)

Most parents did a lousy job of informing their children about sex and what it takes to be a good husband or a good wife. Children have received the obligatory story about the birds and the bees but remained ignorant about how to remain chaste in our sex-saturated society.

They are unable to navigate the minefield of lies about sexuality. They were never told why it is important to remain a virgin until marriage or why the wife is to be submissive to her husband or that homosexuality is an abomination to God because it can destroy a marriage, a family, or a nation.

At least half of the younger generation do not even bother to get married these days.

They don't know that God condemns "move-in" non-commitment type arrangements. They have no idea what the divine design for marriage is, and that it is the only way a man and a woman can live together and have a blissful and rewarding relationship.

In fact, biblical truth for the most part, has been completely ignored or avoided in the upbringing of young people in America. How sad!

Important truth - God will never accept or bless a nation that has rejected His Truth in order to embrace satanic lies.

Unfortunately, America is in the process of rejecting God's Truth and it will continue to do so unless believers like us speak God's truth to those who have ears to hear. Where else will they hear it? We need to take advantage of every opportunity to speak the truth in love.

Ephesians 4:14-15 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 --

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let *each one of you speak truth with his neighbor*," for we are members of one another.

Notice, we are to "speak the truth **in love**". How we speak the truth is as important as what we speak. If we are trying to win an argument or we have a combative manner, people will think we are stubborn, just trying to prove that we are right and they are wrong so they won't listen.

When we treat others with unconditional love and respect, they will be much more likely to listen to us and to accept the truth.

(NLT) **1 John 3:18-19 Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. 19) Our actions will show that we belong to the**

truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God.

LESSON 152 (7-25-19)

(NASV) *whatever things are honorable,*

(NKJV) *whatever things are noble,*

honourable (US honorable) ■ adjective

1 bringing or worthy of honor.

2 a title given to certain high officials, the children of some ranks of the nobility.

Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., **Concise Oxford English Dictionary** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

noble ■ adjective (nobler, noblest)

1 belonging by rank, title, or birth to the aristocracy.

2 having fine personal qualities or high moral principles.

3 imposing; magnificent.

Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., **Concise Oxford English Dictionary** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

honorable / noble – SEMNOS, **σεμνός**, adj. npn; venerable, revered, worthy of respect/honor, noble, dignified, This word is used in three other verses. It is found in *1 Timothy 3:8 & 11*, and *Titus 2:2* referencing church leaders. The NASV, NEV, & LEB translates the word in these verses as “*dignified*” and the NKJV “*reverent*”.

dignified - the quality or state of being worthy, honored, or esteemed Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

reverent – the state of being revered, one worth of deep

respect

Believers are to meditate on whatever is laudable, awe inspiring, worthy of adoration. We are to dwell on the sacred as opposed to the profane. This is not easy to do, because we live in a “dog eat dog” sin sick world. The depravity of man is graphically displayed on TV, radio, and the internet around the clock. Common decency has all but vanished as crude irreverent immoral degeneracy has replaced it. Half of our population and their wretched leaders have embraced evil, promoted wickedness, taunted Christians, and mocked the truth of God’s Word.

Jeremiah 6:15-16 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time I punish them, they shall be cast down," says the LORD. 16) Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

So where can we go to focus on such positive, uplifting, and inspiring things? You know – the Bible!

Euodia and Syntyche stopped respecting each other so their relationship was in danger. Mutual respect is the foundation of a good relationship. Often there is a break-down of respect for both parties but sometimes one person continues to show respect even when the other one does not. That person remains honorable and noble not only

because he is respectful to the other person, but also because he says nothing negative about the other person nor tries to harm them in any way. Instead, he prays for the other person.

If we commit ourselves to think about the things in this list, we will be more prone to look for the commendable things in others rather than their faults. Faults are easy to find in others but not easy to find in ourselves.

whatever things are just,

just - conforming to a standard of correctness, that which is right or fair. "Just" refers to conformity to God's standards.

just - ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ, δίκαιος, adj. npn, that which is obligatory in view of certain requirements of justice, righteous, right, fair, equitable

This word is translated "*righteous*" 63 times in the NASV and 6 times as "*just*". Being just is certainly related to being righteous because righteousness is essentially doing what is right and when a person is just then he is doing what is right.

When we are just, we are worthy of God's approval. It is the trait of being impartial, objective, and unbiased. However, by nature we are unjust, selfish, and biased. This is demonstrated very early in life when a child is given candy bar and told to share it with his sister. What happens when mom leaves the room?

There is an old saying "*having an ax to grind*" that refers to being unjust. It means to have a personal motivation or selfish

reason for saying or doing something. It is an expression for someone who tries to take an unfair advantage over others.

People who don't try to live by God's Word usually have little or no reluctance in doing whatever they want to do. They are only restrained by the possibility of retaliation from the people they cheat or being caught and punished by law enforcement.

You would expect that professing Christians would be fair and just in dealing with others. However, Christians cheat, swindle, deceive, and bamboozle others more than one would suspect. The question is why, why do believers who desire to treat others justly and fairly, fail to do so?

Apart from the fact that we all are defeated by our OSN at times, fear specifically is the cause behind our unjust and unfair treatment of others. We don't really believe that the Lord will provide for our needs, so we think it's necessary to take what we want or need ourselves, even when we know that it's not just or fair.

Society's norms and standards replace biblical standards when a nation turns from God. Post-modernism replaces the absolutes of God's Word. This has occurred in our own country, so the social construct of political correctness has so overtaken the thinking of millions of Americans, that they no longer recognize justice. Convicted criminals are mollycoddled and the vermin who have been found guilty of raping and murdering innocent people are not executed.

Less than one half of one percent of the people in America are classified as being trans-genders. Yet cities all over the

country are trying to pass laws that would allow biological males to intrude into women's restrooms, locker rooms, and showers in public schools as well as women's public facilities.

In the twisted demented mind of the people in positions of power who would require 99.50% of the population to suffer the indignity, the humiliation, and the embarrassment of being naked in front of perverts, seems to be perfectly just.

When Christians protest this by claiming that this is immoral, indecent, and exceedingly sinful in the eyes of God, these leftist leaders just roll their eyes and claim that Christians are discriminating against the trans-genders. They claim that forcing 330 million Americans to comply with their ungodly, immoral, unconstitutional, and dangerous law in order that 1 million trans-genders won't be offended, is just and fair.

HONOR QUOTES

Reputation is what other people know about you.

Honor is what you know about yourself. *Lois MacMaster Bujold*

Success without honor is an unseasoned dish;

It will satisfy your hunger, but it won't taste good. *Joe Paterno*

I would prefer to even fail with honor than to win by cheating. *Sophocles*

He has honor if he holds himself to an ideal of conduct though it is inconvenient, unprofitable, or dangerous to do so.

It is not titles that honor men, but men who honor titles.

Niccolo Macheavilli

We treat our people like royalty. If you honor and serve the people who work for you, they will honor and serve you.

Mary kay Ash

No person was ever honored for what he received,
Honor has been the reward for what he gave. *Calvin Coolidge*

LESSON 153 (7-30-19)

whatever things are pure,

pure *adjective*

3. a.(1) : free from what vitiates, weakens, or pollutes

(2) : containing nothing that does not properly belong

b : free from moral fault or guilt

c : marked by chastity

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

pure – HAGNOS, ἄγνός, adj. npn; things that are pure. It refers to what is wholesome, not mixed with moral impurity.

It occurs eight times; the AV translates as “pure” four times, “chaste” three times, and “clear” once.

1 exciting reverence, venerable, sacred.

2 pure.

a pure from carnality, chaste, modest.

b pure from every fault, immaculate,

c clean

It comes to be used simply for things connected with deity. It then comes to signify “ritually clean” and in contrast to the positive synonym – δίκαιος, it refers negatively to the lack of defects.

The originally purely externally religious concept now acquires a more ethical and inward significance.

ἀγνός means “morally blameless.” Friedrich Hauck, “Ἄγνός, Ἀγνίζω, Ἀγνεία, Ἀγνότης, Ἀγνισμός,” ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 122.

James 3:17 the wisdom from above is first *pure*, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

It seems that most people today are more concerned about their water being pure than their children or themselves. We hear the word “pure” used all the time about the quality of products but hardly ever in reference to people.

If we desire to live a life that is pleasing to God, we must be pure in our dealings with others. That includes not only how we treat them, but also the motivation behind our actions.

Hebrews 4:12-13 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and *is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* 13) And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Acts 8:22 Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, *the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.*

Motivation or intention was and is a very important in

determining the innocence of a person (*Num. 35:15-25*). Some people may appear to be pure based on their outward behavior, but they may have hidden hatred in their soul and have self-promoting malevolent motivation (*Phil. 1:12-18*). We need to be alert because there are people who will be so nicey-nicey to you and then stab you in the back.

Psalm 24:4-5 He who has clean hands and a *pure heart*, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, And has not sworn deceitfully. 5) He shall receive a blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

James 1:26 - 27 If anyone thinks himself *to be religious*, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. 27) *This is pure and undefiled religion* in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

to be religious “*threskos*” (adjective) pertaining to being devoted to a proper expression of religious beliefs—‘devout, pious, religious

pure and undefiled religion What emphasizes the person in verse 26 who is doing it wrong? Sins of the tongue. The person who does it right? What emphasizes him? Helping the helpless. So if you’re wrong you are going to have the sins of the tongue. That is verse 26. But if you do have true production, pure production, you are going to help the helpless.

“***pure***” is the adjective “*katharos*”. This means to be clean or unsoiled, guiltless. It connotes a lot of use of rebound and a

lot of use of doctrine.

Then we have “**religion**” again, but this time it is the noun “*threskeia*”, it means a system of activity with God in mind;

“**and undefiled**” — “*amiantos*”. “*miantos*” means to have excrement on your clothing; the “a” prefix means not to have it. There is a system of works that “stinketh not”. All human good is like *miantos*. Here we have *a)miantos* which means bona fide good, production of divine good based on doctrine, based on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And notice that this is accomplished “before God” which is from the immediate source of God.

LESSON 154 (8-1-19)

In times past, moral purity was something that people admired but things have changed, especially among the younger set.

If a young man goes through high school and college and is still a virgin, he isn't well-regarded, he's mocked, laughed at, and made the butt of jokes. Girls use to be embarrassed if they heard vulgarity or dirty jokes, now they use worse language than boys. Of course this does not include all boys and girls but it certainly is true of a significant number of them.

This should not be surprising:

“Sixty-seven percent support giving contraceptives to students.” Schools stress graphic sex education and birth control but morality and abstinence are not mentioned. In some schools, students can receive sex transition treatments and hormone without notifying their parents.”

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/birth-control-at-school-most-say-its-ok/>

“More than nine out of 10 Americans, men and women alike, have had premarital sex, according to a new study. Premarital sex is normal behavior for the vast majority of Americans, and has been for decades.”

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/premarital-sex-almost-everyones-doing-it/>

There is a big difference between people who strive to be pure morally but at some point yield to temptation and those who live in recklessness abandon.

whatever things are lovely, (adjective) delightful for beauty, harmony, or grace : ATTRACTIVE, eliciting love by moral or ideal worth. Synonym - see BEAUTIFUL Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

lovely, PROSPHILES, **προσφιλής**, adj. Pros = with or through, Phileo = love, pertaining to pleasure or delight, pleasing, agreeable, lovely, amiable

“Lovely” is anything that inclines love toward towards others. It speaks of what promotes accord rather than conflict. This would describe a person who is amiable, agreeable, thoughtful, and non-judgmental.

We all need to do our best to make it easy for others to want to be around us. Mature believers are easy to be around; you don't have to continually be in an “unconditional love” mode. They are characterized by the following:

Thoughtful - Objective – Non-Complaining - Gracious -
Forgiving – Sensitive – Good Listener – Truthful –
Trustworthy – Encouraging – Reliable – Helpful –

Non-Competitive – Loyal – Positive - Loving

Many today have lost the sense of what is lovely. Things that are lovely have symmetry and harmony.

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lovely, PROSPHILES, προσφιλής, adj. The word "lovely" comes from two Greek words:
and "affection." Pros = "towards", Phileo = "love" "affection", pertaining to pleasure or delight, pleasing, agreeable, lovely, amiable.

"Lovely" is anything that inclines love toward towards others. It speaks of what promotes accord rather than conflict. This would describe a person who is amiable, agreeable, thoughtful, and non-judgmental.

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Many today have lost the sense of what is lovely. Things that are lovely have symmetry and harmony but those things are lost in much of what people accept today. Music that is lovely is balanced and proportional but the rise in the popularity of “hard rock” and “rap music”, which has no symmetry, rhythm, or balance, demonstrates that weird fragmented incoherent noise, now passes for music.

LESSON 155 (8-6-19)

Over the Rainbow

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSZxmZmBfnU>

Hard Rock

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3v5yMF1hTs&list=PL58q25FsnmT-QV07WsAoXD3HcCBJweMhk&index=7> (Start at 2:03)

Rap

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvGgFzagfl4&list=PLRZIMhcYkA2EQRcAq4nf7pFP3LcD5uX7h&index=2> (Start at 120 Stop by 205)

What has happened to the soul of people who buy this kind of toxic noise? It would appear that in order to enjoy this kind of twisted racket, one’s soul must be twisted as well.

Like music, lovely art has symmetry and balance as well.

Windberg Paintings <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGMjxC0s1cM>

Today there is a growing demand for “modern art”.

Modern Art

19, 8-6 Modern Art.PP

Comparison of the Two

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INi07egoefc>

The downward trend in what is lovely could be shown in many other areas such as fashion, poetry, literature, photography, architecture, etc. Because of this trend, it will

be all the more wonderful when we get to heaven and see beauty that takes our breath away.

whatever things are of good report,

good report, EUPHEMOS, εὐφημος, adj. npn; praiseworthy, commendable, admirable, pleasing. EU = good, PHEME = report

We need to spend more time thinking about things that are commendable, pleasing, and good. So many people today go around angry and bitter because they think about people and things that they don't like. Some of these people are known to have something called "Trump derangement syndrome". They hate our president so intently, they are constantly angry, in a bad mood, and have a scowl on their face. That is no way to live.

Believers should focus on the positive and constructive rather than the negative and depressing. Dwelling on the negative and disheartening things can depress us and demoralize us.

People become discouraged because they think about things that bring them down. If we catch ourselves doing this, we need to change our focus on the wonderful promises God has given to us.

1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

Psalms 31:19 Oh, how great is Your goodness, Which You have laid up for those who fear You, Which You have

prepared for those who trust in You In the presence of the sons of men!

One way we can stay positive and refuse to get down in the doldrums is to only say up-lifting things about other people. Here is an old maxim that is so very helpful in staying up-beat:

If you can't say something good about someone, don't say anything at all.

There are believers who have done something horrible or had something horrible happen to them at some point in their life and they never get over it. They remain sour, bitter, and unpleasant to be around because they won't let it go, so they are miserable.

No matter what sin we have committed, we are to acknowledge it to God (1 John 1:9) and then forget it and move on. ***Philippians 3:12-14*** ***Not that I have already obtained it*** (max. super-grace), ***or have already become perfect*** (complete v. rpi), ***but I press on*** in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13) ***Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind*** and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14) ***I press on*** toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (See Psalm 103:12)

The problem is, those who won't let go of something negative that happened, constantly think about no one but themselves. Their life becomes just one big pity party. They are full of gloom and doom and they themselves become their own worst enemy. If they would forget about the past, they could start

thinking about other people and that would change everything.

If they would obey the following verses, they would make tremendous progress towards becoming a positive person.

Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4) do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;

LESSON 156 (8-8-19)

When we choose to focus on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praise worthy, all of which describe the promises of God, we rid ourselves of the mind clutter of negative thoughts such as fear, worry, anger, grudges, bitterness, cynicism, resentment, etc.

Get Rid of Mind Clutter

In her book Throw Out Fifty Things: Clear the Clutter, Find Your Life, Gail Blanke challenges her readers to go room by room in their houses, throwing out things, and then to go to work on their minds, getting rid of mind clutter.

Good stewardship means we keep focused on what is really important, and it is not usually the things we clutter our lives and our homes with. What things are you storing that you can do without? What thoughts are you hanging

onto that you would be better off without? Bitterness? Grudges? Negative thoughts? Throw them out.

—*Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell* Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell, "Get Rid of Mind Clutter," in 300 Illustrations for Preachers, ed. Elliot Ritzema (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015).

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the *renewing of your mind*, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

"Grand Theft Auto" Leads to Grand Theft Auto

*Sheriff's deputies investigating the theft of an SUV in central Florida were surprised to discover the suspect had a lot more experience than they thought. Deputies found the stolen 1998 Dodge Durango parked in the driveway of a home, and inside they found the suspected thief playing the popular video game "Grand Theft Auto." Authorities arrested 30-year-old Michael Ray Ekes and charged him with grand theft auto, burglary, and drug possession. When they arrested Ekes, a check of his records indicated that he had just gotten out of jail on bond on another charge of auto theft. *We do the things we think about.* —Jim L. Wilson and Jim Sandell *ibid**

The following is another example that demonstrates how important it is for us to properly manage our thoughts>

"A study by the Rand Corporation, published in the

November 2008 issue of the journal Pediatrics, determined that teens who frequently watch sexualized sitcoms and dramas are twice as likely to be involved in a pregnancy as those teens who have had limited exposure. Researchers asked teens about their viewing habits and their sexual behavior. Those watching shows like That '70s Show and Friends (popular shows at the time) were more likely to be sexually active.

*The study had suggestions for broadcasters and parents. Broadcasters should be more realistic in their depictions of sex, showing consequences, such as pregnancy and disease. Parents, besides limiting the viewing, could spend time watching with their children so they can explain the consequences.” *ibid**

Mark 7:20-21 And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21) "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders...

“No Christian can afford to waste “mind power” on thoughts that tear him down or that would tear others down if these thoughts were shared.

The Christian who fills his heart and mind with God’s Word will have a “built-in radar” for detecting wrong

thoughts. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 96.

Paul describes the last two areas to meditate on by an "if" ***clause. Both of these clauses appeal to something that is*** positive in believers. This is not something that is only a

potential in the believer.

if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy -- meditate on these things.

Since both **ifs** are first class conditional clauses, the word “since” can be substituted for “if”.

VIRTUE *noun* [Middle English virtu, from Old French, from Latin virtut-, virtus strength, manliness, virtue, from vir man]

1 a : conformity to a standard of right : MORALITY

b : a particular moral excellence

2 : a beneficial quality or power of a thing

3 : manly strength or courage : VALOR

4 : a commendable quality or trait : MERIT

5 : chastity, especially in a woman

Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

virtue - ARETE, ἀρετή, n. nsf; ① uncommon character worthy of praise, excellence of character, exceptional civic virtue, the quality of moral excellence-‘outstanding goodness

Virtue is found only two other times in the N.T.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priest hood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

excellencies – This word is translated from the same Greek word “arete” used in Phil. 4:8.

The point of this verse is believers have status before God

because God "chose" us, made us a "royal priesthood," "a holy nation," "His own special people." We praise God for His virtue/goodness which includes the grace provision of the things mentioned herein.

Every church age believer has royal status because of God's grace. We should recognize that status in other believers no matter how carnal they may be.

The other usage of the word "arete" is found in **2 Peter 1:3**
2 Peter 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

God calls us by and for His own glory and by His virtue (goodness) and gives us *all things* through His grace.

Virtue Quotes

When virtue and modesty enlighten her charms, the lustre of a beautiful woman is brighter than the stars of heaven, and the influence of her power it is in vain to resist.
Akhenaton

Socialism is a philosophy of failure, the creed of ignorance, and the gospel of envy, its inherent virtue is the equal sharing of misery. *Winston Churchill*

The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts: therefore, guard accordingly, and take care that you entertain no notions unsuitable to virtue and reasonable nature. Marcus Aurelius

I am suggesting that as we go through life, we 'accentuate the positive.' I am asking that we look a little deeper for the good, that we still our voices of insult and sarcasm, that we more generously compliment and endorse virtue and effort. Gordon B. Hinckley

Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is always a vice. Thomas Paine

In marriage do thou be wise: prefer the person before money, virtue before beauty, the mind before the body; then thou hast a wife, a friend, a companion, a second self. William Penn

Virtue is more to be feared than vice, because its excesses are not subject to the regulation of conscience. Adam Smith

if there is anything praiseworthy

praiseworthy ■ adjective deserving of praise.

—DERIVATIVES *praiseworthily* adverb *praiseworthiness* noun

Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

praiseworthy – ΕΠΑΙΝΟΣ, ἔπαινος, n. nsm; ② a thing worthy of praise,

Sometimes it is difficult to find something praiseworthy, especially finding it in certain types of people. One of the easiest things in the world to find is fault in others. We have to be careful that we don't allow finding fault in others to become a habit. Those who are always finding fault seldom finds anything else. It is a lot easier to blow out another person's light than to light your own. It is more difficult to find something to praise in other people. Philippians

Grace Notes

This is true for children as well. Children do much better when they receive praise when it is deserved than hearing nothing but continual criticism. They will eventually give up on even trying to please their parents. Encouragement and praise will breathe life into a child who is depressed and discouraged.

When a child is praised even on the small things, he will try harder, but when he is censured for every little thing, he will resent it and either rebel against his parents or he will lose any motivation he may have had to excel in anything.

Colossians 3:21 *Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.*

Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12) encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God,

LESSON 157 (8-13-19) (The video failed so this lesson number has been voided)

meditate on these things.

MEDITATE (transitive verb)

: to engage in contemplation or reflection

1 : to focus one's thoughts on : reflect on or ponder over

2 : to plan or project in the mind : INTEND, PURPOSE

Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

Meditate – LOGIZOMAI, λογίζομαι, v. pmm; ② to give careful thought to a matter, think (about), consider, ponder, let one's mind dwell on. To think about something in a detailed and logical manner - to reason about something or someone.

Meditation is very important and we find many people who meditated in the Bible:

Isaac meditated while waiting for his new bride Gen. 24:63

Joshua was commanded to meditate on scripture Josh. 1:8

David meditated on the Lord in his bed at night Psalms 63:6, on God's works Psalms 145:5

The author of *Psalms 119* meditated on God's wonder v.27,
God's statutes v. 48, God's precepts v. 78, God's Word v. 148
God resisters meditate on terror *Isa. 33:18*

"Meditate" is used twelve times in the Psalms in the NASV.

Logos Word Study

Sixty to seventy years ago, things were not as hectic and chaotic as they are today and it was much easier to get away by yourself to meditate. With the deluge of information that we must process daily and the many ways of communication we have today, there isn't much time, and often no place, for us to be alone to meditate.

The greatest area of sin in our lives is not in what we do or say but what we think. We think about the sins we commit before we act on them.

Sins List

Notice the number of Mental Attitude Sins compared to the Sins of the Tongue and Overt Sins:

Think about the things we see every day on the news, radio, in the newspapers, and on the internet. They are filled with murder, rape, riots, racism, robbery, accidents, floods, tornados, fires, hurricanes, suicides, cruelty, and sickness. The hate and vicious vitriol that people have towards each other is nearly unbelievable.

It is extremely difficult to concentrate on the lovely, pure, and praiseworthy when we have absorbed nothing but ugliness and negativity. Without doctrine to focus on, we can easily become

depressed, angry, and fearful. But take a look at how the Psalms begin:

LESSON 157 (8-15-19)

Psalm 1:1-2 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2) But his delight is in the law of the LORD (B.D.), and in His law he meditates day and night.

*"The word "meditate in this Psalm means to chew the cud. The idea is to ruminate about the Word of God. David likens himself to a ruminating cow. He takes a Scripture and **ruminate**s over and over it until he can appropriate the Word to his life." Grace Notes Philippians*

RU•MI•NATE transitive verb

1 : to go over in the mind repeatedly and often casually or slowly

2 : to chew repeatedly for an extended period (Merriam-Webster, 1996)

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not **war** (v. pmi) according to the flesh, 4) for the weapons of our **warfare** are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5) We are destroying **speculations** (Logismos - the system of thought when Satan is winning - influencing your viewpoint) **and every lofty** (arrogant) **thing raised up against the knowledge of God** (in our *kardia*), **and we are taking every thought** (divine viewpoint) **captive to the obedience of Christ, 6) and we are ready to punish all**

disobedience, whenever your obedience (in taking in doctrine) ***is complete.***

war – STRATEUO, στρατεύω, v. pmi; ② to engage in a conflict, wage battle, fight

warfare – STRATEIA, στρατεία, n. gsf; military engagement, expedition, campaign

Paul was not describing a skirmish or even a battle, but an ongoing military campaign.

How many people do you know outside of this church, or another Bible church, even know anything about the Angelic Conflict or that it even exists?

Most believers don't think of themselves as being in warfare or needing powerful specialized weapons. They are deceived and naive to think that if they are a good moral person and are nice to everyone, then they have fulfilled their Christian duty.

They have no idea that we are in the accelerated stage of the Angelic Conflict and there are powerful forces of darkness, seen and unseen, that hate us and seek to do us harm. If they did know about it, they might be interested in learning what weapons God has provide for us and how to use them.

Notice the wording of Verse 4: our divinely powerful weapons are ***for the destruction of fortresses***

Verse 5: ***We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing*** and ***we are taking every thought captive***

Verse 6: ***we are ready to punish all disobedience***

Does it look like believers in the Church Age should be defensive or offensive? Should we be retreating or attacking? Remember, we are referring to spiritual warfare.

In the Church Age, the devil is on the DEFENSE. He is still very dangerous in counter-attacking us however. Believers are the assault troops against him! Satan counter-attacks at the point of gnosis. When doctrine has been accepted and converted to epignosis, he can not attack it any more.

Speculations (logismos) is the Greek word for the system of thought when Satan is winning - influencing your viewpoint. Paul uses (noema) for the systems of thought when they succumb to the authority of The Christ. R.B. Thiem Notes

we are taking every *thought* captive – NOEMA, νόημα, n. as; ① that which one has in mind as product of intellectual process

We need to ride herd on our thinking. We dare not think anything we please. We dare not put our minds in neutral or allow them to be conquered by MAS. We have to fight to bring every thought into captivity unto obedience to Jesus Christ. The more we store the Word of God in our hearts, the less room there is for the garbage that so easily accumulates.

The Judaizers, like some “great religious personalities” today, impressed the people with their overpowering abilities, their oratorical powers, and their “commendations” from church leaders. Paul took a different approach;

for, though he was as human as anyone else, he did not depend on the human but on the divine, the spiritual weapons provided by the Lord. His warfare was not according to the flesh, because he was not fighting against flesh and blood (see Eph. 6:10ff). You cannot fight spiritual battles with carnal weapons. Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 665.

Ephesians 6:11-12 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil
12) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers (generals/archons - arche - demon rulers – Abaddon and Beelzebub),, **against the powers** (exousia – demon commissioned officers) , **against the world forces of this darkness** (kosmokrator – hapax legomena, Satan's corps of demon ambassadors in world capitals), **against the spiritual forces of wickedness** (rank and file fallen angels) **in the heavenly places.**

Now that we know the formidable forces that oppose us, we need to know about the Full Armor of God.

LESSON 158 (8-20-19)

Ephesians 6:13-17 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14) Stand (v. aam) **therefore, having girded your waist with TRUTH, having put on the breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS, 15) and having shod your feet with the preparation of the GOSPEL OF PEACE; 16) above all, taking the shield of FAITH with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one**

(Satan). **17) And take the *helmet of SALVATION*, and the *SWORD OF THE SPIRIT*, which is *THE WORD OF GOD*;**

TRUTH – ALETHEIA, ἀλήθεια, n. dsf; ① the quality of being in accord with what is true, truthfulness, dependability, uprightness.

Truth here refers to the belt of Bible doctrine. The belt on the Roman soldier protected his mid-section from attack and held together the weapons and shields he carried.

It held everything else together for him. The most important item was mentioned first and this was the belt of doctrine!

RIGHTEOUSNESS DIKAIOSUNE, δικαιοσύνη, n. gsf; ③ the quality or characteristic of upright behavior, uprightness, righteousness. What type of righteousness is this referring to?

GOSPEL OF PEACE – EUAGGELION, εὐαγγέλιον, n. gsn; ① God's good news to humans, good news as proclamation

GOSPEL OF PEACE – EIRENE, εἰρήνη; n. gsf; ② a state of well-being, peace

FAITH – PISTIS, πίστις, n. gsf; ② state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted, trust, confidence, faith.

The Shield of Faith is the Faith/Rest drill. Satan does not have any power strong enough to destroy the believer who is protected by his shield of faith.

SALVATION – SOTERIOS, σωτήριος, adj. gsn; pertinent to salvation, saving, delivering, preserving, bringing salvation.

The helmet of salvation refers to the fact that believers have eternal salvation and there is absolutely nothing that Satan can do to change that.

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT – MACHAIRA, μάχαιρα, n. asf; ① a relatively short sword or other sharp instrument, sword, dagger

Revelation 1:16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

Revelation 2:12 These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:

Revelation 2:16 'Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them (backsliders) with the sword of My mouth.

Revelation 19:15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations.

Philippians 4:9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Verse 6 – We are commanded not to worry and make our requests known to God.

Verse 7 – If we obey vs. 6, the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds.

Verse 8 – Provides a list of things we are commanded to meditate on in order to maintain the peace of God.

Verse 9 – Provides another list we are commanded to practice in order to have the God of peace with us.

The Christian life involves not only proper thinking (v. 8), but it also includes doing righteous deeds. You cannot separate outward action and inward attitude. This is one reason that it is so important for us to get our mind right by learning B.D. so that we will have the right attitude, which will produce righteous acts.

LEARN ■ verb

1. acquire knowledge of or skill in (something) through study or experience or by being taught.

▶ commit to memory.

▶ become aware of by information or from observation.

Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., Concise Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

learned - MANTHANO, **μανθάνω**, v. aai; ① to gain knowledge or skill by instruction, learn. This word is used 25 times in the NASV. 22 times as “learned”, 1 time as “educated”, one time as “found out”, and 1 time as “receive instruction”.

Learning is where everything starts, including spiritual growth. Teaching is foundational to Christian living. We cannot apply what we do not know. People who are wise know that learning never ends. People will either learn the hard way or the easy way.

Those who are lazy, arrogant, or think they already know it all, are doomed to learn the hard way and learning the hard way is not fun, it’s painful. It’s known as the School of Hard Knocks.

Humility is found in all those who learn the easy way which is learning from the knowledge and experience of others. There is so much to learn and so little time.

Many believers go through a learning process where they learn a few fundamental biblical principles but they reach a stage where their quest for doctrine starts to wane. They convince themselves that they have learned enough and either go to church sporadically or quit going altogether.

LESSON 159 (8-22-19)

A believer's spiritual momentum dies when he stops studying God's Word. The probability that human viewpoint will take over his life is multiplied many times over. Eventually, he forgets most of the doctrines he had learned and it is very possible that his apathetic attitude toward doctrine will turn into a negative antagonistic attitude toward Scripture and to God.

We either Live and Learn (the hard way) or we Learn and Live (learning comes first from the failures and successes of others). We will either be a Learner or a Loser.

The Philippians had a great role model to learn from, the Apostle Paul. One reason we are to be very discerning about the people we associate with is because we are blessed by those who are good role models and cursed by those who are arrogant know-it-alls.

“Paul turns from contemplation to practical life: they must translate into action the lessons which they received from him. The verbs are aorists and refer to the time when he was among them. He taught not by word only, but by living

example; they saw in him when present, and heard of him when he was absent, a pattern of the Christian life.” H. D. M.

Spence-Jones, ed., *Philippians, The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 158.

We are going nowhere if we don't learn to translate the Word of God into experience.

Knowledge comes first and it is very important, but if we don't convert that knowledge into action, we will become confused, discouraged, and start thinking that doctrine doesn't work.

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.” — *Mahatma Gandhi*

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” — *Benjamin Franklin*

“The beautiful thing about learning is that nobody can take it away from you.” — *B.B. King*

“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty.” — *Henry Ford*

received – PARALAMBANO, παραλαμβάνω, v. aai; ③ Something that the emphasis lies not so much on receiving or taking over, as on the fact that the word implies agreement or approval, acceptance.

Paul received knowledge from the Lord and we receive that knowledge from Paul:

1 Corinthians 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you...

1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received (from Christ)...

Receiving is a necessary component of learning. We can accumulate information but if we don't accept it, we haven't learned it.

In the spiritual realm, information that we don't believe or is not important to us, is not learned or remembered. That's because we did not receive it.

It can only be considered something learned, if it matters to us and we accept it. (example 3-4-5 right angle)

heard – ΑΚΟΥΟ, ἀκούω, v. aai; ⑦ to hear and understand a message, understand.

"Hear" and "saw" have to do with the example Paul set when he was with the Philippians. He was an example both in word "heard" and conduct "saw". Pastors are flawed just like every person, but he must be vigilant not to appear legalistic nor worldly because people judge them to a higher standard than most folks so they need to set a good example.

Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

Luke 8:19-21 And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. 20) And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You." 21) But He (Jesus) answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

Luke 11:27-28 *And it came about while He said these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice, and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts at which You nursed." 28) But He said, On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it."*
Read: James 1:21-25

Romans 2:13 *not the **hearers** of the Law are just before God, but the **doers** of the Law will be justified.*

John 13:17 *"If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.*

LESSON 160 (8-27-19)

saw – EIDON, εἶδον, v. aai; ① to perceive by sight of the eye, see, perceive.

The Philippians saw Paul translate the things that he taught into action with their own eyes. His life matched his words. They "got the point" of what the Christian way of life was all about when they watched Paul on a day to day basis. He lived among them and one really gets a sense of who a person really is when they live with you.

It is one thing to sit under formal teaching but it is another thing to receive or appropriate that teaching into one's life. Someone may be an example in word and deed but if that is not adopted into our lives, what's the point?

practice these things – PRASSO, πράσσω, v. pam; ① to bring about or accomplish something through activity.

PRACTICE transitive verb

- 1 a : CARRY OUT, APPLY 〈practice what you preach〉
 b : to do or perform often, customarily, or habitually
 〈practice politeness〉
 c : to be professionally engaged in 〈practice medicine〉
- 2 a : to perform or work repeatedly so as to become
 proficient 〈practice the act〉
 b : to train by repeated exercises 〈practice pupils in
 penmanship〉
 c : the condition of being proficient through systematic
 exercise 〈get in practice〉 Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's
 Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

To carry out some activity (with possible focus upon the
 procedures involved)—‘to do, to carry out, to perform, deed.’
 Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on
 Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 511.

This word is translated 13 times in the NASV and 10 of them are
 found in the Romans epistle. Romans has much to say about
 executing the Christian way of life.

If we do not know the content of God's Word, we cannot
 practice it. If we

If we do not apply the principles of God's Word to experience,
 we cannot practice it.

If we do not take opportunities to expose ourselves to the
 teaching of God's Word, we cannot practice God's Word.

If we do not experience personal relationships with mature
 Christians, we cannot practice it.



PRINCIPLE: What we believe determines what we think; what we think determines who we are; who we are determines what we do.

and the God of peace will be with you.

peace – This is the same word we found in ***Philippians 4:7- and the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension,***

God is the God of peace because he is the source of peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may ***the God of peace Himself*** (experientially) ***sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

The God of peace will set us apart unto Himself and preserve us until Christ comes again.

preserved – ΤΕΡΕΟ, τηρέω, v. apo; ② to cause a state, condition, or activity to continue, keep, hold, reserve, preserve someone or something

complete - ὀλόκληρος, adj. nsn pertinent to being complete and meeting all expectations, with integrity, whole, complete, undamaged, intact, blameless

Hebrews 13:20-21 Now ***the God of peace... 21) equip you in every good thing to do His will,***

"Peace" is more than the absence of trouble. It means harmony, to be a person who is at rest in his soul and is content. It is the absence of stress and worry.

**Romans 15:33 Now *the God of peace* be with you all.
*Amen.***

A believer will have harmony both within himself and without with others if he focuses on the application of God's Word to his life.

Enjoyment of God's peace depends on the application of truth to experience.

Colossians 3:15-16 And *let the peace of Christ rule* (v. pam) *in your hearts*, to which indeed you were called (v. api) *in one body; and be thankful. 16) Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom and teaching...*

How can a Christian know when he is doing God's will? One answer is: the peace of Christ in the heart and in the church. When the believer loses his inner peace, he knows that he has in some way disobeyed God.

The word translated "rule" is an athletic term. It means "to preside at the games and distribute the prizes." Paul used a variation of this word in his Letter to the Colossians: "Let no one declare you unworthy of a prize" (literal translation, Col. 2:18). In the Greek games, there were judges (we would call them umpires) who rejected the contestants who were not qualified, and who disqualified those who broke the rules. The peace of God is the "Umpire" in our believing hearts and our churches. When we obey the will of God, we have His peace within; but when we step out of His will (even unintentionally), we lose His peace. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 139.

will be with you.

We know that God is omnipresent and we know that He is in us and we are in Him. So what did Paul mean when he said that “the God of peace will be with you?”

When we obey the commands given in Philippians 4:6-9...

Verse 6 – We are commanded not to worry and to make our requests known to God.

Verse 8 – Command to meditate on whatever is True, Honorable, Pure, Lovely, of Good Repute, Excellent, and Worthy of Praise.

Verse 9 – We are commanded to practice the things we have learned, received, seen, and heard

...we will experience the peace of God which indicates that the God is with us in a special way.

God told Joshua that He would never leave him or forsake him (Joshua 1:7), and that goes for us as well:

Hebrews 13:5 *being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"*

God's providential care is with us always, especially in hard times when we are in danger or are in pain, or lonely, etc. plus He is also with us under normal circumstances as the God of peace when we Faith/Rest.

God being with us in a special way when we are obedient to His commands and have ongoing confidence in Him, can be

compared to “*abiding in Him*” in John 15:1-8 which also addresses the benefits of trust and obedience.

LESSON 161 (8-29-19)

The analogy of the vine and the branches signifies fellowship with Christ, not organic connection with Him.

John 15:1-10 *I (JC) am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2) "Every branch (believer) in Me (JC) that does not bear fruit (produces divine good), He (GF) takes away (removes from fellowship or SUD); and every branch that bears fruit (produces divine good, He prunes it (v. pai kathairo adversity, suffering, trial), that it may bear more fruit. 3) "You are already clean (pruned adj. katharos) because of the word (BD) which I have spoken to you. 4) "Abide (v. aam) in Me (JC), and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides (v. pas) in the vine (JC), so neither can you, unless you abide (v. pas) in Me. 5) "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides (pt. pa) in Me, and I in him, he bears (v. pai) much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6) "If anyone does not abide (v. pas) in Me, he is thrown away (removed from the vine in the sense of losing fellowship) as a branch, and dries up (spiritually); and they gather them (reversionistic believers), and cast them into the fire (of divine discipline), and they (the fire of judgment on the believer is the same as applying it to his works 1 Cor. 3:15, JSC. Believer's works are simply a metonymy of the believer themselves.) are burned. 7) "If ^{3rd} you abide (v. aas) in Me, and My words (BD) abide (v. aas) in you, ask (v. amm) whatever you wish (v. pas), and it shall be done (v. fmi) for you. 8) "By this is My Father glorified, that you bear (v.*

pas) **much fruit, and so prove to be** (v. ams) **My disciples.** 9) **"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide** (v. aas) **in My love.** 10) **"If ^{3rd} you keep** (v. aas) **My commandments, you will abide** (v. fai) **in My love; just as I have kept** (v. rai) **My Father's commandments, and abide** (v. pai) **in His love.**

Here is a quick summery of what we have been studying in Phil. 4:6-9:

Right Praying, Right Thinking, and Right Living are the conditions for having the Peace of God and Victory Over Worry.

Read: Matthew 6:24-34

LESSON 162 (9-3-19)

Philippians 4:10 *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.*

The contrastive conjunction "*But*" indicates that the subject matter is changing.

*"Years had passed since the Philippians first gave a gift to Paul to help meet his needs when he was first in Thessalonica (Phil. 4:15-16). Paul was aware of their desire to continue to help, but he realized, within God's **providence**, that they had not had the "opportunity" to help."* John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1828.

providence - The word "providence" comes from two Latin words: **pro** = "before," and **video** = "to see." God's providence simply means that God sees to it beforehand.

I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, CHAIRO, χαίρω, v. api; ① to be in a state of happiness and well-being, rejoice, be glad.

We must remember what the circumstances were when Paul wrote these words. He was in prison waiting for a trial that could end in his execution.

The fact that this word is in the passive voice is significant. It means that Paul wasn't actively pursuing happiness.

He was obeying the Lord and trusting Him to provide for all his needs and the result was a personal state of well-being in which he greatly rejoiced.

Those who seek happiness will never find it because only God can enable us to rejoice in every circumstance. People need to stop using their energy and effort to please themselves and start using it to please the Lord. It is only way that they will find the happiness they're seeking.

Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself also in the LORD; and he shall give you the desires of your heart.

Those who make it a habit to trust the Lord and obey Him are the only ones who are able to rejoice always.

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice always;

Job 6:9-10 Would that God were willing to crush me; that He would lose His hand and cut me off! 10) "But it is still my consolation, and I rejoice (ip) in unsparing (ip) pain, that I have not denied (pr) the words of the Holy One.

Psalm 94:17-19 If the LORD had not been my help, My soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence. 18) If I should say, "My foot has slipped," Your lovingkindness, O LORD, will hold me up. 19) When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your **consolations (ip) delight my soul. Psalm 119:50 This is my **comfort** (encouragement, hope) in my affliction, for Your word has given me life (revived me, perfect tense).**

now at last you have revived* (v. aai) *your concern* (inf. pa) *for me,

This was not a rebuke; there was a period when there was no contact between them, they had “no opportunity to show” their concern for Paul.

Paul treated them in a most gracious manner by letting them know that he understood and held nothing against them. The Philippians had always been generous to Paul, even when other churches gave him nothing.

He saw their gift as a sacrifice which delighted God so He assured them that God would honor their generosity and meet all their needs as well.

indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.

concerned – PHRONEO, φρονέω, v. iai; ① to have an opinion with regard to something, think, form/hold an opinion, judge.

This is a good example of the love and concern that believers should have between one another. Paul was very happy that the connection between them had been renewed and he understood that the lapse in communication between them was not due to a lack of concern on their part.

Paul was in prison and it would be very easy for him to be lonely and think that no one cared about him, but he rejoiced in the Lord instead of getting angry or being full of self-pity.

Philippians 4:11 Not that I speak from want/need; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

“Paul did not want them to think that he was complaining about any shortage of funds. Rather, he would have them know that he is quite independent of such mundane circumstances. He had learned ... to be content, no matter what his financial condition might be.” William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1980.

content – AUTARKES, **αὐτάρκης**, adj. nsm; content, self-sufficient. (BDAG)

2) Independent of external circumstances. 3) Contented with one’s lot, with one’s means, though the slenderest.

James Strong, Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995).

One of the first things that we learn from this verse is that contentment is not automatic, it doesn’t come naturally. We must LEARN how to be content. That is what we have been learning since we studied Philippians 4:4.

Hebrews 13:5-6 Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself

has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you," 6) so that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What shall man do to me?"

So three practical aspects of being content has to do with 1. lack of greed 2. knowledge that the Lord will never desert us or forsake us 3) He is our helper.

This verse sure applied to Paul because he certainly was not afraid of what man could do to him. He said in *Phil. 1:23* that it was his desire to depart and be with the Lord as that would be much better than to remain on earth.

What should it take for us to be content?

1 Timothy 6:6-8 But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by **contentment**. 7) For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8) And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

LESSON 163 (9-5-19)

It is very common for people to be discontented with who they are and what they have so they wish they were someone else, usually someone who is famous, rich, or powerful. What about those famous, rich, or powerful people, are they content being who they are? Consider the following:

Are You Happy with Yourself?

"We are told that Frederick the Great, honored soldier, craved praise as a man of letters. Napoleon wanted to be a musician. Whistler, the painter, wanted to be a soldier. When Whistler failed at West Point, he followed engineering, but he found

himself in art. Ty Cobb, the remarkable baseball player known as the “Georgia Peach,” wanted to be a physician. A generation ago the world was plunged into war by a former house painter who wanted to be a military genius and dictator.

G. Curtis Jones, 1000 Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching (Nashville, TN Publishers, 1986), 285.

Would You Rather Be Somebody Else?

*“Living at a time when the general atmosphere and circumstances stimulate the anti-self, some people regret they did not pursue a different career. The Danish philosopher of the nineteenth century, Søren Kierkegaard, declared he would have been happier if he had been a police spy. Richard Nixon always wanted to be a sportswriter. Norman Vincent Peale anticipated being a salesman, and Lena Horne a school teacher. Opera singer, Grace Bumbry [a black woman born 1937], cherishes the thought of being a race-car driver. Bill Veeck of the baseball world [American Major League Baseball franchise owner and promoter] dreamed of being a newspaperman. Would you rather be somebody or something else? *ibid* pp. 358–359.*

Patiently Waiting (Song of Solomon 8:1–5)

Delayed gratification is a foreign concept to our natural instincts. Our culture doesn’t encourage patience or contentment; we would prefer to have our desires met the moment they arise.

The woman in Song of Solomon tells us that she is delighted in her beloved. She praises his attributes and tells of the wonders of their love. But throughout the poem, at seemingly random moments, she also warns the daughters of Jerusalem about immediate gratification. She encourages them to wait

and have patience and urges them not to force love. It is something that must be anticipated and protected, not enjoyed before it's time. It doesn't feel natural to wait and anticipate, but in many ways, staying faithful and being hopeful characterizes our faith. Waiting doesn't mean we're not bold or risk-takers. It means we're faithful to God—we're waiting for things to happen in His time. We know God has something planned for us that is beyond our expectations. John

D. Barry and Rebecca Kruyswijk, *Connect the Testaments: A One-Year Daily Devotional with Bible Reading Plan* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012).

Most people today are not content unless they get what they want when they want it. That's why so many people are drowning in credit card debt. Overall credit card debt in America in 2018 was \$911 billion, with the average household owing over \$8,000.

So Paul said that he had learned how to be content no matter what the circumstances were, but he didn't mention what it was that he learned. He does tell us however in the following verses:

Philippians 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,

“for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.”

Think about how important it is to be able to truthfully say what Paul said.

No one can be content in every kind of circumstance unless he knows the content of the verses above, believes it and brings it to mind when he is tempted to push the panic button.

Anyone who cannot, or does not apply this concept to his experience will lack the peace of God and will live in ongoing fear, dread, anger, confusion, and doubt.

These verses do not exist in a vacuum, meaning that all you need to do is quote these verses in troubling times and all will be well. These verses are supported by other biblical concepts such as “Faint/Rest” and “the Grace Pipeline” along with scriptures like:

1 Corinthians 10:13 No testing has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.

Those who have not learned how to be content, regardless of what is going on around them, continue to be enslaved to their circumstances. Their souls will never have peace or be at rest because they will continually worry about things they have no control over. Their only hope is to learn how to be content by trusting in the One who has sovereign control over all things.

Philippians 4:11-12 Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12) I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

It is obvious by just scanning this verse that knowledge is the key to keep MAS from ravaging the soul when dire situations exist.

I know how to get along with humble means,

I know - ΟΙΔΑ, οἶδα, v. rai; ③ to know/understand how, to be able. / to know how - to be skilled in. James Strong, Enhanced Strong's Lexicon (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995).

It takes specific biblical knowledge to be able to remain content and rejoice with humble means.

I know how to get along with humble means – ΤΑΠΕΙΝΩ, ταπεινῶ, inf. pp; to cause to be low, to humble, to be abased. It refers to causing humility, abasement, loss of prestige, or physical lowness. G. Scott Gleaves, "Humility," ed. Douglas Mangum et al., Lexham Theological Wordbook, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

No one likes to be abased or to be brought low but it happens to all of us. Sometimes we bring it on ourselves and sometimes we are brought down by others or even by God. So it only makes sense that we prepare for it by learning how to remain content no matter what.

LESSON 164 (9-10-19)

Most people are averse to change but things always change. So, we must learn how to cope and adjust without grumbling or complaining. For believers who have not learned how to be content, change, especially change for the worse, can be devastating. They rarely rejoice because they are always unsettled and insecure because even when things are going good, they are discontent because they know that things could change for the worse at any moment.

Usually, the reason they are so unprepared for change is that they are ignorant of the doctrinal principles and concepts that would prepare them for any event.

Paul learned that when he was weak, destitute, or in a state of deprivation, was when he was the strongest spiritually.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10) Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Actually, we are always weak, completely dependent on God for everything, but when things are going good, we don't seem to recognize how needy we really are on the Lord.

Situations are constantly changing but our sense of security, confidence, contentment, and joy should remain untouched. Why? Because those things should depend on our relationship

with the Lord, not our circumstances. That's why Paul said, "*I am well content with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties...*"

Paul learned how to live in extremities. He adjusted to either with equal composure. Paul knew what it was like to be without food or clothing. He knew what it was like to go bankrupt. He had experienced plenty of adversity.

and I also know (*oida* v. *rai*) This is the second time this word is used in this verse and both times it is in a perfect tense.

how to live in prosperity – PERISSEUO, περισσεύω, inf. πα; ① intr., to be in abundance, abound, to have more than enough.

This word is used in two other verses in the N.T.

In **Rom. 5:17**, "***of abundance of grace***" and in **2 Cor. 8:2**, "***of abundance of joy***"

Whether we live in humble means or in prosperity, we always have an *abundance of grace* and we should always have *an abundance of joy*. The day a Christian comes to believe that contentment comes from God, that is the day of liberty from the circumstances of life, "

Hebrews 13:5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have...

A person's station or situation in life does not affect the *poise of a mature believer. Every C.A. believer is a member of the Royal Family of God and is a royal ambassador and a

royal priest so we should conduct ourselves accordingly, whether we live in a mansion or in a trailer park.

***POISE**, (noun)

1. stably balanced state: EQUILIBRIUM (a poise between widely divergent impulses —F. R. Leavis)
2. a. easy self-possessed assurance of manner: gracious tact in coping or handling; also, the pleasantly tranquil interaction between persons of poise (no angry outbursts marred the poise of the meeting)

b. a particular way of carrying oneself: BEARING, CARRIAGE
Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996).

Most people think that living in prosperity is much easier than living in poverty, but that is not necessarily so. It may be less difficult to manage the financial affairs of life but certainly not the spiritual aspects of life.

MONEY CANNOT MAKE YOU HAPPY! The man who is really rich is the man who is content with what he has. . Money never satisfies us because we never get enough to gratify our desires. Life becomes perpetual resetting of monetary goals higher and higher. ***This is covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5).***

James 1:9-11 But let the brother of humble circumstances glory in his high position; 10) and let the rich man glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. 11) For the sun rises with a scorching wind, and withers the grass; and its flower falls off, and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the

midst of his pursuits will fade away. 12) Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

The humble brother perseveres under trial because he trusts in the Lord's provision, that's why he is in a high position. So he does not fade away like the rich man who does not humble himself and glory in the Lord but he glories in himself and his riches. The destiny of the righteous is far better than the fleeting glory of the wicked.

LESSON 165 (9-12-19)

Psalm 49:16-20 Be not afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house increases. 17) For when he dies he will carry nothing away; his glory will not go down after him. 18) For though, while he lives, he counts himself blessed,- and though you get praise when you do well for yourself – 19) his soul will go to the generation of his fathers, who will never again see light. 20) Man in his pomp yet without understanding is like the beasts that perish.

Man can live apart from God so much that he becomes like an animal in his life.

Being content with what we have does not mean that we are not allowed to aspire to do great things or that we shouldn't have an incentive. It means we are not to envy those who have more than we do or covet what they have.

Proverbs 28:11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding sees through him.

(NLT) **Proverbs 28:23 The poor plead for mercy; the rich answer with insults.**

Wealthy people often find it difficult to depend on the Lord and their prayer life suffers because of it. They have everything they want so why do they need God?

People who acquire tremendous wealth often lose their perspective on reality. Those who win the lottery or superstars in sports and entertainment are a good example. NFL star players make tens of millions of dollars for playing 12 games that last one hour. They actually only play about 30 minutes per game.

For a player who has a contract for 10 million dollars over a five-year contract would be paid \$333,330 per game for about 30 minutes of work. That's \$666,666 per hour.

The President of the United States' salary is \$400,000 per year. Members of Congress make \$174,000 per year. Many of the men and women in the US military are on food stamps.

in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret

A mature believer is prepared for any contingency he may face by relying on J.C. for all things and being content with whatever happens. True liberty comes by living a life centered in Christ.

I have learned the secret - ΜΥΕΩ, μυέω, v. rai; to initiate into the mysteries. 2 to teach fully, instruct. 2a to accustom one to a thing. 2b to give one an intimate acquaintance with a thing, to introduce to things not known. Spiros Zodhiates, The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000). James Strong, Enhanced Strong's Lexicon (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995).

The reason Paul did not know this secret information was not because it was hard to understand, abstruse or nebulous; it was because this knowledge is given to certain believers from God. No one, including Paul could figure this out for himself. This secret is available to all believers but only spiritual adult believers learn it.

It is a bit like initiation into a fraternity. You learn things that others that are not in the fraternity don't know. This fraternity is the Fraternity of Mature Believers.

Now Paul introduces another pair of two extremes: "*being filled*" and "*going hungry*" - "*having abundance*" and "*suffering need*".

of being filled (inf. pp) ***and going hungry*** (inf. pa), ***both of having abundance*** (inf. pa) ***and suffering need*** (inf. pp).

being filled = prosperous

Prosperity can include wealth but there are several other ways to be prosperous. This refers to prosperity we receive.

PROSPEROUS adjective

1 : auspicious, favorable

2 a : marked by success or economic well-being

b : enjoying vigorous and healthy growth

It is true that financial prosperity can turn people's attention away from God but that does not apply to all wealthy people. Some of the most outstanding Christians are wealthy. I know a few whose wealth is not the core of their life. Their wealth is a detail by which they serve Jesus Christ and they are extremely generous and giving people.

going hungry = being in need – this does not to be equated with being discontented. "going hungry" here is something we get ourselves into (active voice). We bring it on ourselves. We do not manage our budget well enough.

having abundance = having an oversupply or over flow.

This is different from "*being full*" which is something we receive (passive voice). "*having abundance*" here means abundance for which we work (active voice). Some people inherit their wealth while others work for it.

suffering need - This is something we receive (passive voice). This is the hunger that was of no fault of our own. An unanticipated change in the market brought our business into bankruptcy, sickness, death, fire, tornados, floods, etc.

Matthew 5:6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

“Paul often faced hunger in his life. This was true in his present circumstance in jail. The Roman jail did not provide food. The prisoner depended on people from the outside to give them food.” Grace Notes, Philippians 10

There are 4 different circumstances of life with which we need to cope.

1. Prosperity where we did not earn it.
2. Adversity where it was our fault.
3. Prosperity where we earned it.
4. Adversity where it was not our fault.

Paul is telling us, there is no experience in life that can keep us from being content!

We can have stability by orienting and adjusting to any situation in life.

Our contentment does not have to depend on our circumstances. There is a much better way. We are cheating ourselves whenever we depend on material possessions, physical comfort, or “trouble free days” to determine whether we will be content or be stressed out and miserable.

LESSON 166 (9-17-19)

<https://www.prageru.com/video/goodbye-america/>

Our circumstances are always changing and it seems like most of the time, the change goes from bad to worse. That's one reason why so many people are unhappy and hard to tolerate.

The good news is that God never changes! His Word, and His promises never change! There's more good news. He has provided a way that we can have ongoing perpetual serenity and tranquility in our soul no matter what is going on around us. Is that something in which you would be interested? Who wouldn't be?

Many believers believe that maybe a few elite Christians may be able to maintain their composure and contentment in every situation but it is a hill too high for the great majority of believers.

*It has been objected to Christianity that it requires of the believer a superhuman type of living. The objection is well taken—it does. No mere morality, however high, no most scrupulous observance of the outward things of the religious life, as Bible reading, prayer, church-going, almsgiving, will fill out the demand of the Christian ethic. **It is a heavenly standard for earthly living.** The whole environment is hostile to that standard; Satan and his hosts are determined the believer shall not realize it in his own experience; nay, the believer's own flesh rebels against it.*

Here comes the peril: The believer will be tempted to say, “This is merely an ideal. It is not seriously meant to be fully realized. It helps just as the moon helps if I make it my target, for while I shall not strike the moon, I shall shoot higher than I should if I made the barn roof my target.”

*But the type of Christian experience which we have in the Epistles is not set forth as an unattainable ideal. It is indeed above man's natural capacity, **but with the superhuman demand is given a superhuman enablement**, and millions of God's dear children, from Paul down to this day, have lived in “steadfastness,” “unity,” “helpfulness,” constant unbroken joy in the Lord, “moderation,” utter deliverance from care, with mind and heart garrisoned in the peace of God. Millions have lived in the things that are “true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report,” and so have known the constant presence of the God of peace.*

They, like Paul, have learned in whatsoever state they are, therein to be content.

*And they have lived this type of life because **they have learned the secret, and that secret is, I can do all things through Christ my strength.** Along with the supernatural and humanly unattainable standard of Christian living goes, under grace, a supernatural and altogether adequate enablement.*

C. I. Scofield, No Room in the Inn and Other Interpretations, ed. Mary Emily Reily (New York; London; Toronto; Melbourne; Bombay: Oxford University Press; Humphrey Milford, 1913), 114–115.

LESSON 167 (9-19-19)

So how does one acquire this ongoing serenity? Well, according to the Apostle Paul, there is a secret that we must learn before we can possess this most valuable ability.

We, like Paul, need to be calm and confident in the midst of the most disturbing circumstances. We also need to refuse to allow the peace of God and our joy to be destroyed because of ignorance or unbelief. Paul's body was in chains but he did not allow his spirit to be chained to the deteriorating situations of his life.

The pendulum swings back and forth and God wants us to know how secure we are in Him, both in the good times and the bad. He has provided a way for us to rejoice no matter what may be going on in our life at any given time. The secret is to learn how to make JC the center of our lives.

Making JC the center of our life is a learning process that takes time. We must first get rid of the habit of living for ourselves. That is a process as well and it takes time.

As we learn that He can do much more for us than we can do for ourselves, we start to trust Him and start doing things his way. We start to learn how to think and act in the spiritual realm rather than the material or earthly realm. Through Bible study, we learn to rely on the Lord and His grace. We learn to trust Him to take care of our troubles and woes and strengthen us to the point that we can maintain our composure and even rejoice even when we are experiencing suffering and pain.

The blueprint is found in *Philippians 4:6-13*.

Philippians 4:6* *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

1. Stop worrying and start praying. Tell God all about your problems and trust Him to deal with them.

Philippians 4:7* *And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

2. You will experience the wonderful peace of God as your stress and anxiety is replaced with contentment and serenity.

Philippians 4:8* *Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell (meditate) on these things.

3. What should we think? Meditating on the things in this list will help us to maintain the peace of God. When we are worried or afraid, we think about our problems, but when we think about God and the uplifting things in this list, we are confident and content.

Philippians 4:9 *The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

4. What should we do? Keep on applying the doctrine we have learned and emulate others who are adult believers and who are growing in grace and knowledge.

Philippians 4:10 *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.*

Paul was glad that the Philippians reconnected with him and had provided him with a financial gift of support.

Philippians 4:11 *Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.*

The Lord supplied for Paul's needs when there was no outside support and he had learned how to be content regardless of his circumstances.

Philippians 4:12 *I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.*

God has provided a better way to live than allowing our circumstances to determine whether we have a good day or a bad day, or whether we are stressed out and miserable or relaxed and content.

If we learn the secret, we can have perpetual serenity and contentment.

Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

This is the secret!

God can do wonderfully marvelous things through us, but He has to prepare us first.

This is the way that C.I. Scofield describes that preparation:

The one broad distinction between Christian and Christian is that some are seeking by self-effort to attain to the standard of right Christian living, while others, in utter self-distrust, are yielding themselves to the great supernatural enablements, which are the birthright of every believer. C. I. Scofield, *No Room in the Inn and Other Interpretations*, ed. Mary Emily Reily (New York; London; Toronto; Melbourne; Bombay: Oxford University Press; Humphrey Milford, 1913), 117.

Christians who yield themselves to the great supernatural enablements of God do suffer, but not because God is angry with them. They suffer through the preparation process that God uses to do great things through them.

Doubtless there are chastisements for the willfully disobedient child, but the cause in such cases are usually evident.

Take an illustration: A ton of pig iron is worth about \$4.00, a ton of watch springs about \$30,000, and a ton of Damascus blades about \$100,000. And the springs and the blades were all pig iron once. But there is no rose-strewn pathway over which pig iron may saunter into springship and bladehood, nor may pig iron be smitten into perfection of edge and temper by one fierce touch of the furnace. Again and again it must be bathed in flame, and again and again beaten upon the anvil.

But the smith is not angry with the pig iron. His blows are not the blows of wrath, nor his thrustings into the furnace the tokens of judgment. A sinner becomes a saint by faith, but he does not become saintly in one day, nor by one testing.

Twenty years before, these men [Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego] had stood with Daniel under test, to determine whether they would be loyal to God and conscience in small things. Now [as they defy Nebuchadnezzar and are about to be thrown into the fiery furnace] they are ready for a more fundamental and profound testing. c. 1.

Scofield, No Room in the Inn and Other Interpretations, ed. Mary Emily Reily (New York; London; Toronto; Melbourne; Bombay: Oxford University Press; Humphrey Milford, 1913), 120–121.

So, are you satisfied to be a \$4.00 a ton believer, \$30,000 a ton believer, or \$100,000 a ton believer? Your answer to this question will determine the way you will spend eternity.

God has given believers a heavenly standard for earthly living. There is no way we are able to meet that standard apart from God enabling us. The good news is, God gives superhuman enablement to believers who yield to Him, in order to meet His superhuman heavenly standard.

This is certain, if you want to become a \$100,000 a ton believer, God will provide absolutely everything you will ever need to reach your goal.

LESSON 168 (9-24-19)

Now we come to the summary and climax of all the things Paul has been teaching since Philippians 4:6 –

Philippians 4:13 - *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

Did Paul make an unfounded claim here? Many Christians are skeptical of statements like this in practice if not in theory. Most believers are somewhat doubtful as to whether they can do hardly anything through Christ.

I can do – ISCHUO, **ἰσχύω**, v. pai; ② to have requisite personal resources to accomplish something, have power, be competent, be able

Does this verse mean that Paul was declaring that he was sovereign? Does it mean that he, as well as other believers, can be like Superman and do anything and everything we want? Does it mean that we can be super heroes who can perform miracles?

That is not the context of this verse or the ones leading up to it. Paul would never consider himself as a super hero. In fact, he boasted about his weakness because he learned that when he was weak, that's when he was strong because that is when he relied on the Lord more than ever (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

*“This statement, does not make Paul a wonder-worker, a spiritual ‘super-man’, who towers so far above the rest of us that his life is no encouragement to lesser mortals. And this means that the triumphant assertion **I can do every- thing through him who gives me strength**, can be true of every Christian today.*

His ‘self-sufficiency’ and equanimity [evenness of mind, composure] especially under stress in meeting all life’s demands has not come through a mechanical self-discipline or fixed resolution such as the stoic practiced, but from his in union with a personal Lord. Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 11, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 183-184.

LESSON 169 (9-26-19)

“Verse 13 is a “famous” verse, but greatly misunderstood. I was visiting with a high school quarterback once who said: “That’s my verse!” This was his pre-game mantra that psyched him up to make the big plays. This verse is not about the Lord strengthening us to win ball games and live our dreams. This is a verse that says: In Jesus, I have enough. With him, I have enough when I win and when I fail. When I have, when I don’t have. When I’m praised and when I’m rejected... even when I’m imprisoned.”

https://sermons.faithlife.com/sermons/329743-p.s.-i've-learned-the-secret?utm_source=logos&utm

The ***all things*** in this verse is not unlimited. The will of God limits the phrase "*all things*." Here, it refers to the will of God for the believer. Whatever the Lord desires the believer to do, God grants him the power to do it.

So Paul was relating the “all things” to maintaining his confidence in God, his composure, his joy, and the peace of God at all times, no matter what. No adversity could defeat him. He was free even when he was in prison. When he was destitute, he wasn’t down. When he was poor, he was still rich. The strength that Paul spoke of was outside the inner resources of himself.

2 Corinthians 3:5 *Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God...*

(NKJV) **Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.***

You will notice that the NKJV uses the proper name “Christ” instead of the pronoun “Him” as the NASV.

A note from the NASV:

Changed Reference—*The use of a different referring expression to refer to an established participant to:*

- *‘recharacterize’ the participant, or highlight some thematically-salient information.*
- *explicitly indicate the current ‘center of attention’ by switching from a proper name to a more generic reference that connects one participant to another in a context (e.g. ‘his mother’ instead of ‘Mary’ in Luke 2:48).*

Steven E. Runge, *The Lexham Discourse Greek New Testament: Glossary* (Lexham Press, 2008).

The Greatness of God's Grace

Salvation has its source in the heart of God, and reaches us on the principle of grace, or unmerited favor, through faith alone, without works.

Indeed when one thinks of the depth from which the sinner is taken, and of the height to which the saint is raised, one wonders how any sane being could ever have supposed that works could have any place in such a salvation.

Man is helpless and hopeless in death and sin. Man cannot lift himself out of death into fellowship and oneness with Christ in the heavenlies, "but God who is rich in mercy" can. C. I. Scofield, No Room in the Inn and Other Interpretations, ed. Mary Emily Reily (New York; London; Toronto; Melbourne; Bombay: Oxford University Press; Humphrey Milford, 1913), 113-114.

We were all born with an OSN, spiritually dead, and condemned. There is nothing that we can do by our own effort to better our standing with God.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things and is desperately wicked; Who can know it?

Psalms 53:2-3 God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, To see if there is anyone who understands, Who seeks after God. 3) Every one of them has turned aside; together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one.

So God did the ultimate by saving all mankind from the Lake of Fire by sending His Son to pay our penalty on the cross and offering eternal life as a gift for anyone who believe in JC.

But He also has made it possible, through His grace, for us to live a life of joy and contentment even when we experience adversity and suffering.

So we believers go from being a miserable depraved helplessly condemned wretch, to becoming a Royal Family Member with eternal life and God's own righteousness, plus, we can declare ***"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."***

Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

strengthens - ENDUNAMOO, ἐνδυναμόω, part. pa; ① to cause one to be able to function or do something, strengthen, Causative verb to empower, to pour power into one.

When we are trusting the Lord and obeying Him, He keeps on pouring His power into us so that we can accomplish His will for our lives.

A form of this same word is used in 1 Timothy 1:12

1 Timothy 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who **has strengthened me** (part. aa), **because He considered me faithful, putting me into service;**

The word "strengthened" in both of these verses, are related to the noun "dunamis", which is where we get the English word, "dynamite".

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, **be strong** (v. ppm) **in the Lord, and in the strength of His might.**

2 Timothy 2:1 You therefore, my son, **be strong** (v. ppm) **in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

Acts 9:22 But Saul kept **increasing in strength** (part. aa) **and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.**

Read: **Colossians 1:9-12**

LESSON 170 (10-1-19)

We also have strength and power from God the Father;

Ephesians 1:17-19 **that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18) having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19) and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might.**

We also have power from the Holy Spirit:

Romans 15:13 **May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.**

We also have power from the Word of God:

Hebrews 4:12 **For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

Human beings can achieve many things, though any achievement which disregards God is futile. God always achieves what He intends and anything we do that has eternal value requires God-given resources.

Psalm 39:6 - Surely every man walks about like a shadow; Surely they busy themselves in vain; he heaps up riches, and does not know who will gather them.

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 And all that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor. 11) Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.

The things we accomplish in this life where God has no part are insignificant, temporal, and will be forgotten. But the things that we do while trusting in the Lord, are very significant, eternal, and brings blessing to us and glory to God.

Psalm 127:1 Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain.

Zechariah 4:6 Then he answered and said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.

1 Samuel 2:9 "He keeps the feet of His godly ones, But the wicked ones are silenced in darkness; For not by might shall a man prevail.

2 Chronicles 16:8-9 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand. 9) "For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His...

John 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Read: **Joshua 7:1-11**

LESSON 171 (10-3-19)

Psalm 33:16-22 The king is not **saved (yasha יָשַׁע nifal Victorious) **by a mighty army; A warrior is not **delivered**** (natzal נָצַל nifal saved) **by great strength. 17) A horse is a false hope for **victory**** (teshuah תְּשׁוּעָה n. f. victory); **Nor does it **deliver**** (malat מָלַט Pi"el flee to safety) **anyone by its great strength. 18) Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who **hope**** (yachal יָחַל Pi"el to wait, hope, expect) **for His **lovingkindness**** (cheched חֶסֶד, n. merciful kindness, used 248 times), **19) To **deliver**** (natzal נָצַל hif"el to rescue) **their soul from death, And to **keep them alive**** (hayah הָיָה Pi"el preserve alive) **in famine. 20) Our soul waits** (chakah חָכָה Pi"el to wait), **for the LORD; He is our help and****

our shield. 21) For our heart rejoices (samach שָׂמַח Qal. yiktol ‘imperfect’- kind of action, here, ongoing action) **in Him, Because we trust** (batach בָּטַח Qal. qatal ‘perfect’ – conveys the totality of an action, to trust) **in His holy name. 22) Let Thy lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, According as we have hoped** (yachal יָחַל Pi”el to wait, hope, expect) **in Thee.** Michael S. Heiser and Vincent M. Setterholm, Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology (Lexham Press, 2013; 2013).

nif‘al - It conveys reflexive action, where the subject of the verb both carries out and receives the action of the verb. The nif‘al is also occasionally used for simple passive, where the subject of the verb receives the action of the verb.

pi‘‘ēl - Refers to the relationship of the verb’s subject to the action of the verb. That is, stems convey grammatical ‘voice’ relationships. The pi‘‘ēl stem expresses the bringing about of a state.

hif‘îl - The hif‘îl stem indicates the causative sense of verbs. That is, the subject of the verb in the hif‘îl stem causes the object of the verb to participate in the action of the verb

qal – The qal is the unmarked stem; it has no nuanced meaning per se.

Peace is the birthright of every believer in all circumstances. It is found only in God and is maintained through having a close relationship with him.

“The task, then, before us is to cultivate our relationship with the Lord in whatever situation we find ourselves.

To keep on seeking him no matter what. In hard times we may be tempted to think he's abandoned us. In rich times we may be tempted to think we don't need him. Paul would say, in either way, we are missing the real source of joy: Christ."

Proverbs 30:8-9 Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion, 9) Lest I be full and deny Thee and say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest I be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God.

Paul has caught a glimpse of God's "riches in glory," put on full display "in Christ Jesus." This is why for him to live was Christ; to die was gain. This is the Christ whom, in the humiliation of his incarnation and death on a cross, God has exalted by bestowing on him the name above all names, the name of the Lord himself; this is the Christ in whom all of God's riches in glory have been lavishly made available to us. For Paul this fact determines everything. This is the glory that he longs for his Philippian friends to see and experience. Thus the whole letter finds its theological focus in this final word. Gordon D. Fee, "To What End Exegesis? Reflections on Exegesis and Spirituality in Philippians 4:10-20," ed. Evans Craig A., Bulletin for Biblical Research, Vol. 8 (1998): 87.

LESSON 172 (10-8-19)

The next five verses have to do with the financial gift from the Philippians to Paul, for his support.

Philippians 4:14 Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction.

The Philippians could have concluded: since Paul could live just as well in poverty as in prosperity (v. 12), perhaps the money they sent to him wasn't appreciated.

No doubt, Paul added this word of clarification so the Philippians would not think he was being ungrateful for their most recent monetary gift.

The fact that he cleared up what could have been a misunderstanding, is an example of the love and thoughtfulness he had towards the people who had already benefitted so much from him.

Most of us have only a very few true friends who will stick with us through thick and thin. When we find ourselves in need, especially financial need, we notice that the "friends" that use to hang out with us seem to be missing. True friends are like the Philippians who were willing and eager to share what they had with Paul when he needed help.

Helping others who are in financial need takes discernment. Some people think you owe them something and are not grateful for your help and others will very quickly become dependent on you, rather than the Lord to provide a way out of their financial problems.

Share – SUNKOINONEO, συγκοινωνέω, part. aa; ① to be associated with someone in some activity, be connected, to communicate with or fellowship with. SUN = with, KOINONEO = fellowship

Paul considered the relationship between himself and the Philippians to be a two-way street, with both parties actively involved in the sharing of both material and spiritual gifts.

When we give to a church, missionary or parachurch organization, we have an eternal stake in that enterprise. The Philippians invested a stake in Paul. They had an investment in him. Giving is an investment in eternal values.

Grace Notes; Philippians

1 Corinthians 9:11 & 13-14 If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? ... 13) Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar? 14) So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

Galatians 6:6 Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 Let the elders [presbuteros – “old man” captain of a ship] who rule well (pt. ra) be **considered worthy of double honor, especially those who **work hard** (studying & teaching) **at preaching the word/doctrine and teaching.** 18) For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."**

considered worthy – ΑΧΙΟΟ, ἀξιόω, v. ppm; ① to consider suitable for requital (repayment) or for receipt of something consider worthy, deserving.

double – DIPLOUS, διπλοῦς, adj. gsf; double

honor - TIME, τιμή, n. gsf; ③ honor conferred through compensation, honorarium, compensation

work hard – ΚΟΡΙΑΟ, κοπιᾶω, pt. πα; ② to exert oneself physically, mentally, or spiritually, work hard, toil to the point of exhaustion, strive, struggle

preaching – LOGOS, λόγος, n. dsm; ① a communication whereby the mind finds expression, word.

This is the only place in the Bible where the Greek word *logos* is translated “preaching”.

The Greek word for “preacher” is *keruz*, κηρυξ and the Greek word *kerusso*, κηρύσσω, is translated “preaching” 39 times.

(NASV) **2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for **teaching** (*didaskalia*), for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17) that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

(NKJV) **2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for **doctrine** (*didaskalia*), for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17) that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

teaching – DIDASKALIA, διδασκαλία, n. dsf; ② that which is taught, teaching, instruction

The Greek word for “teacher” is *didaskalos*, διδάσκαλος, and the Greek word for “teaching” is *didasko*, διδάσκω.

The AV translates *didaskalia* as “doctrine” 19 times. Here it refers to the content of doctrine. This refers to BD that was learned and now is in the soul.

LESSON 173 (10-10-19)

Expanded Translation:

1 Timothy 5:17-18 *Let the pastors who rule well be considered financially worthy of the honor of double remuneration, especially those who work exceedingly hard studying and teaching doctrine which can be metabolized and utilized.*

18) For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing" (Deut. 25:4), and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." (Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7)

This verse is important because it quotes both the Old Testament and the New Testament showing that financial support is crucial for the work of the Lord.

“While the leadership needs of a congregation extend far beyond the preaching and teaching of the truth, these are at the core of the ministry and are perhaps most important, which should be reflected by the double value given them by the congregation.” “1 Timothy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Victor Books, 1985), 744.

Most believers consider giving to be a chore rather than a privilege. If writing a check or taking money out of your wallet is drudgery to you, then you have missed the point altogether. It is an honor and privilege to give to the Lord. The natural mind thinks that the more you give, the less you have.

But in reality, you have more, because you are actually making an investment that will yield back something much more valuable than money.

Philippians 4:15-16 And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16) for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

Ten years earlier, when Paul went to their city with the gospel, the Philippians were raw heathens as they had never heard the gospel. This is found in Acts 16 and 17 historically. Paul had to flee Philippi for his life when he went to Thessalonica.

PRINCIPLES IN GIVING

PRINCIPLE #1: Giving is a mental attitude rather than an amount of money given. *2 Cor. 8:1-2 & 6*

PRINCIPLE #2: True giving is always done voluntarily apart from pressure or compulsion. *Acts 11:29, 1 Cor. 16:2, 2 Cor. 8:3, 9:7*

PRINCIPLE #3: Christian giving is a privilege associated with grace.

PRINCIPLE #4: Giving is a soul activity. The amount of the gift is never emphasized. *2 Cor. 9:7*

PRINCIPLE #5: Proper giving is an extension of the spiritual stability of the believer and is not based on emotions.

PRINCIPLE #6: True Christian giving is love giving, not law giving.

PRINCIPLE #7: Money given by believers to the Lord's ministry must be administered properly.

- a. Reliable people must be appointed by the church to collect and to account for the money that is collected.
- b. Money must be handled by more than one person in order to eliminate any appearance of impropriety or misappropriation of funds.

"It is often more difficult to receive graciously than to give graciously. Paul wants his friends to know he is truly grateful for their financial contribution, without making them feel obligated to send more. He does this by expressing the greatest joy he derives from their generosity. Their offering will be an "acceptable sacrifice," which pleases the Lord. And they will experience God at work to meet their own needs."

Lawrence O. Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion*, (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991), 809.

LESSON 174 (10-15-19)

2 Corinthians 9:6 Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.

What other believers give is NON OF OUR BUSINESS! That is strictly between them and the lord. The following comments are given for instruction and are not to be used to judge other believer's giving habits!

Church Age believers are free to give as little or as much as they please, but the principle presented in the verse above always applies.

Believers who have been blessed financially by God and who give graciously/bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Sometimes, we are not able to give as much as we would like, or maybe not at all, because of unforeseen circumstances and yet we still must take care of our family needs. God understands this and we will still reap bountifully.

Some believers give just a little even though they are capable of giving much more. Usually, they are holding back because they are either greedy or because they don't trust the Lord to provide for all their needs; they will reap sparingly.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Let each one do just as he has purposed (v. rmi) **in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.**

Most believers believe that the practice of tithing applies to Church Age believers, however the verses above contain no commands, instead, we are to determine ourselves the amount we give and it shouldn't be grudgingly **nor under compulsion**. If we are required to give ten percent as a tithe, we certainly would not be told that we are not under compulsion.

It is our mental attitude of readiness or desire to give, that makes our donation acceptable, not the amount we give!

2 Corinthians 8:7-9 But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work [giving financial help] also. 8) **I am not speaking this as a command**, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also. 9) For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

Other verses that substantiate this principle as well:

Deuteronomy 15:11-14 *"For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore **I command you**, saying, 'You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land.'* 12) *"If your kinsman, a Hebrew man or woman, is sold to you, then he shall serve you six years, but in the seventh year you shall set him free. 13) "And when you set him free, you shall not send him away empty-handed. 14) "You shall furnish him liberally from your flock and from your threshing floor and from your wine vat; **you shall give to him as the LORD your God has blessed you.***

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2) On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, **as he may prosper**, that no collections be made when I come.*

2 Corinthians 8:10-12 And I give my opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do this, but also to desire to do it. 11) But now finish doing it also; that just as there was the **readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it **by your ability**. 12) **For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable** according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have.**

It is our mental attitude of readiness or desire to give, that makes our donation acceptable, not the amount we give!

2 Corinthians 8:18-21 And we have sent along with him [Titus] **the brother whose fame in the things of the gospel has spread through all the churches; 19) and not only this, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work [collecting a financial gift], **which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness**, 20) taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; 21) for **we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.****

Philippians 4:17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

Paul was certainly not soliciting funds to aggrandize himself. What thrilled him was that in sharing financially with him, the Philippians were giving to God, who would continue to meet their needs and reward them.

Most of us are bombarded with solicitations for money. They are at our door, on TV, on the telephone, and on the internet. It is easy for us to become cynical and calloused to any organization that duns us for money. We must be careful that we do not allow that to interfere with our motivation to give to the Lord.

You will notice that Paul connected freely giving to the Lord with profit which increases our account.

Hebrews 6:10-12 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

11) And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12) that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 10:35-36 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

*The Philippians have interest accruing to their account. This is the result of their growth in character. Periodically their account gains interest. It accumulates dividends and will be paid at sometime in the future. **"To your account"** -- God places this payment to the account of the Philippians. This account grows with each fresh demonstration of love. It is a good spiritual business investment where accumulation of interest grows. Grace Notes*

Every believer has an account with God. We may not know how much we have in the bank but they do. God knows exactly what our account looks like. He knows how much surplus we have. He knows how much we owe. God is keeping an account of what we give to him. This puts somewhat of a different perspective on Acts 20:35:

Acts 20:35 ...remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

What does your account look like? Is it increasing? Paul used banking terms but the account he spoke of was not referring to financial gain but spiritual gain which certainly eclipses monetary gain in value.

Paul was essentially saying, "I am glad to get your gift, not for what it does for me, but for what it does for you. I want fruit to abound to your account." Giving is an indicator of our spiritual condition.

LESSON 175 (10-17-19)

Philippians 4:18 But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

Paul was really trying to get the point across that the financial gift was more than enough to meet his needs:

***I have received everything in full
and have an abundance
I am amply supplied***

Paul again was showing his appreciation for the gracious gift that his beloved Philippians sent him. Not only did their gift supply his need, it went beyond his need. He viewed himself in prosperity while sitting in jail! He was more content confined in a dank dark dungeon than probably most of the believers who had their freedom and were enjoying the comforts of home.

Gratitude for a God who cares for us grows as we experience His amazing grace and faithfulness.

The Philippian's gift impacted both Paul and God. It impacted Paul because it was from God, through his beloved brothers and sisters in Philippi. It impacted God because it was a fragrant aroma to Him. This is O.T. language taken from the Levitical offerings (*Ex 29:18; Ezek 10:41; Gen 8:21; Lev 1:9, 13, 17; 2:12*). Their gift smelled sweet to God as the fragrance of perfume. It was an offering that was acceptable to Him.

The phrase "a soothing aroma" is used 48 times in the O.T. relating to burnt or baked sacrifices.

Exodus 29:18 "And you shall offer up in smoke the whole ram on the altar; it is a burnt offering to the LORD: it is a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD.

Leviticus 6:14-15 'Now this is the law of the grain offering: the sons of Aaron shall present it before the LORD in front of the altar. 'Then one of them shall lift up from it a handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with its oil and all the incense that is on the grain offering, and he shall offer it up in smoke on the altar, a soothing aroma, as its memorial offering to the LORD.

The phrase “a fragrant aroma” is used twice in the N.T. Once in our verse here and also in Ephesians 5:2 where the ultimate offering of all time is mentioned.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2) and walk (v. pam) in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, *an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*

Jesus sacrificed His own life as an offering to God so that the barrier between man and God would be forever removed.

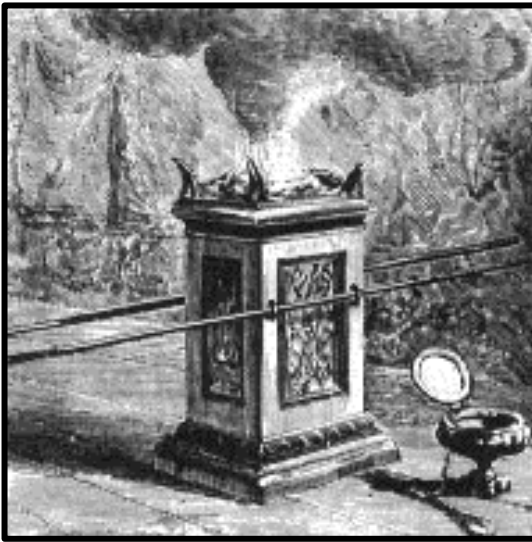
Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you *present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

When we restrain ourselves from giving in to our lusts and desires which God forbids, it is seen as a holy sacrifice which is acceptable to Him.

We have an idiom in the English that is used when something isn't right. When someone says, “*Something doesn't smell right,*” or “*I smell a rat!*”, it usually means that something or someone is wrong, corrupt, unfair, unjust, unacceptable, or evil.

A fragrant aroma to God is just the opposite. It is acceptable, right, well pleasing, good, pleasant, and satisfying.

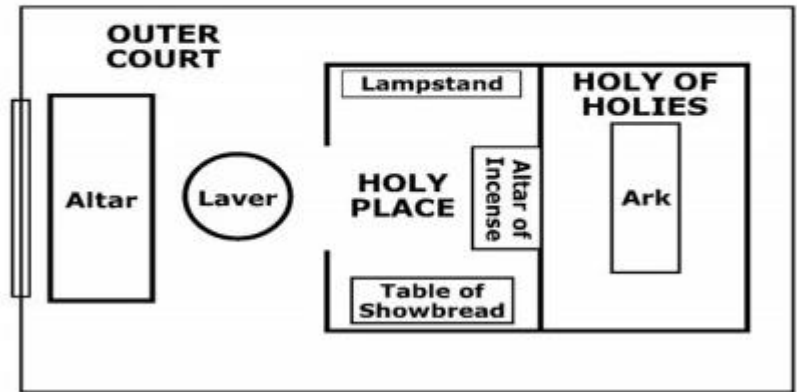
The Altar of Incense was located in the Holy Place in the Tabernacle and later the Temple on which incense was burned which gave off a fragrant aroma. It's smoke which lifted up heavenward was symbolic of the prayers of believers.



Altar of Incense

Old Testament Type & shadow

The Tabernacle Experience



Revelation 8:3-4 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.
4) And **the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.**

Giving is an act of worship. We worship when we give to the cause of Christ. When you cheerfully drop your offering into the offering plate, you have just done an act of worship and it is a fragrant aroma to God and it adds to your account with Him.

Prayer is also an act of worship and when we pray under the filling of the Holy Spirit, our prayers are a fragrant aroma to God just as the incense burned on the altar of incense symbolically illustrated in the O.T.

LESSON 176 (10-22-19)

Philippians 4:19 And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Although God's people are called to be diligent in ministering to their brothers and sisters in Christ, they sometimes fail. When others fail us, we should be glad that the Lord never fails us.

One of the best loved of all the psalms begins by reminding us that the Lord will supply for all our needs:

Psalms 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want

With the Lord as his shepherd, the psalmist (probably David) knew he would not lack anything he truly needed. The prophet Habakkuk discovered the same truth. He put it like this:

Habakkuk 3:17-19 Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls – 18) Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. 19) The Lord God is my strength; He will make

my feet like *deer's feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills.

The type of deer mentioned above refers to a fallow deer which is a doe. The name "fallow" is derived from the deer's pale brown color. The Hebrew name of the fallow deer, yachmur, comes from the Aramaic language, where chamra means "red" or "brown".

Agile and fast in case of danger, fallow deer can run at a maximum speed of 30 mph over short distances. Being naturally less muscular than other cervids such as roe deer, which are not as fast. Fallow deer can also make jumps up to (5.8 ft) high and up to (17 ft) in length.

*** A fallow deer or gazelle pictures strength, surefootedness, beauty, and speed. The comparison of this type of deer to Hubakkuk and other mature believers demonstrates that the Lord will keep us stable and spiritually strong no matter what lies before us. The key to maintaining joy in every circumstance is found in the first part of verse 19 - ***The Lord God is my strength.*****

King David quoted *Hab. 3:19* which is recorded in *2 Sam. 22:34* when he wrote a song which is very similar to *Psalms 18*.

Habakkuk did not state that he would merely endure in the hour of distress. He said he would rejoice in the LORD and be joyful. God is the inexhaustible source and infinite supply of joy... Far too many people keep trying to buy joy, but happiness is not found in circumstances. Joy is available to everyone, even to those stripped of every material

possession, for joy is to be found in a Person. It comes through an intimate and personal relationship with the Lord, so that even those in the worst circumstances can smile. The Bible Knowledge Commentary p. 1521

Nehemiah 9:15 "Thou didst provide bread from heaven for them for their hunger, Thou didst bring forth water from a rock for them for their thirst..."

Verse 19 should eradicate any concerns about not having enough for our own needs if we give generously to the Lord. It says ***my God SHALL*** (v. fai) ***supply ALL your needs...***

LESSON 177 (10-24-19)

And my God shall supply all your needs

shall supply - PLEROO, πληρόω, v. fai; ① to make full, fill (full), to provide for by supplying a complete amount—‘to provide for completely,

The indicative mood does not mean that God might supply, or sometimes will supply, or often supply, but will always supply for our needs. He will always meet not just some of our needs, or most of our needs, but all of our needs.

needs – CHREIA, χρεία, n. asf; ② that which is lacking and needed, need, lack, want, difficulty,

God often gives us the things we want that are non-essentials by His grace, but that does not mean that He is obligated to. Sometimes, He gives us what we need but which we don't desire to have. Testing and divine discipline would fall into this category and we should give Him thanks for these as well.

Abraham demonstrated the attitude we should have when we are in dire need of something. When he and Isaac were approaching the place where he was to sacrifice his son.

Genesis 22:7 And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8) Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

Abraham's wife, Sarah, demonstrated the same error as millions of believers continue to make, which is thinking of God as limited in what He can do.

Genesis 18:13-14 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?' 14) *Is anything too difficult for the LORD?* At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son."

Certainly, God is able to make up for the shortfall of funds when one gives to help others and to the Lord. And much more.

Psalms 41:1-3 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. How blessed is he who considers the helpless; The LORD will deliver him in a day of trouble. 2) The LORD will protect him, and keep him alive, And he shall be called blessed upon the earth; And do not give him over to the desire of his enemies. 3) The LORD will sustain him upon his sickbed; In his illness, Thou dost restore him to health.

Proverbs 19:17 He who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, And He will repay him for his good deed.

We should always be gracious to those who are less fortunate than we are because it is a win – win proposition. They are blessed by our help and we are blessed by God.

Psalm 112:5-7 It is well with the man who is gracious and lends; He will maintain his cause in judgment. 6) For he will never be shaken; The righteous will be remembered forever. 7) He will not fear evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

The context of our verse, verse 19, is to dispel any notion that giving to the Lord might result in not having enough resources in reserve in case unforeseen setbacks occur.

2 Corinthians 8:11-15 But now finish doing it also [collecting financial support]; that just as there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it **by your ability. 12) **For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have.** 13) **For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality--** 14) **at this present time your abundance being a supply for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want, that there may be equality;** 15) **as it is written, "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little had no lack."****

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 also supports the principle that giving generously to the Lord in no way jeopardizes a believer's financial standing to continue to give in the future.

LESSON 178 (10-29-19)

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 *Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. 7) Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8) **And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;** 9) as it is written, "He scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, His righteousness abides forever." 10) **Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness;** 11) **you will be enriched in everything for all liberality...***

God's sufficiency is always related to His character, specifically the *omni* characteristics: His omniscience knows every circumstance and situation in life, there is nothing that is hidden from God, he knows the innermost desires of our soul, and He is able to supply what we need. His omnipotence is able to do whatever is necessary to be done in order to fulfill the need, and because of His omnipresence, He is always present with us and always aware of our circumstances so that He can solve each and every problem.

King David wrote about God's faithfulness in the Psalms and in Proverbs:

Psalm 37:25 *I have been young, and now I am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Or his descendants begging bread.*

**Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the Lord with our possession,
And with the firstfruits of all your increase; So your barns
will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with
new wine.**

God supplies our need when we meet someone else's need.
It is impossible for us to out give God!

In the very beginning, notice what Satan asked Eve, "*Did God really say?*"

(NIV) **Genesis 3:1 ...And he said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"**

That was a trick question. Satan was suggesting that God was being unfair and withholding something from her that she needed. He really isn't the all sufficient God's who provides for all the needs of His children.

Genesis 3:2-3 And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3) but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it **or touch it, lest you die.'"**

Satan's trick question was working, Eve started to see herself as a victim by telling the lie that God told her and Adam that they would die if they even touched the tree.

Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!"

Now Satan, the father of lies, tells a lie to the woman who is ready to believe it because now she considers herself to be a victim because she thought God was unjust and dishonest with

her. She was motivated by self-pity and that is why she lied to the serpent.

Genesis 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Satan tells another whopper which he knew would ignite the arrogance and power lust within her. At this point, she had lied, had self-pity, was arrogant, probably angry, and had power lust. So what did she do?

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

She did what every person does when they doubt the sufficiency of God's gracious provision for them – she acted independently of God, she took matters into her own hands.

Satan thought that he had checkmated God, he had won the angelic conflict because God's experiment with restoring the earth and creating man to inhabit it blew up in his face. It was a colossal failure because Adam and the woman used their free will to sin just as he (Satan) did. So in his twisted mind, he was off the hook regarding the lake of fire because anyone given free will, will inevitably sin, so the one having it is not responsible for it.

God had to punish Adam and Eve for their sin or else He would be unjust and dishonest. The punishment was spiritual death which would mean eternal separation from God in the lake of fire. If the sentence was carried out Satan could boast that the experiment proved nothing, it was a failure.

BUT, there was something that Satan had not counted on, the unfathomable love and grace of God. He never expected that the Lord Himself would become a man and take on Himself the penalty of sin for mankind so that man could be saved by believing in His sacrifice. Satan was aced by grace.

God provides everything that we need in every circumstance. We need to know His Word, though. We need to know the promises He has given us; we need to understand His character.

The issue when we are doing without, is an opportunity to relax and show others that we know that God is still providing all that we need. It gives us a chance to show our trust in the sufficiency of His grace, His provision, and His power.

LESSON 179 (10-31-19)

We will not be able to relax and enjoy life if we don't settle in our own minds that God will provide for all our needs. If we question that, we will drift back into the MAS of doubt and worry.

We should have the attitude toward giving that the Philippians had. Read: **2 Corinthians 8:1--5**

Three Lessons ago (Lesson 176), **Habakkuk 3:17-18** was quoted to underscore the fact that believers can rejoice in the Lord under the direst circumstances.

I found something this morning that has bearing on this verse that you may find interesting:

Hancock, John (January 12, 1737–October 8, 1793), was an American merchant and Revolutionary leader. He was a graduate of Harvard, 1754, a member of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, 1766–72; and a member of the Continental Congress, 1774–78. He became well-known for being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. He was the Governor of Massachusetts, 1780–85, 1787–93.

On March 5, 1774, on the occasion of the Boston Massacre, John Hancock gave an oration in Boston, which was printed in five pamphlet editions and widely circulated:

Some boast of being “friends to government”: I am a friend to “righteous” government, to a government founded upon the principles of reason and justice....

I have the most animating confidence that the present noble struggle for liberty will terminate gloriously for America. And let us play the man for our GOD, and for the cities of our GOD; while we are using the means in our power, let us humbly commit our righteous cause to the great LORD of the universe, who loveth righteousness and hateth inequity.

—And having secured the approbation of our hearts, by a faithful and unwearied discharge of our duty to our country, let us joyfully leave her important concerns in the hands of HIM who raiseth up and putteth down empires and kingdoms of the world as HE pleases; and with cheerful submission to HIS sovereign will, devoutly say,

“Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet we will rejoice in the LORD, we will joy in the GOD of our salvation.”

[Then he quoted *the following verses*]

Habakkuk 3:17–18 “Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet we will rejoice in the LORD, we will joy in the GOD of our salvation.”

Peter also weighed in on the faithfulness of God in providing for all our needs:

2 Peter 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; 3) seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

Read: ***1 Chronicles 29:9-18***

according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

God gives according to the standard of what He has, which is simply everything; He has unlimited wealth and resources.

God will supply their need not "out of" his riches but "according to" his riches. God will supply riches in ratio to his personal

wealth. If I have two million dollars and you asked me for two hundred dollars and I gave you the two hundred, I would give out of my two million, not according to my two million. If I gave according to my wealth, I would give two thousand rather than two hundred. Grace Notes

Note the contrasts in this passage: You (the Philippians) met Paul's need; I (God) will meet *all* your needs. You (Philippians) supply out of very limited resources; I (God) supply out of my unlimited riches in glory. You supplied by the hand of Epaphroditus; I will supply by Christ. God administers his supply to the giver through Jesus Christ. This passage is a promise that God will reimburse you on a scale worthy of His capacity to give.

Some misguided individuals try to scam God's generosity by trying to bribe God with their contributions in order to receive great wealth, fame, power, etc. They don't give in order to show their gratitude or love to God like the Philippians did, they give in order to benefit themselves. Even if God gave them what they desire, it wouldn't make them happy because He, not what He gives, is the only source of happiness and joy.

Philippians 4:20* *Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

This doxology is Paul's praise in direct response to the great truth that God supplies all the needs of the saints. In a more general sense, this is praise in response to the character of God and His faithfulness. John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1829.

God is glorified in everything He says and does as well as for His nature and attributes. In this chapter, He is glorified for providing for all the needs of the Apostle Paul as well for the needs of the Philippian believers.

In both prosperity and adversity, there are opportunities for us glorify God by the power and grace He gives us through the Holy Spirit. No adversity is without opportunity to glorify God and all blessings are opportunities to magnify the greatness of God.

Philippians 4:21 Greet (v. amm) ***every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.***

Philippians 1:13-14 So that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14) and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

Certainly the brethren with Paul included Timothy and Epaphroditus (*Phil. 2:19, 25*). Others who were preaching the gospel in Rome were also included (*Phil. 1:14*).

Philippians 4:22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

Paul now sends his final greetings to the Philippians, from his fellow workers, and from other believers.

Caesar's household were probably those who Paul had given the gospel to as a result of his house arrest. They included soldiers and relatives of Caesar's household.

***23) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
Amen.***

Of course Paul concluded with his most wonderful desire for them which was the grace of the Lord to be with them.