

Sermons on Philippians-Brian Bell

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Philippians 1:1-18

9-14-97

1. Philippians Intro:

1.1. A Prison Epistle: Writing from a Rome jail. Almost 10 yrs. After his 1st trip to Philippi. The church is now established (ie. bishops & deacons).

1.2. 1st Trip: His 1st trip there was during his 2nd missionary journey. See Acts 16:12-40.

1.3. Type of Letter: Tender letter to a group of friends close to Paul's heart.

1.3.1. At 104 verses long, It is not a treatise on Theology, but a letter to a friend. - "He doesn't give an equation to analyze, but an emotion(Joy) to express!" (John Phillips)

1.4. Purpose of letter: To acknowledge a gift of \$ from this church.

1.5. Key verse: "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain!"

1.6. Key Word: "Joy" He writes to express Joy, & encourage Joy in his dear friends!

1.6.1. Q: What animal do you picture as being a happy animal? I picture the Otter: It's care free, swimmin, flippin, turnin, & churnin up the muddy waters bottom. Q: Ever see an Otter w/a worry?

1.6.2. Beavers look like they're worried. Shuffling about trying to get their dam built, their house built, workin, chewin, & shufflin about!

1.6.3. Take an Otter lock him up in a small pond at the zoo what does he do? - He's carefree, swimmin, flippin, & turnin, & churnin.

1.6.4. Paul's like our little Otter - He teaches us a lesson on Joy! {Even though this is where he got beaten up & imprisoned there in Philippi.}

1.6.5. "Joy is to be caught!" - It is said that as Benjamin Franklin concluded a stirring speech on the guarantees of the Constitution, a heckler shouted, "Aw, them words don't mean nothin' at all. Where's all the happiness you say it guarantees us?" Franklin smiled and replied, "My friend, the Constitution only guarantees the American people the right to pursue happiness; you have to catch it yourself." {Paul sure did!}

1.6.6. Uses Joy or Rejoice 16 times. It's used in all 4 chapters.

1.6.7. Kaufmann Kohler states in the Jewish Encyclopedia that no language has as many words for joy and rejoicing as does Hebrew. In the Old Testament thirteen Hebrew roots, found in twenty-seven different words, are used primarily for some aspect of joy or joyful participation in religious worship. The psalmist says, "Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fullness of joy, in thy right hand are pleasures forevermore". (Psalm 16:11)

1.6.8. A letter of Joy must have been written by someone sunbathing on the Mediterranean! No, from a Roman Prison.

1.6.9. Joy is to be found in something more than good feelings & comfortable settings. That something is someone...vs.21!

1.6.10. I think too many people took Isaiah Wrong when he said, "I have set my face like a flint."(50:7)

1.6.11. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers."

Robert Louis Stevenson once entered in his diary, as if he was recording an extraordinary phenomenon, "I have been to Church today, and am not depressed."

2. The Prisoner Paul! (Phil 1:1-8)

2.1. Phil 1:1a - From Paul: What memories that must have evoked for the believers hearing this letter read in Philippi!

2.1.1. Esp. Lydia - "It was the Sabbath, we were down at the Riverside praying, when 4 men walked up (Luke, Silas, Timothy, & a man named Paul). When he spoke of Jesus as the Messiah, myself & my family responded & even got baptized then & there.

2.1.2. A Poor Slave-girl - also would have been thrilled to here from Paul who broke her enslavement to an evil spirit, & a group of masters who made merchandise of her.

2.1.3. Also, The Roman Jailer - & his wife & kids. Never had this jailer seen a man, after he had been stripped, beaten w/rods, & feet stuck in stocks, to respond by singing & praising God!

2.1.4. Many a people who were touched by Paul were glad to here from the great Apostle....their...Paul!

2.2. Phil 1:1b - "Timothy" - (1/2 Jew, 1/2 Gentile,...yet wholly Christian!

2.2.1. Ran Paul's errands, arranged meetings, took care of details to lighten the Apostles load.

2.3. Phil 1:1c - "servant" doesn't need to say Apostle...he's writing to friends, not clearing up doctrine! {Paul uses doulos 30 times in his epistles}

2.4. Phil 1:1d - "saints" - There are only 2 categories of humans...sinners & saints(saints are simply saved sinners!)

2.5. Phil 1:2 - "our Father" - Strange concept for Jew & Gentile alike.

2.5.1. Greeks had Zeus/lustful & vengeful; Syrians gods were carnal & cruel; Egyptians were everything from the Sun to the sunfish, cows to crocodiles; The pagan religions saw God as Mother but never as "Father!" {a good, loving, gracious, parental, & intimate Father}

2.6. Phil 1:3 - Q: Do you remember the Christians you've met in different places?(Rossen, Vessela, Russain farmer, Japanese believers, P.I. 9 yr. Old w/goosey stuff & cheetos) Q: Do you remember them in prayer?

2.7. Phil 1:4,5 - You could lock Paul up, but like the Otter...he's still gonna swim! (Paul prayers break out of the prison doors & fly to the throne room unhindered!!!)

2.8. "Joy" - Paul did this as a want to, not a have to!

2.8.1. Paul couldn't say this for everyone...some he made request w/tears instead of joy for them!

2.9. Phil 1:6 - Here is a good example of Jesus as our "Alpha & Omega"!

2.9.1. How sad for the Christians who depend wholly on themselves!

2.10. Phil 1:7 - This was no light weight thing for the Philippian's yoking themselves with an "insurrectionist"!

2.10.1. Rome didn't look favorably upon insurrectionist! Paul proclaimed an advent of a kingdom other than Rome, & a King greater than the Caesar!

2.11. Phil 1:8 - A wave of home sickness comes over Paul - oh to be able to say, "come on Timothy lets pack our bags & head to Philippi!"

3. The Prisoners Prayers! (Phil 1:9-11)

3.1. "Love" - No one has simplified it better than Anna B. Warner put it... "Jesus Loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so!"

3.1.1. There is no greater definition for Love than in 1 Cor.13.

3.1.2. There is no greater truth than "God is Love"!

3.1.3. Love is a theme that is not only important here, but will continue on as the main theme in heaven!

3.2. Phil 1:9b - many have knowledge but lack discernment!

3.3. Phil 1:10 - It's possible to be wrong but sincere;

It's also possible to be right but insincere!

3.3.1. The 1st is deceived; the 2nd is playing games!

3.3.2. Being wrong but Sincere seems only to be acceptable in Religion?? {what would you think of the sincere pharmacist who gave you a deadly drug instead of your prescription?}

3.3.3. Now,to be right but insincere is the life of the hypocrit.

3.4. Phil 1:10b - "Sincere" - "tested by sunlight".

3.4.1. After the Rapture we'll appear before the Beema seat judgment. Jesus will test our works with His perfect Light & the precious stones will shine forth, the other stubble will burn. {order: Rapture, Review, Rebuke(for some), & Reward.}

3.5. Phil 1:11 - "Rt." - The world asks, "Is this that I want to do...popular?"

Or, "Will it make me feel better? Is it politically correct?"

The Christian must ask, "Is it right?" "Is it Biblically correct?"

3.6. Phil 1:11b - "...which are by Jesus Christ" - People can live normally "good" lives on a human level.

3.6.1. They can pay their bills, give to charity, help their neighbors, honor their commitments, abide by the law, even go to church!

3.6.2. The difference lies in Means & Motives! {Christian goodness is not a matter of Degree, but of Kind!}

3.6.3. A Christian's righteousness will exceed that of the Scribes & Pharisees. (Mt. 5:20). Not necessarily in quantity but in quality!

3.6.3.1. The difference is the means, it is "...by Jesus Christ!"

3.6.4. "The means of our goodness is not our own effort to copy His life, but His living in us!" (Swindoll) {It is supernatural, it is the result of a Spirit-filled life!}

3.6.5. It's different. Its Motive - Our Motivation is "The Glory & Praise of God!"

3.7. End: Paul's prayer was that they would be Sound in Doctrine; Sincere in Devotion; & Spirit-filled in their Dedication to Jesus!

4. The Prisoners: Purpose/Plan/Productivity/& Preaching! (Phil 1:12-18)

4.1. Purpose! (Phil 1:12)

4.2. vs.12 - Paul's #1 purpose in life, "The furtherance of the Gospel!"

4.3. Plan! (13)

4.4. vs.13 - Paul at one time wanted to go to Rome by Storm (Rome was the epicenter of the known world)!

4.4.1. Rom 1:13 "Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles."

4.4.2. A lesser man would have questioned God's way's. - But Paul saw his chains "Divinely Planned!" {His chains were a challenge, not chastisement!}

4.4.3. If he could not go to them, they could still come to him. He could write, pray, sing, & evangelize there.

4.4.4. And, though his palace was a prison, he had greater power than any Caesar!

4.5. Productivity! (Phil 1:13,14)

4.6. Q: Do you think Caesar's Elite Guards would come to hear this Jewish missionary? Not likely!

4.7. But by: praying, singing hymns, hearing him dictate his letters, conferences w/other Christians, talks w/other prisoners, ... the guards listened!

4.8. vs.14 - "...more bold" - "The Israelites have removed the word "Forward" from their military vocabulary, & replaced it with, "Follow me". {These officers are only chosen from those who served as a commando or paratrooper. "Leaders are those who have taken the 1st step!" {Paul was that type of leader!}

4.8.1. They developed boldness because of Paul's boldness. Enthusiasm begets Enthusiasm, Zeal begets zeal!

4.9. Preaching! (Phil 1:15-18)

4.10. "Not sincerely" - a precious metal mined with a basic alloy!

4.10.1. "These miners were mining the pure gold of the gospel, w/the alloy of their jealousy.

4.10.2. Maybe they thought that their success would irritate Paul? (they were free to preach while Paul was incarcerated) {How little his rivals knew him!}

4.10.3. He ignores them...no he prays for them! What a big man Paul was!

4.11. Phil 1:18 - Paul could not applaud their motive only their motion of the gospel...it was going forward!

4.11.1. Paul was not applauding false doctrine...no way!

4.11.2. Q: Are you big enough to see God using a preacher who's decked in gold? Prancing the stage like a Peacock? Sweating even his jacket? Those preachers who have to put an "a" at the end of every word!

4.11.2.1. Maybe you see them building an empire for themselves. Some seem to not have a real conviction opening their arms too wide embracing all.

4.11.2.2. Schuller 2 weeks ago - Gave a near perfect gospel invitation at the end of his message. (besides 1 comment that God wants all to prosper) Dealt plainly with sin!

4.11.2.3. {Though I don't like his robes, his voice, his smile, is incorrect in his views on prosperity & positive thinking, is it possible God uses his gospel for some to come to salvation?}

4.12. Q: Would you have used Balaam to convey a divine message for you? God did! Q: Would you have used Caiaphas (the puppet priest) as a prophet? God did! Q: Would you have used Jonah who had a miserable unforgiving spirit, bitter, narrow minded, & prejudice? God did! Q: Would you have blessed any of the Psalms David wrote after his adultery & murder? God did!

4.13. Paul had a single passion...The Gospel!

4.13.1. He focused on Preaching not on the Preacher!

4.14. "I rejoice!" - Q: What makes you Joyful?

4.14.1. (Spurg) "Joy on the face is the result of the shining reflection of God in our hearts!" There are more flies caught with

honey than with vinegar, and there will be more souls led to heaven by a man who wears heaven in his face than by one who bears death in his looks."(Spurg)

5. End:

5.1. Joy always under construction! Most of us have experienced what happens to motorists when one of those huge graders goes to work on a highway repair job. when the machine is operating on a busy road, traffic is halted and the cars lined up in opposite directions are allowed to proceed alternately. - A veteran operator of one of those big machines decided one day to try to relieve the tension that inevitably results from such a traffic backup. Consequently on both the front and rear of his grader a sign now appears, declaring, "The Road to Happiness is Almost Always Under Construction."

5.2. Jn.16:22 "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

Philippians 1:1-18

I. INTRO:

1. Poem: One ship drives east & another drives west, With the selfsame winds that blow. Tis the set of the sails, And not the gales, Which tells us the way to go. [Ella Wheeler Wilcox]

1. Paul understood that joy doesn't depend upon circumstances, people, possessions, or worries. (ch.1,2,3,4)

2. It is an attitude that's determined by confidence in God.

1. It's this confidence in God that guided him like an inner compass, which always kept him on joy's course...regardless of the storms that blew.

3. Q: Do you have that same inner confidence guiding you?

1. Let Paul teach us how to put our confidence in God & set our sails for joy!

2. Book Overview: With Christ as our model of humility & service, you can enjoy a oneness of purpose, attitude, goal, & labor as a church.

1. Philippi is 1st church Paul founded in Macedonia. He's writing almost 10 years after 1st trip to Philippi. The church is now established(elders & deacons).

2. It's a tender letter to a group of friends close to Paul(not a theological treatise).

3. Purpose of letter: To acknowledge a \$ gift from this church (sent Epaphroditus)

1. A very generous church! Celebrates generosity. [1 of our Core Values: Stewardship]

4. Key verse: "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain!"

5. Key word: Joy! (16x's joy/rejoice)

1. He writes to express joy & encourage joy in his dear friends.

2. Kaufmann Kohler states in the Jewish Encyclopedia that no language has as many words for joy and rejoicing as does Hebrew. In the OT 13 Hebrew roots, found in 27 different words, are used primarily for some aspect of joy or joyful participation in religious worship.

1. The psalmist says, Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fullness of joy, in thy right hand are pleasures forevermore (16:11)

3. A letter of Joy must have been written by someone sunbathing on the Mediterranean right? No, from a Roman Prison.

4. Joy is to be found in something more than good feelings & comfortable settings.

1. That something is someone! (21) [Oh, Jesus Christ is found 18x's in ch1 alone]

II. I HAVE YOU IN MY HEART!

1. THANKING! (Phil 1:1-8)

2. (1) So when the Philippians broke open the seal, the 1st word they read was their beloved apostle's name..."Paul!"

1. He was to those 1st century Philippians,...

What Luther was to the German Christians in the 16th century. What Lincoln was to the African Americans in the 19th century. What Churchill was to the British in the 20th century...A respected leader, teacher, & friend.

3. (Phil 1:3) Thanksgiving - Idea! A practical suggestion to help you cultivate the art of thanksgiving in your family.

1. Have each member of the family contribute once a month by writing down things they feel especially thankful for. Then on Thanksgiving, make it a tradition to have everyone read what they've written & give thanks together as a family. (Chuck Swindoll)

4. (Phil 1:6) Good example of Jesus being our Alpha & Omega!

1. How sad when Christians depend wholly on themselves!

5. PRAYING! (Phil 1:9-11)

6. This is one of Paul's prison prayers.

1. Prison may cut off a man from men, but not from God! :)

2. Paul's prison privations did not damp his faith, nor dull his hope, nor dim his love. (Awake My Heart; Baxter)
7. (Phil 1:9) That your love - No one has simplified it better than Anna B. Warner...Jesus loves me this I know, for the bible tells me so!
 8. (Phil 1:9b) Many have knowledge, but lack discernment.
 1. To guide their love, Paul prays for 2 things: Full & complete knowledge on 1 side & a keen awareness of right & wrong on the other.
 9. (Phil 1:10) It's possible to be wrong but sincere; It's also possible to be right but insincere!
 1. The 1st is deceived; the 2nd is playing games!
 2. Being wrong but sincere seems only to be acceptable in Religion???
 1. What would you think of the sincere pharmacist who gave you a deadly drug instead of your prescription?
 3. To be right but insincere is the life of the hypocrite.
 4. Sincere = tested by sunlight. (folk etymology, w/o wax used to cover statue flaws)
 10. (Phil 1:11) Righteousness(right) - The world asks, "Is it popular?" "Will it make me feel better?" Or, Is it politically correct?"
 1. The Christian must ask, "Is it right?" "Is it biblically correct?"
 11. (Phil 1:11b) Which are by Jesus Christ - People can live normally good lives on a human level.
 1. They can: "pay their bills, give to charity, help their neighbors, honor their commitments, abide by the law, even go to church!"
 2. The difference lies in both Means & Motives!
 1. Christian goodness is not a matter of Degree, but of Kind!
 3. A Christians righteousness will exceed that of the Scribes & Phar's. (Mt. 5:20).
 1. Not necessarily in quantity but in quality!
 2. The difference is the Means. It is...by Jesus Christ!
 1. The means of our goodness is not our own effort to copy His life, but His living in us! (swindoll)
 2. It is supernatural, it is the result of a spirit filled life!
 3. It's difference is the Motive. Our Motivation is The Glory & Praise of God!
 12. Poem [2nd Stanza]: Like the winds of the sea are the ways of fate(?), As we voyage along through life: Tis the set of a soul That decides its goal, And not the calm or the strife. [Ella Wheeler Wilcox]
 13. As you prepare to launch into the calm & strife of your day, set the course of your soul according to these 3 guiding principles from Paul: [Swindoll]
 1. 1st, Confidence brings joy when you focus on the things for which you're thankful! (3)
 2. 2nd, Confidence brings joy when you let God be God! (6)
 3. 3rd, Confidence brings joy when you keep love within its proper limits! (9)
 14. Declaration of Independence: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.
 1. If it's our unalienable(can't take away) right to pursue Happiness...why have so few found it? - Maybe because of the word pursuit? It suggests it's outside of us, somewhere "out there" needing to be discovered or caught.
 1. But it doesn't come from without but from within!
 2. It comes not from outward circumstances but from an inner mind-set.
 3. Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl wrote, "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."
 15. Memorize Phil.4:8 Think of the mind like a bank that regularly receives deposits.
 1. By depositing the kinds of thoughts mentioned in Phil.4:8, we build up & draw on a rich account that will constantly yield a high dividend called joy!
 16. PREACHING! (Phil 1:12-18)
 17. (Phil 1:16) Not sincerely - a precious metal mined with a basic alloy!
 1. These miners were mining the pure gold of the gospel, w/the alloy of their jealousy.
 18. (Phil 1:18) Sometimes you can't applaud their motive, but you only their motion...the gospel was moving forward!
 1. Q: Are you big enough to see God can use a preacher who's decked in gold? Prancing the stage like a Peacock? Sweating his jacket crazy wet? Those preachers who have to put an "a" at the end of every word!
 2. Maybe you see them building an empire for themselves. Some seem to not have a real conviction, opening their arms too wide embracing all.
 3. I once heard Robert Schuller give a near perfect gospel invitation at the end of his message. (besides 1 comment that God wants all to prosper) Dealt plainly with sin!
 1. Though I don't like his robes, his voice, his smile, his views on prosperity & positive thinking, is it possible God uses his gospel for some to come to salvation?
 19. Read what Paul wrote in Galatians 1:6-9.
 1. To the Galatians he says, "let em be accursed" to Philippians he says, "so what?" - One condemnation, the

other indifference! {Contradictory???

2. Nope! To the Galatians he was denouncing those who garble the gospel of grace into a message of works...Anathema!!!

1. To the philippians, he's rejoicing that despite the impure motives of some, the good news of Jesus Christ is still being proclaimed accurately.

2. The message matters most, not the messenger!

20. Q: Would you have used Balaam to convey a divine message for you? God did!

Q: Would you have used Caiaphas (the puppet priest) as as prophet? God did!

Q: Would you have used Jonah who had a miserable unforgiving spirit, bitter, narrow minded, & prejudice? God did!

Q: Would you have blessed any of David's Psalms after his adultery/murder? God did!

21. Paul had a single passion...The Gospel!

1. He focused on Preaching not on the Preacher!

22. I rejoice, & will continue to rejoice - Q: What makes you Joyful?

1. (Spurgeon) Joy on the face is the result of the shining reflection of God in our hearts! There are more flies caught with honey than with vinegar, and there will be more souls led to heaven by a man who wears heaven in his face than by one who bears death in his looks.

23. End: Joy always under construction!

1. Most of us have experienced what happens to motorists when one of those huge graders goes to work on a highway repair job. When the machine is operating on a busy road, traffic is halted and the cars lined up in opposite directions are allowed to proceed alternately. A veteran operator of one of those big machines decided one day to try to relieve the tension that inevitably results from such a traffic backup. Consequently on both the front and rear of his grader a sign now appears, declaring, "The Road to Happiness is Almost Always Under Construction."

1. Jn.16:22 Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you!

2. "The Road to Happiness is Almost Always Under Construction."

Philippians 1:19-30

9-21-97

1. Intro:

1.1. Ever find yourself on the "horns of a dilemma"?

1.2. Dilemma's are predicaments that are not resolved w/a simple right or wrong! - Dilemma's always have advantages & disadvantages looming on both sides. - Dilemma's put us between a "rock & a hard place"!

1.2.1. 3 types of dilemma's: (Swindoll)

1.2.2. [1] Volitional Dilemma - When we want to do 2 different things @ the same time. {e.g. finish schooling & stay @ your job.}

1.2.3. [2] Emotional Dilemma - When we have conflicting feelings about a difficult situation {e.g. pet contracts a painful disease/let die naturally or "the shot"}

1.2.4. [3] Geographical Dilemma - When we desire to be in 2 different places @ the same time. {e.g. Better job far away/ But family & friends, & church, & ministry are great here}

1.2.5. Paul runs into a "rock & a hard place" dilemma, 1 that is not only geographical, but intensely emotional, & volitional as well! (23,24)

1.3. Outline/2 Parts:

Part 1 "Paul's Priorities" - [1] He put Christ 1st(19-21) [2] He put others 2nd(22-25) [3] He put Himself last(26).

Part 2 "The Philippians Conduct" - [1] Striving together [2] Not frightened by your enemy [3] Suffering for His sake.

2. Paul's Priorities/HE PUT CHRIST 1st (Phil 1:19-21)

2.1. Phil 1:19 - "Deliverance"? - From Rome's imprisonment? Or, the ultimate deliverance...from this life?

2.2. Phil 1:20 - Paul's life was in danger if he lost the trial, he could be killed as an enemy of Rome.

2.2.1. No self pity here! - Because for Paul the most imp. thing in this life wasn't his plans & his personal comfort, it was exalting Jesus!

2.2.2. When Christ is your life...death is not your enemy!

And! You have the assurance of being w/Christ when life ends!

2.3. "earnest expectation" - (apokaradokia - apoka-ratho-kia) 12 letters!

2.3.1. It is the compound of 3 words: "away/head/to watch"

2.3.2. It means: "Watching something w/the head turned away from other objects. {1 other place, Rom.8:19}

2.4. Phil 1:21 - "gain" = unshackled & free!

2.4.1. "To die is gain!" - Isaac Asimov tells the story of a rough ocean crossing during which a Mr. Jones became terribly seasick. At an especially rough time, a kindly steward patted Jones on the shoulder and said, "I know, sir, that it seems awful. But remember, no man ever died of sea-sickness." Mr. Jones lifted his green countenance to the steward's concerned face and replied, "Man, don't say that! It's only the wonderful hope of dying that keeps me alive."

2.5. Do you fear Death...or Dying?

2.5.1. Many people say they do not fear death, but the process of dying. It's not the destination, but the trip that they dread. John Newton, a one-time slave trader, was converted and became a great preacher and hymn writer in the Church of England. Two years before his death, in 1807, he was so weak that he could hardly stand in his pulpit; someone had to support him as he preached. Shortly before he died, when he was confined to his room and unable to move, he told a friend, "I am like a person going on a journey in a stagecoach, who expects its arrival every hour and is frequently looking out of the window for it -- I am packed and sealed, and ready for the post." {Newton wrote "Amazing grace"}

2.6. Different translations of:

Liv. Bib. - "For to me, living means opportunities for Christ, & dying - well, that's simply better yet!"

Phillips - "For living to me means simply Christ, & if I die I should merely gain more of Him."

GNB - "For what is life ? To me, it is Christ. Death then will bring more."

2.7. Q: What's your motto?

"For to me, to live is money,...& to die is to leave it all behind."

"For to me, to live is fame,...& to die is to be forgotten."

"For to me, to live is power,...& to die is to lose it all."

"For to me, to live is possessions,...& to die is to take none of them w/me."

2.8. Here's a paradoxical truth: "I will never be Happy if I am concerned primarily w/becoming Happy!" {it was Paul's goal to please God at every moment 2 Cor.5:9 "Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him."}

2.9. "Fear not that your life shall come to an end,
but rather that it shall never have a beginning."

2.10. Vs.21 is the epitome of "Contentment"!

2.10.1. Longfellow on contentment said, "For after all, the best thing one can do when it's raining is to let it rain."

2.10.2. An Arabian Proverb says, "Better a handful of dry dates and content therewith, than to own the Gate of Peacocks and be kicked in the eye by a broody camel." [Broody =a mare kept for breeding]

2.10.3. Another said, "A contented man is the one who enjoys the scenery... along the detours!"

3. HE PUT OTHERS 2nd (Phil 1:22-26)

3.1. Paul says I don't know which one to choose?

3.2. As w/all Dilemma's both sides of the issue have Benefits & Liabilities!

3.2.1. A missionary organization has as its logo an Ox & a Plow on one side; & an Altar on the other. The inscription reads, "Ready for either"...That was Paul's Motto!

3.3. Let's look at both of his options.

3.4. Option #1 - TO DEPART!

3.5. BENEFITS - [1] To be instantly w/Christ [2] Being free from pain & the frustrations of this world(ie. no more stonings, beatings, imprisonment's, & thorns' in the flesh) [3] No more living in constant danger [4] No more hunger & thirst [5] No more sleepless nights & hardships [6] Being in a place of perfection [7] Being in the very presence of God!

3.6. LIABILITIES - [1] Absent from those who needed him [2] The Philippians were his sp. children, to leave them was like a father abandoning his children. [3] He no longer would be a witness to the Roman guards & the prisoners [4] The infant church would be short a great champion of the truth.

3.7. Option #2 - TO REMAIN!

3.8. BENEFITS - [1] He could continue to nurture the Phil.'s growth & maturity in the Lord. [2] His writing ministry could continue, bringing God's grace & truth to countless generations he would never see.

3.9. LIABILITIES - [1] Remained chained in Rome, instead of going home to heaven.

3.10. Paul's #1 desire? - Heaven... "which is Far better!"

3.11. His Choice? - Though he badly wants to be w/Christ, he chooses to stay instead. He selflessly places their needs above his own desires.

3.11.1. "The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit." {Nelson Henderson}

4. HE PUT HIMSELF LAST

4.1. His body was not his own; his future was not his own; his business was not his own; & his life was not his own.

4.1.1. "After crosses and losses, men grow humbler and wiser." {Benjamin Franklin}

5. The Philippians Conduct/STRIVING TOGETHER (Phil 1:27)

5.1. "Our Conduct" - There should be about our behavior/lifestyle an attention to our WHOLE life. {Paul Harvey said, "If you don't live it, you don't believe it!"}

5.1.1. In our speech(guys!), how we dress(ladies!)[not prudish, yet modest], in our actions & reactions, ...all of our lifestyle.

5.1.2. Holy has the same root as wholly, it means complete. A man is not complete in spiritual stature if all his mind, heart, soul, and strength are not given to God. (R. J. Stewart)

5.1.3. Someone once asked Gandhi, "What is the greatest hindrance to Christian missions in India?" Gandhi replied, "Christians!"

5.1.4. The Indians have a wonderful saying: "When you were born, you cried, and the world rejoiced. Live your life in such a manner that when you die, the world cries, and you rejoice.

5.2. Paul spiritually challenges them to 2 things: 1st - "Stand Fast" in spirit & mind in 2 different aspects:

5.2.1. [1] Among themselves - There should be unity & harmony {ie. striving together(27)}

5.2.2. [2] Before others - They should exhibit this solidarity & courage in striving together for the gospel(28).

5.2.2.1. Striving - as in an athletic contest (rwp) {1 time used, sunathleo}

5.2.2.2. The Philippians have seen Paul fight the good fight of faith by the sweat of his brow,...now he exhorts them to do the same.

5.3. Now Paul challenges them to Not be alarmed by their opponents(28).

6. NOT TERRIFIED BY YOUR ENEMY (Phil 1:28)

6.1. NKJV = Terrified; NIV = Frightened; NASB = Alarmed.

6.1.1. The metaphor is of a timid or scared horse (ie. not startled in anything)

6.2. As conflicts arise there is no reason to be shy or hesitant...here's why!

6.2.1. [1] They're not Alone(Phil 1:27) - They were to strive together. They'd have friends by their side.

6.2.2. [2] The Victory was theirs(Phil 1:28) - Further explained in 2 Thes.1:5-10.

6.2.3. [3] God granted them to Suffer for Him(Phil 1:29) - Don't let suffering catch you off guard; rather prepare for suffering by expecting it!

6.2.4. [4] Any conflicts you'll face, I've faced!(Phil 1:30) - Sometimes it helps just knowing that someone else has already been thru what you're currently experiencing.

6.2.4.1. Read - 2 Cor.1:3-6

7. SUFFERING FOR HIS SAKE (Phil 1:29,30)

7.1. "The pruning maybe uncomfortable now, but in the future you'll see succulent fruit so heavy your branches will reach the ground."

8. End:

8.1. In making Right Decisions in the midst of a dilemma! Remember to: [1] Rethink your priorities [2]Reconsider the imp. of Christ in your life

8.2. Q: Do you find yourself in a hard pressed Dilemma? In between a rock & a hard place?

8.2.1. Your decision won't be easy, but remember your Priorities.

8.2.1.1. Usually we see our priorities this way "God-marriage-family-work-etc."

8.2.1.2. Yes we should put "God" on the top, but he also should be put 1st in everything (ie. God - God in my marriage -

God in my family - God in my work - God in...)

8.2.2. Write down your Dilemma _____

8.2.2.1. Then Alternative #1 _____

8.2.2.1.1. Benefits -

8.2.2.1.2. Liabilities -

8.2.2.2. Alternative #2 _____

8.2.2.2.1. Benefits -

8.2.2.2.2. Liabilities -

8.2.3. Fill this out & show it to the Lord & ask Him for wisdom, discernment, & direction.

8.2.4. Then, show it to someone godly you respect.

8.3. Have you faced your future?

8.3.1. Seneca called Death, "The Birthday of your Eternity!"

8.3.2. "If your not ready to die, your not ready to live!"

8.3.3. One man while dying said to his son, "Leonard, There's nothing to dying, its the living that matters!"

8.3.4. "For to me, to live is Christ, & to die is gain." "To live w/o Christ is to die w/o Christ!"

8.3.5. Be near me, Lord, when dying; O show thy cross to me; And, for my succour flying, Come, Lord to set me free; These eyes, new faith receiving, From thee shall never move; For he who dies believing Dies safely through thy love. Bernard Of Clairvaux (1090-1153)

Philippians 1:19-30

I. INTRO:

1. Story: "Flower Mix-up". A bank in Binghamton, NY had some flowers sent to a competitor who had recently moved into a new building. There was a mixup at the flower shop, and the card sent with the arrangement read, "With our deepest sympathy." The florist, who was greatly embarrassed, apologized. But he was even more embarrassed when he realized that the card intended for the bank was attached to a floral arrangement sent to a funeral home in honor of a deceased person. That card read, "Congratulations on your new location!"

2. What's your attitude to life? What's your attitude regarding dying? Why is it that you want to stay here? Why do you want to depart?

1. So often our answer is so skewed:

1. I'm not ready to die, I don't want to miss out on _____ (marriage/kids/see how u'd turn out)

2. I don't want to continue to live, I want to get away from _____ (bills, debt, relationship)

3. Paul is in prison & is facing possible death. So, he's not just saying these words, it is what he is really facing.

II. TO LIVE IS CHRIST!

1. DILEMMA! (19-23)

2. (Phil 1:20) My earnest expectation - The word is composed of the preposition away, the noun head, & the verb to watch. And indicates watching something with the head turned away from other objects (Vincent)

1. It indicates the concentrated intense hope which ignores other interests & strains forward as with outstretched head. (LKGNT)

2. So much so that...Christ will be magnified in my body...dead or alive!

3. (Phil 1:21) Other Translations:

1. (NLT) For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better.

2. (Message) Alive, I'm Christ's messenger; dead, I'm his bounty. Life versus even more life! I can't lose.

3. Phillips For living to me means simply 'Christ,' & if I die I should merely gain more of Him.

4. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Mt.13:45,46)

1. Jesus is our Pearl of great price, for whom we are willing to part with all that we have.

5. Let us be like the oxen which stands between the plough & the altar, to work or to be sacrificed; & let our motto be, "Ready For Either!"

6. When Christ is your life, death is not your enemy.

7. For Paul, life was Christ! (or Christ Himself) [Centrality of Christ!]

1. Before his conversion he was the center of his own world. A world in which God was a part.

1. A world in which, to climb to its top, each rung was based upon his own righteousness, or how well he as performed.

His God hung on a great carrot stick in the sky.

2. But when his conversion came on the road to Damascus, his conversion was a revolution.

1. Paul was no longer the center of his universe. Christ was.

2. Paul knew he was held in such esteem by Christ...I have been crucified with Christ; 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 gave Himself for me. Gal.2:20

1. What Paul knew, "Jesus loved Paul, Jesus died for Paul".

3. For Paul, death was simply much more of Christ...It was gain!

8. For Paul, death was gain!

1. It is a release from earthly troubles for sure; it means a re-union with other Christians loved ones; it means reward for present service rendered to our Master; & it means realization of all our highest, truest, & dearest longings.

9. Some might read it this way instead:

1. For to me, to live is money, & to die is to leave it all behind!

2. For to me, to live is popularity, & to die is to be forgotten!

3. For to me, to live is power, & to die is to lose it all!

4. For to me, to live is possessions, & to die is to take none of them with me!

10. (Phil 1:22,23) To live on - To remain in this life would result in additional fruit.

11. To depart - To depart this life would mean being with Christ.

12. (Phil 1:23) Hard-pressed - I'm pressed in a corner between 2 strong desires.

1. Caught between a rock & a hard place!

13. Be with Christ, which is far better - That is the central fact which makes death gain to the believer.

1. To depart from this life here, is to be with Christ!

1. All other aspects of the gain are subsidiary/secondary to that, & are included in it.

2. We always quote Rev.21:4 & miss what's most important in vs.3!!! (read)

14. DECISION! (Phil 1:24-26)

15. His decision...he will remain. And he was the apostle which once enjoyed the unique experience being caught up to the 3rd heaven. (got a taste of glory)

1. 3rd heaven = (1) where birds fly, the firmament; (2) the starry heavens; (3) the heaven of heavens, God's throne.

16. He will remain - Paul recognized he must not selfishly seek to desert the duties which God had given him.

17. REQUEST! (Phil 1:27,28)

18. Change of tone & change of direction (Phil 1:27-2:12)

1. Paul moves from information to exhortation.

2. Whatever happens to him, the Philippians were to continue conducting themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel.

19. (27) Your conduct - He calls the church to appropriate conduct.

20. (27b) A unified stand & unified minds would be the best witness to the world for the gospel. Especially if they stood strong through the sufferings they were to endure(29).

21. (28) Terrified - to frighten, to startle, to terrify.

1. The metaphor is from a timid horse (Lightfoot; LKGNT).

2. Perhaps an allusion to Cassius who at the battle of Philippi committed suicide at the fear of defeat. [In Dante's Inferno, Cassius is one of 3 people deemed sinful enough to be chewed in 1 of the 3 mouths of Satan, in the very center of Hell, for all eternity, as a punishment for killing Julius Caesar(instigated the plot) The other 2, Brutus & Judas Iscariot]

3. So Paul is saying even if you're faced with death, "don't be like a timid horse or a wimp like Cassius."

1. Have unflinchable steadfastness, even in the face of persecution!

22. REMINDER! (Phil 1:29,30)

23. 2 wonderful privileges: To believe/trust in Christ & To suffer for Christ.

1. God is honored by both.

24. God runs a costly school, for many of his lessons are learned through tears! (Streams In The Desert; Sept.2; pg.335)

1. Soon school will close for us, the end of our school term is closer everyday.

2. Don't run from difficult lessons; Don't flinch from the rod of discipline.

3. Cheerfully endure to the end, then we will graduate in glory.

4. Paul's life was a model of suffering.

1. Suffering: confirms the believers faith; brings him/her in closer contact w/the Lord; & provides a vehicle for making commitment real & tangible.

25. The world's finest china is fired in ovens at least 3 times & some many more.

1. The famous Dresden china is always fired 3 times.

1. Why so many times with such intense heat? This makes the colors brighter, more beautiful, & permanently attached.

2. Metal bends best when softened w/fire. Marble takes shape only under the splintering blows of a chisel. Wood, with the

abrasive scrape of sandpaper. (Swindoll)

3. We are fashioned after the same principle!

1. The human trials of life are burned into us numerous times, & through God's grace, beautiful colors are formed in us & made to shine forever!

26. The 18th-century Bible commentator Matthew Henry expressed this confidence in words he hoped would be read after his death by anyone who might unduly mourn his passing. He wrote: Would you like to know where I am? I am at home in my Father's house, in the mansions prepared for me here. I am where I want to be - no longer on the stormy sea, but in God's safe, quiet harbor. My sowing time is done and I am reaping; my joy is as the joy of harvest. Would you like to know what I am doing? I see God, not as through a glass darkly, but face to face. I am engaged in the sweet enjoyment of my precious Redeemer. I am singing hallelujahs to Him who sits upon the throne, and I am constantly praising Him. Would you know what blessed company I keep? It is better than the best on earth. Here are the holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. I am with many of my old acquaintances with whom I worked and prayed, and who have come here before me. Lastly, would you know how long this will continue? It is a dawn that never fades! After millions and millions of ages, it will be as fresh as it is now. Therefore, weep not for me! (Our Daily Bread, Sunday, May 27)

Philippians 2:1-11

9-28-97

1. INTRO:

1.1. Last Chapter - Good Ol Paul: Lock him up in prison - & he'll win his jailers to Christ & write letters that will influence the thinking millions for ages to come! Set him free - & he'll win whole continents to Christ! Kill him - & he'll win a martyr's crown! (Phillips)

1.2. This Chapter - Paul's goal here is Unity for the Philippian church.

1.2.1. To get Unity you need Humility! To get Humility, you need an Example...the best example is Jesus!

1.3. This section is for a church, where some men & women's aim, was to gratify a selfish ambition...I wish this was relevant to US??? J

1.3.1. Jesus aim on the other hand was to "serve others", not to be self serving!

1.4. Here Paul wants to see unselfishness expressed in a like-minded spirit of harmony.

2. THE CHURCH NEEDS UNITY & HUMILITY! (Phil 2:1-4)

2.1. 4-FOLD INCENTIVE FOR UNITY! (Phil 2:1)

2.2. You need to change "if" to "since"! {All 4 "if's" here refer to a fulfilled condition!}

2.2.1. The 4 things are not hypothetical...but Facts!

2.2.2. So, Paul was affirming these qualities in the Philippians...not questioning them.

2.3. 4-FOLD DIRECTIVE OF UNITY! (Phil 2:2)

2.4. "Fulfill"? or, Fill-Full my Joy!

2.5. Look at how the 4 Incentives (1) link with the 4 Directives (2).

2.5.1. [1] Since there is consolation in Christ - be like-minded.

2.5.2. [2] Since there is comfort of Love - having the same love.

2.5.3. [3] Since there is fellowship of the Spirit - being of one accord. {accord = "harmony of souls", souls that beat together in tune w/Christ & w/each other}

2.5.4. [4] Since there is affection & mercy - be of one mind. {like clocks that strike at the same time}

2.6. Unity - {Story "Boy trying to break a bundle of sticks"}

2.6.1. He calls for Unity not Uniformity!

2.6.1.1. Quote - "Everybody repeat after me..." "We are all individuals."

2.6.2. You can achieve Unity amidst Diversity!

2.7. Q: How is vs.1 an incentive to obey Paul's command in vs.2?

2.7.1. A: Look what we have going for us!

2.8. HUMILITY! (Phil 2:3)

2.9. "Nothing" - How many things?

- 2.10. Our Motto should be: "You can take the high road but I'll take the low road...the road of humility!"
- 2.11. "Lowliness of mind" - Do you know how to forget others' faults? By remembering your own!
- 2.11.1. (Jonathan Edwards) "Nothing sets a person so much out of the devil's reach as humility."
- 2.11.2. Humility you might say, "that's for weasels, I'm an eagle!" Then this quotes for you {"Eagles may soar,...but weasels aren't sucked into jet engines!"}
- 2.12. Here Paul gives us practical advice on how to integrate a Christlike Attitude into every day living.
- 2.12.1. [1] Never let selfishness or conceit be your motive!
- 2.12.2. [2] Regard others as more important than yourself.
- 2.13. Vs.3 deals w/our Attitude; vs.4 deals w/our Actions!
- 2.14. SELF-LESS-NESS! (Phil 2:4)
- 2.15. Example of Selflessness: The Rainbow Orphanage! (Larry Anderson & youth group/CCPhelan) Were there the night of the fire, woke to children screaming. The director & his wife pulled 1x1 the children from the fire. Both suffered burns.
- 2.16. Paul gives 1 more practical tip: "Don't limit your attention to your own personal interests...include others!"
- 2.16.1. Story - 2 boys w/1 apple figured out this verse, "I'll cut...you chose!"
- 2.17. Paul doesn't promote self-hate, but advocates self-forgetfulness!
- 2.17.1. As Billy Graham says, "We hurt people by being too busy. Too busy to notice their needs. Too busy to drop that note of comfort or encouragement or assurance of love. Too busy to listen when someone needs to talk. Too busy to care."
- 2.18. "Ambition" - You may get to the very top of the ladder and find it has not been leaning against the right wall.
- 2.19. Q: Do these 2 verses go against our natural tendencies?
- 2.20. Q: How do they go against the spirit of society?
- 2.21. Story - Geese Sense! "Why the V formation?"
- 2.22. > It has been learned that as each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.
- > Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front. (If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way we are going.)
- > When the lead goose gets tired, he rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point.
- > The geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. (What do we say when we honk from behind?)
- > Finally, when a goose gets sick, or is wounded by a shot and falls out, two geese fall out of formation and follow him down to help and protect him. They stay with him until he is either able to fly, or until he is dead, and then they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their original group.

3. CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF UNITY & HUMILITY! (Phil 2:5-11)

- 3.1.1. Paul shows us Christ's humble attitude BEFORE(5,6), DURING(7,8), & AFTER(9-11) His coming to earth!
- 3.1. BEFORE (Phil 2:5,6)
- 3.2. Max Lucado(God came near) - "Christianity in its purest form, is nothing more than seeing Jesus. Christian Service in its purest form, is nothing more than imitating Him whom we see. To see His majesty & to imitate Him, that is the sum of Christianity!"
- 3.3. Phil 2:6 - 1st Paul reveals His Height of Glory.
- 3.4. As 2nd member of the Godhead, Jesus is coexistent, coeternal, & coequal w/God!
- 3.4.1. "As the print of the seal on the wax is the express image of the seal itself, so Christ is the express image-the perfect representation-of God." (Saint Ambrose 340-397ad)
- 3.4.2. "A man who can read the New Testament and not see that Christ claims to be more than a man can look all over the sky at high noon on a cloudless day and not see the sun." (William Biederwolf)
- 3.4.3. Considering Jesus as equal to God the Father, "What did it cost Him to be a Servant?" (Wow)
- 3.5. DURING (Phil 2:7,8)
- 3.6. Phil 2:7 - For the 1st time God put on flesh!
- 3.7. "He emptied Himself" - Of What?
- 3.7.1. Not - His Divine nature, or His God-ness.
- 3.7.2. But - He gave up His environment of Glory, He took upon Himself limitations of place(space), knowledge, & Power.
- 3.7.3. Lightfoot said, "He stripped Himself of the insignia of Majesty!"
- 3.7.4. "He went from being surrounded by angels praising & adoring Him, to come to those who would curse & crucify Him instead."

3.7.5. "He left the Fathers presence & fellowship, to come walk a lonely path of obedience to the cross."

3.7.6. "Think about it the Sov. of the universe became umbilically dependent, the Divine Word was unable to utter one word, the Alpha & Omega had to learn how to feed himself, put His toys away, clean up his room, & take naps."

3.7.6.1. Why? Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

3.7.7. Q: Of what must you empty yourself to model that same servants attitude? {a title; a position; privileges; rights; status; personal conveniences?}

3.8. "Bondservant" - He took the characteristic attributes of a slave.

3.8.1. His Humanity was as real as His Deity.

3.8.2. "Girded for war, humility his mighty dress, He moves into the battle wholly weaponless." (Madeleine L'Engle)

3.9. "Likeness" - A Real likeness!

3.9.1. Look at the steps downward: [1] He emptied Himself [2] He took the form of a bondservant [3] He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death [4] He accepted the most humiliating type of death...crucifixion.

3.10. Phil 2:8 - "He humbled Himself" - Q: Want to know how humble you not? How proud you are? Just wash someone's feet in your family this week! {Try it, you'll experience a very humbling moment as either the washer or washee!}

3.11. Wasn't Jesus always stripping His robe for us? {1st in his heavenly home stripping His robe of Glory; next to wash feet; next, to hang naked on a wooden cross. {what a love}}

3.12. "The Cross" - God plans and engineers a personal visit to his own world, and the reaction of the world is to...get rid of him.

3.12.1. Jesus' coming is the final and unanswerable proof that God cares. William Barclay

3.13. AFTER (Phil 2:9-11)

3.14. Phil 2:9 - Jesus had to descend to the lowest depths of suffering & death for our sins, but once our debt was paid, God again lifted His Son to a position of highest Glory & Honor.

3.14.1. He also bestowed upon Him the Name of highest significance.

3.15. Phil 2:10 - He who willingly bowed to His Fathers will in coming, is now the recipient of all knees bowing to Him!

3.16. "Every knee" - Heaven - Angelic hosts & all bel.'s who have died before us. Earth - Everyone from the most bitter skeptic to the most sincere follower. Under the Earth - Refers to the unsaved who have died, the demonic host, & even Satan himself.

3.17. Phil 2:11 - "Naming Jesus Christ is the annihilation of curiosity!"

3.18. This is one of the most imp. verses in the N.T. "Here is the aim of God, "That every tongue should confess...Jesus Christ is Lord!"

3.18.1. These 4 words were the 1st creed that the Christian Church ever had

3.18.2. To be a Christian was to "confess Jesus Christ as Lord."

"Rom.10:9 "That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

4. END:

4.1. The Great question facing some of you today is: Whether or not you'll voluntarily humble yourself before the Lord Jesus, or wait till your forced to?

4.1.1. Plan A - Act Now? - You'll be saved.

4.1.2. Plan B - Refuse? You'll surely concede one day "Under the earth" (too late?)

4.2. Jesus is the lifeline the Father has lowered for our salvation.

4.2.1. All mankind has fallen in a deep pit(sin) - the rope has been thrown down - attach it to your waist TODAY!

4.3. Stand at the base of Jesus' cross today - look up - & let His crimson blood drop upon you w/its cleansing power!

4.4. Jer.39:18 "but your life shall be as a prize to you, because you have put your trust in Me," says the LORD."

Philippians 2: 1-11

I. INTRO:

1. Prayer: Every Christian has the choice of being humble & being humbled. Lord You never crushed a soul that was laying prostrate at Your feet.

2. Dr. Harry Ironside was once convicted about his lack of humility. A friend recommended as a remedy, that he march through the streets of Chicago wearing a sandwich board, shouting the scripture verses on the board for all to hear. Dr. Ironside agreed to this venture and when he returned to his study and removed the board, he said "I'll bet there's not another man in town who would do that."

1. Our pride is as silly as the donkey that had Jesus on his back, thinking that they put garments & palm fronds on the ground for him!

2. Perspective: How to stay humble? Picture yourself as simply a kite in a hurricane. When Jesus is the hurricane, it's kinda hard not to fly!

3. Unselfish - who comes to mind when you hear that word? Mother Theresa? Maybe this "unknown man in the water" from 1982.

As disasters go, this one was terrible but not unique, certainly not among the worst on the roster of U.S. air crashes. There was the unusual element of the bridge, of course, and the fact that the plane clipped it at a moment of high traffic, one routine thus intersecting another and disrupting both. Then, too, there was the location of the event. Washington, the city of form and regulations, turned chaotic, deregulated, by a blast of real winter and a single slap of metal on metal. The jets from Washington National Airport that normally swoop around the presidential monuments like famished gulls were, for the moment, emblemized by the one that fell; so there was that detail. And there was the aesthetic clash as well—blue-and-green Air Florida, the name a flying garden, sunk down among gray chunks in a black river. All that was worth noticing, to be sure. Still, there was nothing very special in any of it, except death, which, while always special, does not necessarily bring millions to tears or to attention. Why, then, the shock here? But the person most responsible for the emotional impact of the disaster is the one known at first simply as "the man in the water." (Balding, probably in his 50s, an extravagant mustache) He was seen clinging with 5 other survivors to the tail section of the airplane. This man was described by Usher and Windsor as appearing alert and in control. Every time they lowered a lifeline and flotation ring to him, he passed it on to another of the passengers. "In a mass casualty, you'll find people like him," said Windsor. "But I've never seen one with that commitment." When the helicopter came back for him, the man had gone under. His selflessness was one reason the story held national attention.

4. Humility - tough subject.

1. I don't claim to be there, nor as having been there.

2. So like Paul, I'll use Jesus as our example this evening.

3. Let's commit to Pursue humility together; Practice humility together; Grow in Humility together.

4. We cannot attain full Humility here. The best we can say is, "as a proud person I am pursuing humility."

5. Augustine said, Pride is the mother of all sin. It is pregnant w/all sin.

1. Pride is the root sin that leads to the fruit of sin.

6. Conversely then Humility is the mother of all Joy!

5. Humility runs completely counter culture today!

1. Even comes against some churches who preach, "It's all about your destiny, your rights, your calling, your giftedness, your glory."

6. UNITY THROUGH HUMILITY!

1. If (4x's) - since Paul was affirming these qualities in the Philippians, not questioning them

2. (Phil 2:1,2) Fulfill or, Fill-Full my Joy!

3. Look at how the 4 Incentives (vs.1) link with the 4 Directives (vs.2).

1. Since there is consolation in Christ - be like-minded.

2. Since there is comfort of Love - having the same love.

3. Since there is fellowship of the Spirit - being of one accord {accord = "harmony of souls", souls that beat together in tune w/Christ & w/each other}

4. Since there is affection & mercy- be of 1 mind {like clocks that strike at the same time}

4. He calls for Unity not Uniformity!

1. Quote - "Everybody repeat after me..." "We are all individuals."

2. You can achieve Unity, amidst Diversity!

5. (3) Nothing - How many things?

6. (4) Paul doesn't promote self-hate, but advocates self-forgetfulness!

1. As Billy Graham says, "We hurt people by being too busy. Too busy to notice their needs. Too busy to drop that note of

comfort or encouragement or assurance of love. Too busy to listen when someone needs to talk. Too busy to care."

7. Paul shows us Christ's humble attitude Before!(5,6) During!(7,8) & After!(9-11) His coming to earth!

II. GOD WITH MEAT! (Phil 2:5-11)

1. BEFORE! (Phil 2:5,6)

2. HE DID NOT CLING TO HIS RIGHTS! (5,6)

3. Was Jesus selfishly trying to hold on to His privileges as God? No!

4. (6) As 2nd member of the Godhead, Jesus is coexistent, coeternal, & coequal w/God!

1. "As the print of the seal on the wax is the express image of the seal itself, so Christ is the express image-the perfect representation-of God." (St Ambrose 340-397ad)

2. "A man who can read the NT and not see that Christ claims to be more than a man can look all over the sky at high noon on a cloudless day & not see the sun." (William Biederwolf)

5. DURING! (Phil 2:7,8)

6. HE LAID ASIDE HIS GLORY! (7)

7. Made Himself of no reputation / He emptied Himself / made Himself nothing.

8. This is what "kenosis" means 2 things:

1. His pre-incarnate glory was veiled: that is, the glory that He had before He came to earth was veiled by His human form.

1. Once Jesus unveiled, the veil - Mark 9:23 and He was transfigured before them. His clothes became shining, exceedingly white like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

2. He voluntarily did not use some of His divine attributes some of the time.

1. Nonuse does not mean subtraction. Just because He didn't use them doesn't mean He didn't have them, or could not have used them if He had chosen.

2. Doesn't mean He didn't possess them, but He didn't access them continually.

3. He didn't lay aside His Divine nature or His God-ness!

4. But, He gave up His environment of Glory. He took upon Himself limitations of place(space), knowledge, & power.

1. Lightfoot said, "He stripped Himself of the insignia of Majesty!"

2. "He left the Father's presence & fellowship, to come walk a lonely path of obedience to the cross."

3. "Think about it the Sovereign of the universe became umbilically dependent; The Divine Word was unable to utter one word; The Alpha & Omega had to learn how to feed himself, put His toys away, clean up his room, & take naps." (Swindoll)

5. Q: Of what must you empty yourself to model that same servant's attitude?

1. A title; a position; privileges; rights; status; personal conveniences?

9. (Phil 2:7b) *Chile con carne* = chili w/meat/flesh. Incarnation is about God w/meat on!

1. The likeness of men - A Real likeness!

2. How different was it to pray before Jesus came? What picture of God would men try to have as they prayed? Some awesome, incomprehensible Super-Being utterly beyond all power of human imagination?

1. In Jesus I see Him; recognize Him; understand Him; & though I still fear Him, I like Him; I love Him; I can utterly trust Him; & possess Him!

10. HE HUMBLING HIMSELF! (8a)

11. In Lk.14:7-11 Jesus tells of the parable of taking the low place at a wedding feast.

1. He ends with the basic principle (Phil 2:11) For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

12. (8) He humbled Himself - Q: Want to know how humble you not? How proud you are? Just wash someone's feet in your family this week! [Try it, you'll experience a very humbling moment as either the washer or washee!]

1. Wasn't Jesus always stripping His robe for us?

1. 1st, in his heavenly home stripping His robe of Glory; Next to wash feet; Next, to hang naked on a wooden cross. What a love!

2. Jesus' coming is the final and unanswerable proof that God cares. William Barclay

13. You & I never would have invented a humble God.

1. He is the only God that claims this attribute.

14. HE BECAME OBEDIENT & DIED ON THE CROSS! (8b)

1. For his matchless obedience he receives a matchless name!

15. AFTER! (Phil 2:9-11)

16. GOD HAS EXALTED HIM! (9a) [God rather than Christ becomes the subject now]

17. God super-exalted Him; God gave Him the name; God will receive the Glory.

18. God has highly exalted Him - We do not worship a "babe in a manger"; or a "sacrifice on a cross"; we worship an exalted Lord seated on the throne of the universe!

19. GOD GAVE HIM A NAME ABOVE ALL OTHER NAMES! (9b)

20. In that day The greatest City, Rome! The greatest Empire, Rome! The greatest name, that was above all other

names...NERO!

1. Philippi was a Roman Colony. At every public event, sporting event, political event, they'd bend their knee & raise their voices to declare "Nero was Lord & Savior", his name was to be praised above all!

2. Paul here says, no...Jesus is the name above ALL names!

21. RESULT, ALL WILL ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AS LORD! (10)

22. Every knee should bow –

1. Heaven - angelic hosts & all believers who have died before us.

2. Earth - everyone from the most bitter skeptic to the most sincere follower.

3. Under the Earth - refers to the unsaved who have died, the demonic host, & even Satan himself.

23. GOD RECEIVES THE GLORY FOR ALL OF THIS! (Phil 2:11)

24. This is one of the most important verses in the N.T. "Here is the aim of God..." "That every tongue should confess...Jesus Christ is Lord!"

1. These 4 words were the 1st Creed that the Christian Church ever had.

2. To be a Christian was to "confess Jesus Christ as Lord." Rom.10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

25. The Great question facing some of you today is when will you bow?

1. Will you voluntarily humble yourself before the Lord Jesus, or wait till your forced to? [Today as Friend, or later as Foe?]

1. Plan A - Act Now? - You'll be saved.

2. Plan B - Refuse? You'll surely concede one day "Under the earth" (too late?)

26. Jesus is the lifeline the Father has lowered for our salvation.

1. All mankind has fallen in a deep pit(sin); The rope has been thrown down; Attach it to your waist TODAY!

Philippians 2:12-30

10-5-97

1. Intro:

1.1. A janitor in Canton, Ohio was tired of sweeping & wondered if he could make something that sucked dirt instead. He did & brought his crude vacuum cleaner to a leather business man to finance it. His name was H. W. Hoover!

1.2. Read #6651(7700) "Inventions!"

1.2.1. Inspiring? Yes...but also Disturbing!

1.2.2. Good examples can cause us to work harder, reach higher, but there's 1 problem...good examples have no intrinsic power to enable us to achieve the same things!

1.2.3. They inspire us but can't empower us!

1.3. Why does Paul then exhort us to follow Christ's example(2:5) if such a goal is impossible?

1.3.1. Haven't verses like "be holy for I am holy" frustrated you, because of such a high goal? Be Honest!

1.3.2. My 1st pole vault experience {chose cause didn't have to run very far,...till I made my 1st run towards that bar....way up there, I thought...running isn't so bad!}

1.4. Some attempt to follow His lofty goal by Performance:

1.4.1. They do there best to look & sound like a Christian.

1.5. Some attempt to follow His lofty goal by Perspiration:

1.5.1. They frustrate themselves by intensifying their efforts & trying harder to do life exactly as Christ did.

1.6. But it doesn't take Performance or Perspiration...but Power{from the inside}!

1.6.1. That's what separates "Christ's example" from all others. He can enable us to be like Him! {How? Thru the H.S. who lives in us}

2. "CARRY OUT" YOUR SALVATION! (Phil 2:12-18)

2.1. IN & OUT! (Phil 2:12,13)

2.2. Q: Well here it is, it says we must work hard to earn our Salvation rt.?

2.2.1. NO! - [1] He's addressing Christians(already saved)

[2] It doesn't say "work for" but "work out"!

[3] We must read the next verse, He must work 1st in you before you can work out!

2.3. "work out" = work on to the finish (LKGNT); (like working a mine); carry out your own salvation(Vincent).

2.4. "your own" - not someone else's(spouse, friends, child)!!!

2.5. Formula à "Personal Obedience(12) + Divine Empowerment(13) = His Good Pleasure!(13b)"

2.6. ATTITUDE & ACTION! (Phil 2:14,15)

2.7. Attitude (14)- Bad attitude can manifest itself a couple ways:

2.7.1. [1] Complaining - grumbling, low-toned discontented mutterings.

2.7.2. Story/everyone hates a complainer!- A man decided to join a monastery and one of the rules of the group was that you were only allowed to speak two words every ten years. At the end of ten years he said, "Bad food!" Ten more years went by and he said, "Hard bed!" Finally, on his 30th anniversary with the brothers, he thundered, "I quit!" And the priest in charge responded, "You might as well. All you do is complain anyway."

2.7.3. Great 1 liners on complainers! [1] The loudest boos always come from those in the free seats. [2] If you feel "dog tired" at night, it is because you growled all day. [3] A grouch always looks as if he were weaned on a pickle.

2.7.4. Here's a good question men - Which does God hear? When you say grace before your meal thanking him for the food? Or, when you say, "this wasn't cooked long enough" right after it?

2.7.5. Q: Have YOU been complaining? Around the office? At home? At Bible Studies? At the coffee shop? With a group of friends? With certain friends?

2.7.6. "When you complain about a situation...make sure your not denying ether the wisdom or goodness of God."

2.7.6.1. Erwin W. Lutzer "Complaining about our lot in life might seem quite innocent in itself, but God takes it personally."

2.7.7. [2] Disputing - arguing w/others, stirring up doubt & suspicions; it's skeptical questioning & criticism.

2.7.7.1. It's those who "mountain-climb over mole-hills!"

2.7.8. "Murmuring and complaining unfits the soul for duty."(tie in last 2 vs)

2.7.9. Here are 2 things Jesus didn't do! (W.W.J.D. - What Wouldn't Jesus Do?)

2.8. Action! (Phil 2:15)

2.8.1. [1] Blameless - A purity of life that is undeniable & inescapable, a character that is free from defect.

2.8.2. [2] Harmless - Unmixed, unadulterated(used of wine or milk...not mixed w/water). It is also translated Innocence, or "inexperienced in evil"!

2.8.3. [3] W/o fault - Free from blemish(used for sac. Animals)

2.8.3.1. Barclay says, "The Christian life must be such that it can be offered like an unblemished sac. To God!"

2.8.4. [4] Shining as Lights - Lights that stand out like stars in the midst of a dark world.

2.8.4.1. 2 Cautions: [1] Christians should not pull out of this dark world to huddle & bask in their own light(Girls glow in Haiti). [2] They should not blend so much into the world that you start losing your glow!

2.8.4.2. Balance: Boldly reflect Christ's light wherever you go in this dark world!

2.8.4.3. Your choice: You can burn up your energy grumbling & disputing, or shining as lights!

2.8.4.4. SHINE [1] Like a flash light - guiding those walking in darkness! [2] Like a Lighthouse - signaling those caught in this worlds fog, to see the rocks! [3] Like the Sun - beaming sunshine on a darkened cloudy day. [4] Like a Star - cutting holes in the deep darkness! [5] Like the Moon - reflecting the light of the sun/Son!

2.9. DRINK OFFERING! (Phil 2:16-18)

2.10. Phil 2:16 - Nobody wants to look back on their life & think it was a wasted effort!

2.10.1. Paul gives a Dual image here!

2.10.2. "Run in vain" - Athlete - {Like the runner who trains & trains, then pulls a hamstring rt. before the race, all that running was futile!}

2.10.3. "Labored in vain" - Field worker - {after the exhausting work of tilling the ground & sowing the seeds,...torrential rains come & rip up the field, the seeds float to the surface,...all for not!}

2.11. Phil 2:17 - Paul says even if his ministry results in death it's worth it for him!

2.11.1. F.F.Bruce describes the Drink offering, "When a burnt-offering was accompanied by a Cereal-offering at the temple, a Drink-offering of wine or olive oil might be poured over it or beside it. {This was added last to complete the sacrifice}

2.11.2. So, Paul says, "If my life's blood is to be poured out, let it be poured out on the sac. that your faith offers to God.

2.12. Phil 2:18 - Paul pleas to them that they would have Joy also, even if he is called to be a sac.

3. MY BOY TIM! (Phil 2:19-24)

3.1. Phil 2:19 - There is 1 friend of Paul's he mentioned more than any of the others (Timothy about 24 x's)

3.2. We sometimes picture Paul as the John Wayne Apostle who doesn't need friends...No Way!(Swindoll)

3.3. Phil 2:20 - Paul commends Tim for 3 reasons:

3.4. [1] Like-minded (Phil 2:20a) - or, equal-souled, same-souled.[a Jon & David]

3.5. [2] Sincerely Cares (Phil 2:20b-21) - Genuine concern. Speaks of his inner character.

3.6. [3] Proven Character (Phil 2:22) - approval after being tested.

3.6.1. J.H. Jowett said of charcter: "The real measure of our wealth is how much we'd be worth if we lost all our money.

3.7. Phil 2:22b-24 - "You get Timothy...you get me" was Paul's opinion!"

4. MY BROTHER EPAPHRODITUS! (Phil 2:25-30)

4.1. We've had some good Examples so far: 1st was Jesus(but some say He's hard to relate to...He's God!); 2nd was Paul(but he was an Apostle); 3rd was Timothy(but he's a Pastor!); well then here's a layman...Epaphroditus!

4.2. The Situation: The Philippian church sent Epaph. To "stay" w/Paul - He needs to go back early. Will they call him a quitter? ...Not if Paul can silence any criticism.

4.2.1. Both in P.I. & Haiti, family or friends must take care of you(food, clothes, supplies)

4.3. Phil 2:27 - Wonder why Paul just didn't heal him...if All are to be healed?

4.4. Phil 2:30 - "Not regarding" - parabouleuomai = to risk or gamble; to expose oneself to danger.

4.4.1. In the post-apostolic church there was a group called "Parabolani" (not the pop-a-ratzi!) who risked their lives by nursing the sick & burying the dead.

4.4.2. Epaph. was the forerunner of the Parabolani!

Philippians 2: 12-30

I. INTRO:

1. Happy Cinco de Mayo - When 4000 Mexican army defeated the 8000 strong French army in 1862. Not Mexico's Independence day.

2. National Day of Prayer - Prayer room open all day; Pray at the Pole (City Hall 12-12:30).

3. Title: Practical Christianity!

II. PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY!

1. WORK OUT! (Phil 2:12,13)

2. WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION! (Phil 2:14a)

3. Work out your own salvation. Do not depend on others. Buddha

1. Sorry Buddha, I'm depending on One!

4. Q: Well So here it is, it says we must work hard to earn our Salvation right? NO!

1. #1 He's addressing Christians (They are already saved)

2. #2 It doesn't say "work for" but "work out"!

3. #3 We must read the next verse (He must work 1st in you before you can work out!)

1. Also, remember salvation is talked about past, present, & future in the bible:

1. Past - We are saved from sins Penalty!

1. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Rom.10:10

2. Present - We are being saved from sins Power!

1. Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. Rom.5:9

3. Future - We will 1 day be saved from sins Presence!

1. For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Rom.13:11

5. Work out - work on to the finish (LKGNT). Like working a mine.

1. Or, Carry out your own salvation(Vincent).

2. Or, In-n-Out that's what salvations all about! :)

6. Formula: Personal Obedience(Phil 2:12) + Divine Empowerment(13) = His Good Pleasure!(13b)

7. NO COMPLAINING! (Phil 2:14a)

8. Bad attitude can manifest itself a couple ways: Complaining & Disputing

9. Complaining - grumbling, low-toned discontented mutterings.

1. Story/everyone hates a complainer! A man decided to join a monastery & 1 of the rules of the group was that you were only allowed to speak 2 words every 10 years. At the end of 10 years he said, "Bad food!" - 10 more years went by and he said, "Hard bed!" - Finally, on his 30th anniversary with the brothers, he thundered, "I quit!" - And the priest in charge responded, "You might as well. All you do is complain anyway."

2. Here's a good question men, Which does God hear?...When you say grace before your meal thanking him for the food?

Or, when you say, "this wasn't cooked long enough" right after it?

3. Q: Have YOU been complaining? Around the office? At home? At bible studies? At the coffee shop? With a group of friends? With certain friends?

1. "When you complain about a situation...make sure your not denying either the wisdom or goodness of God."

4. Erwin W. Lutzer "Complaining about our lot in life might seem quite innocent in itself, but God takes it personally."

10. NO DISPUTING! (Phil 2:14a)

11. Disputing - arguing w/others, stirring up doubt & suspicions; it's skeptical questioning & criticism. It refers to the intellectual rebellion against God(Lightfoot).

1. It's those who "mountain-climb over mole-hills!"

2. "Murmuring and complaining unfits the soul for duty."

12. The children of Israel were constantly murmuring & complaining when they should have been trusting & praising.

1. Many of them never reached the Canaan of spiritual victory & blessing. (Bread For Each Day: DeHaan; Phil.2:14)

2. Still today, grumblers & complainers are never victorious Christians.

13. Hudson Taylor used to say, "If your father & mother, your sister & brother, yes, even the cat & dog in your house, are not happier for you being a Christian, it is a question whether you really are or not."

1. It is usually not the greatness of our trouble but rather the littleness of our spirit that makes us complain.

2. These activities(grumbling & complaining) are unworthy of Christ's servants, & they have a negatively contagious effect among a body of Christians.

14. HOPES OF BECOMING! (Phil 2:15)

1. Blameless - A purity of life that is undeniable & inescapable, a character that is free from defect.

2. Harmless - Unmixed, unadulterated (used of wine or milk...not mixed w/water).

1. It is also translated Innocence, or "inexperienced in evil"!

3. W/o fault - Free from blemish (used for sacrificial animals)

1. Barclay says, "The Christian life must be such that it can be offered like an unblemished sacrifice to God!"

15. SHINE! (Phil 2:15)

16. Lights that stand out like stars in the midst of a dark world.

17. Don't expect God to use you as a lighthouse somewhere else, if He can't use you as a candle where you are!

18. Your choice: You can burn up your energy grumbling/disputing, or shining as lights!

1. Like a flash light - guiding those walking in darkness!

2. Like a Lighthouse - signaling those caught in this worlds fog, to see the rocks

3. Like the Sun - beaming sunshine on a darkened cloudy day.

4. Like a Star - cutting holes in the darkness!

5. Like the Moon - reflecting light from a different/greater source!

19. But things are getting spiritually darker in our day...what then?

1. Well, what happens when it starts getting dark in our city? The darker it gets hundreds of street lights around our city click on, dispelling the darkness.

20. RUN! (Phil 2:16)

21. Nobody wants to look back on their life & think it was a wasted effort!

22. Holding fast the word of life - All life is valuable, but not all life is equal.

1. There is vegetable life (which is above mere matter).

2. There is animal life (which is above vegetable life).

3. There is human life (which is above animal life).

4. There is spiritual life (which is superior human life).

1. This is that word of life, or the word that gives eternal life!

2. We are told we can, not only have life, but have it more abundantly.

1. It is a dying souls only remedy!

23. Paul gives a dual image here:

1. Run in vain - Like an Athlete.

1. Like the runner who trains & trains, then pulls a hamstring right before the race, all that running was futile!

2. Labored in vain - Like a Field Worker.

1. After the exhausting work of tilling the ground & sowing the seeds,...torrential rains come & rip up the field, the seeds float to the surface,...all for not!

3. Paul says, I don't want to end that way!

24. POUR OUT! (Phil 2:17)

25. A drink offering, usually a cup of wine, was poured out on the ground to honor deity.

1. Paul is again referring to the prospect of martyrdom which he faces, & thinks of himself, his life's blood, as a libation poured forth to God. (LKGNT; pg.553)

26. Paul says even if his ministry results in death it's worth it for him!
 1. F.F.Bruce describes the drink offering, "When a burnt-offering was accompanied by a cereal-offering at the temple, a drink-offering of wine or olive oil might be poured over it or beside it." [This was added last, to complete the sacrifice]
 2. So, Paul says, "If my life's blood is to be poured out, let it be poured out on the sacrifice that your faith offers to God."
27. TIMOTHY! (Phil 2:19-24)
28. There are too many believers that are not workers.
 1. Zeal w/o knowledge is bad; but knowledge w/o zeal is worse!
 2. W/o workers the cause of Christ would drag to a full-stop.
29. THE MESSENGER! (Phil 2:19)
30. DD. There is 1 friend of Paul's he mentioned more than any of the others (Timothy about 24 x's)
31. Phil 2:20 - Paul commends Tim for 3 reasons:
 1. Like-minded (Phil 2:20a) - or, equal-souled; same-souled [as Jon & David]
 2. Sincerely Cares (Phil 2:20b-21) - Genuine concern. Speaks of his inner character.
 3. Proven Character (Phil 2:22) - approval after being tested.
 1. J.H. Jowett said of character: "The real measure of our wealth is how much we'd be worth if we lost all our money."
 4. "You get Timothy...you get me" was Paul's point!
32. EPAPHRODITUS! (Phil 2:25-30)
33. We've had some good Examples so far:
 1. 1st was Jesus (but some say He's hard to relate to...He's God!)
 2. 2nd was Paul (but he was an Apostle)
 3. 3rd was Timothy (but he's a Pastor!)
 4. Well then, here's a layman...Epaphroditus!
 1. A Brother; a worker; a soldier; a messenger; & a minister.
 2. Yet he became deathly sick. God healed him. Paul is sending him back home.
34. Both in P.I. & Haitian jails, family or friends must take care of you. (food, clothes, supplies)
 1. The Situation: The Philippian church sent Epaphroditus to "stay" w/Paul, but now he needs to go back early.
 1. Will they call him a quitter?...Not if Paul can silence any criticism.
 2. (30) Not regarding his life - παραβολή [par-ab-ol-ay] To risk or gamble; to expose oneself to danger.
 1. In the post-apostolic church there was a group called Parabolani (the riskers, or gamblers!) They ministered to the sick & imprisoned. They risked their lives by nursing the sick & burying the dead.
 2. Epaphroditus was the forerunner of the Parabolani!
35. Why do we exist?...it's called Living Beyond Me!
 1. If you take no risk...you're not alive!
 2. Like Epaphroditus, we need to unwrap God for them!
 1. We as His church shouldn't be a coconut (hard on outside & hollow inside)
 2. But a peach (fuzzy outside sweet inside)

Philippians 3:1-11

10-12-97

1. INTRO:
 - 1.1. "The more we achieve the more we are recognized as being better than most!" (sad but true!)
 - 1.1.1. Many people think that these earthly achievements can merit the heavenly reward of salvation.
 - 1.1.2. They think, "as long as my "good" outweighs my "bad" I'm OK!
 - 1.1.2.1. This is of course what drove Martin Luther mad...trying to catch up!
 - 1.1.3. It's a, "Work-harder, Do-more mentality!" {Sit little & Domore/truck}
 - 1.1.4. Q: How many works are enough to satisfy God anyway?
 - 1.1.5. There's a 180 degree turn when you stop saying, "Look what I've done for God" & say "Look what God's done for me!"
 - 1.2. I think we've all tried to win our heavenly Fathers approval just like we tried to win our own fathers while growing up!
 - 1.2.1. (Bank Commercial) Little toddler, in red P.J.'s, on the cloths line doing gymnastics/beam - juggling toasters - walks on hands on water while dad is fishing. (to no avail)
 - 1.3. To think we can earn God's approval...is Pride! - {This is glorifying yourself...not God!}
 - 1.3.1. Pride is such a nasty varmint!

1.3.1.1. Quote: A Rabbi and a New England minister were getting to know one another. Proudly, the minister exclaimed, "One of my ancestors signed the Declaration of Independence." "I understand your pride," responded the rabbi. "One of my ancestors signed the Ten Commandments."

1.4. When someone feels pretty self-confident about their "good works", instead of attacking their works simply show them the heavenly scale that weighs "good works" & finds them wanting...The Fathers perfect Holiness! Jesus the "standard"!

1.5. When Paul was Saul(B.C.) he was a proud Pharisee; he was B.M.O.C., he was Top Dog of the Kennel; he was The Cream of the Crop!....Then Saul ran right into "The Yard Stick"...Jesus himself!...& That changed everything!

2. PAUL'S WARNINGS! (Phil 3:1-3)

2.1. Phil 3:1 - "Finally brethren"- Wait!He's only ½ way thru his letter? -"Like with most preachers this usually means they're just getting their 2nd wind!"

2.2. "Tedious" - Irksome, most of us learned the alphabet by repetition.

2.3. Phil 3:2 - "Beware!" - (To continually be on the look out for)

2.3.1. These: joy stealing, evil working, ankle biting, legalists were always fast at his heels! - Barking legalism wherever he taught Grace!

2.3.2. [1] "Dogs" - speaking of the diseased, flea bitten, wild, mangy, mutts! {these dogs: bark, bite, & travel in packs, seeking to lure others away to roam with them!}

2.3.2.1. "These dogs weren't on leashes & could be very dangerous if they traveled in packs - They sniffed out new converts to devour w/their strict laws!" (Swindoll)

2.3.3. [2] "Evil Workers" - vs. Good workers!

2.3.3.1. The difference? - Those who "worked for" their salvation , vs. Those who "worked out" their salvation!

2.3.4. [3] "Mutilation" - A play on word's for a botched circumcision / ouch!

2.3.4.1. "The mutilation meant...they mutilated the gospel by insisting on the need to mutilate the flesh in order to be rightly related to God." (Robert Lightner)

2.3.4.2. Circumcision as a religious rite was rendered null & void by the cross of christ! - Col.2:11 "In Him(Jesus) you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, (How?)by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ."

2.4. Phil 3:3 - Note the Contrast à "for"...

2.4.1. Paul sees 3 differences between true believers & the Judaizers:

2.4.2. [1] "Worship in the sp. of God" - Focus is on God not on their own achievements.

2.4.3. [2] "Rejoice in Christ Jesus" - Not boast in their works but glory in the work of Jesus Christ.

2.4.4. [3] "Put no confidence in the flesh" - Can't trust in their own works for salvation - Only confidence in Jesus.

2.4.4.1. Never rely on it! Don't even trust it! Flesh will always steer you wrong!

2.4.4.2. No Christian arrives...till he arrives in glory!

3. PAUL'S ACHIEVEMENTS! (Phil 3:4-6)

3.1. Phil 3:4 - Paul says you want to talk confidence in the flesh?...Let's go!

3.1.1. Check out my wall of Degrees, Plaques, & Certificates!

3.2. Phil 3:5,6 - Wow! Nice Resume!

3.2.1. [1] Circumcised the 8th day - He bore in his body the badge of the chosen people. {under certain circumstance they could on the 9th-12th day}

3.2.2. [2] Stock of Israel - A member of the nation in covenant w/God.

3.2.3. [3] Tribe of Benj. - 1st king came from Benjamin. Was the only Patriarch born in the Land of Promise. When Israel went into battle Benj. Held the post of honor. The battle cry of Israel was "after thee, O Benj."

3.2.4. [4] Top Hebrew - He knew the language of his fathers.

3.2.5. [5] A Pharisee - He was more than a devout Jew, he was a "separated one" keeping the Law Blamelessly.

3.2.6. So, picturing a doctors scale(sliding one weight at a time over): Concerning the Law(slide); Concerning zeal(slide); Concerning Righteousness (slide).

4. PAUL'S PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT! (Phil 3:7-9)

4.1. Phil 3:7 - "But" - Then Wham! He ran rt. into perfection. - One who stepped onto the scale & invited Paul to step onto the other side!

4.1.1. Paul went from the worlds crows nest looking down on all, to the oceans depths looking up!

4.1.2. Here he sees from a completely different perspective.(clam at Ensenada I boiled!)

4.2. "Loss for Christ" - HOLD THINGS LOOSELY!

4.2.1. Like the Toddler w/a new toy we grip things too tightly!

4.2.2. We should hold onto things like the proper way to hold a golf club...like a tube of tooth paste (squeeze to tight it's going to come out.)

4.2.3. With relationship we're better at smothering rather than loving.

4.2.3.1. Whether it's a girlfriend cutting off a relationship that you don't want to let go of, or a son/daughter heading off to college/mission field.

4.2.3.2. "The greater the Possessiveness, the greater the Pain!"

4.2.4. We don't want to give up our treasures for fear of their safety.

4.2.4.1. YET remember everything which we commit to Christ...is safe! In fact nothing is safe outside of Him!

4.2.4.2. No Child, no Job, no Romance, no Friend, no Future, no Dream.

4.2.4.3. Need some proof see Abraham w/his son Isaac. (Gen.22:2 "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.")

4.2.4.4. Abraham had to open his hands wider than any earthly man ever had!

4.2.4.5. God wants to reign w/o a rival! - "Keep your hands empty & your hearts warm!"(Swindoll)

4.2.5. Q: Can you name 1 person, or object, you need to loosen your grip on?

4.2.6. Jim Elliot said, "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose!"

4.3. Phil 3:8 - "Rubbish" (used only here!) could be speaking of excrement, dung, or trash, the kind thrown to the dogs!

4.3.1. A Puritan sat down to his meal & found that he had only a little bread & some water. His response was to exclaim, "What? All this & Jesus Christ, too!"

4.3.2. Q: Since you haven't "suffered the loss of all things". Since He has left you your worldly comforts. Have you used all things for His sake???

4.4. Phil 3:9 - Here we have a Previously Proud Pharisee, now a humble bankrupt believer!

4.4.1. Righteousness is either "from the Law", or "from faith in Christ!"

4.4.2. Note it's defined as "from God" & "by faith."

4.5. Quote: R.A.Torrey drew 2 rectangles in the dirt:

4.5.1. The 1st represented the state of "unregeneracy" /Colorado.

4.5.1.1. 3 men - 1 lives on top of Pikes peak(14,110'); 1 lives at sea level; 1 lives 1000' below in a mine. - But all 3 live in the same state!

4.5.1.2. Same w/the state of unregeneracy - 1 might live on the mnt. Of morality; 1 might live a very ordinary life; 1 might live in the deep darkness of a wicked life. - Yet they are all in that same state of Unregeneracy. {We are all born in that state!}

4.5.2. The 2nd rectangle represented the state of Regeneration.

4.5.2.1. You get out of the state of Unregeneration by becoming Born-Again!

4.5.2.2. In this state 1 might live on a very high sp. plane; 1 might live a very average Christian life; 1 might be backslidden & live a very carnal, worldly, life. Yet all 3 live in the same state of Regeneration!

4.6. To be "found in Him" - is Salvation truth!

4.6.1. Christ found in us - that's Sanctification truth!

4.7. To be found in Him means that when God looks at me He sees Christ!

4.7.1. To have Christ found in me means that when other people look at me they see Christ!

5. PAUL'S QUEST! (Phil 3:10,11)

5.1. Notice the natural lead into Sanctification from vs.9's Salvation.

5.2. Paul didn't sing "1 thing have I, desired of the Lord,..." but 3 things:

5.3. Here lies the Secret of a Holy Life!

5.3.1. [1] KNOW HIM! - Not just know about Him.

5.3.1.1. Knowing Him requires genuine interest! Spending quality time w/Him; Having a progressive relationship; Each person should reveal Himself; Both should listen; Both should talk; Both should respond!

5.3.2. [2] KNOW HIS POWER! - The Power of His Res. (a dynamic power which operates in the life of the individual Christian).

5.3.2.1. Look how the Res. changed Peter's life! - In 2 Pet.1:14 "knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me."

5.3.2.2. The memory of the occasion gave him the power to face martyrdom.

5.3.2.3. The source of Peter's power was Jesus' Res. - Peter had the confident assurance that Jesus was really & truly alive.

5.3.3. [3] KNOW HIS SUFFERING! - Know them more personally.

- 5.4. "Trust in your own achievements brings you glory now, but leaves you sp. bankrupt later!"
- 5.5. "Trusting in Jesus' accomplishments gives Him the Glory now, & results in your eternal rt. forever."
- 5.6. Phil 3:11 - "Attain" - To arrive at a destination, finish the race.
- 5.7. Read Amplified version of vs.10!

Philippians 3:1-11

I. INTRO:

1. Listen to these quotes regarding achievement from some celebrities:

1. I discovered I didn't feel worth a d____, and certainly not worthy of love, unless I was accomplishing something. I suddenly realized I have never felt I could be loved just for being. Oprah Winfrey (Good Housekeeping, Sept, 1991, p. 63.)

2. My drive in life is from this horrible fear of being mediocre. That's always been pushing me, pushing me. Because even though I've become somebody, I still have to prove that I'm SOMEBODY. My struggle has never ended, and it probably never will. Madonna (Quoted from Vogue, in What Jesus Would Say, by Lee Strobel.)

3. I had no idea who I was, or what I could be away from tennis," says Chris Evert, recalling the final years of her career. "I was depressed and afraid because so much of my life had been defined by my being a tennis champion. I was completely lost. Winning made me feel like I was somebody. It made me feel pretty. It was like being hooked on a drug. I needed the wins, the applause, in order to have an identity. Chris Evert (Chris Evert, retired tennis star, Good Housekeeping, October 1990, pp 87-88.)

1. Paul deals with, is life about what we achieve or what we receive???

II. RIPPIN RELIGION!

1. PAUL'S WARNINGS! (Phil 3:1-3)

2. Rejoice - If you cannot rejoice in your circumstances...

1. You can always rejoice in the Lord who controls your circumstances.

2. Fix your attention on Him. He may not change your situation, but He will change you; & that is even better. (www)

3. (Phil 3:2) Beware of - look out for...(3 x's) These: Joy stealing, evil working, ankle biting, legalists were always fast at his heels! - Barking legalism wherever he taught Grace!

1. Beware of dogs - Don't picture pets. Speaking of: diseased, flea bitten, wild, mangy, mutts! [they bark, bite, & travel in packs, seeking to lure others away to roam with them!]

1. "These dogs weren't on leashes & could be very dangerous if they traveled in packs - They sniffed out new converts to devour w/their strict laws!" (Swindoll)

2. Beware of evil workers - Evil Workers vs. Good workers!

1. The difference? Those who "worked for" their salvation, vs. Those who "worked out" their salvation!

3. Beware of the mutilation - A play on word's for a botched circumcision. Ouch!

1. The mutilation meant...the circumcision on which they insisted was harmful rather than helpful to spiritual well-being.

2. Circumcision as a religious rite was rendered null & void by the Cross of Christ! Col.2:11 "In Him(Jesus) you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, (How?) by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ." [circumcision of the heart]

4. Basically then, beware of Religion & Religious people!

1. Religion basically shouts "clean up your act"! Some just say it louder than others!

2. But, they don't tell you how to; they don't empower you to be able to do so; & they usually don't give you any time to work through your former life/ways.

1. Jesus says, I would like to clean up your act! I would like to empower you to do so! And I will be patient with you as you grow!

4. (Phil 3:3) Paul sees 3 differences between true believers & the Judaizers:

1. Worship God in Spirit - Focus is on God not on their own achievements.

2. Rejoice in Christ Jesus - Not boast in their works but glory in the work of J.C.

3. Have no confidence in the flesh - Can't trust in their own works for salvation - Only confidence in Jesus.

1. Never rely on it! Don't even trust it! Flesh will always steer you wrong!

1. No Christian arrives...till he arrives in glory!

2. How far are these true of you?

5. PAUL'S ACHIEVEMENTS! (Phil 3:4-6)

6. Wow! Nice Resume! - Paul says you want to talk confidence in the flesh?...Let's go! - Check out my wall of Degrees, Plaques, & Certificates!

1. See, when Paul was Saul he was a proud Pharisee; he was B.M.O.C.; Top Dog of the Kennel; The Cream of the Crop!

2. Then Saul ran right into "The Yard Stick" Jesus himself! [That changed everything]
3. Circumcised the 8th day - He bore in his body the badge of the chosen people
4. Stock of Israel - A member of the nation in covenant w/God.
5. Tribe of Benjamin - Was the only Patriarch born in the Land of Promise. 1st king came from Benjamin.
6. Top Hebrew - He knew the language of his fathers.
7. A Pharisee - He was more than a devout Jew, he was a "separated one" keeping the Law Blamelessly.
7. (Phil 3:6) Picture an old doctors scale here (sliding one weight at a time over):
 1. Concerning the Law(slide); Concerning zeal(slide); Concerning Rt. (slide).
8. PAUL'S P&L (profit & loss) STATEMENT! (7-9)
9. (Phil 3:7,8) But - Then Whamo! He ran rt. into perfection. Jesus stepped onto the scale & invited Paul to step onto the other side!
 1. Paul went from the worlds crows nest looking down on all, to the oceans depths looking up!
10. Loss for Christ - Lesson: Hold Things Loosely!
 1. Like the Toddler w/a new toy, we grip things too tightly!
 2. Like the proper way to hold a golf club is like holding a tube of toothpaste.
 3. With relationships we're often better at smothering rather than loving.
 1. Whether it's a girlfriend cutting off a relationship that you don't want to let go of; or a son/daughter heading off to college/mission field.
 2. "The greater the Possessiveness, the greater the Pain!"
 4. We don't want to give up our treasures for fear of their safety.
 1. YET remember everything which we commit to Christ...is safe! [In fact nothing is safe outside of Him!]
 1. No Child; no Job; no Romance; no Friend; no Future; no Dream...is safe outside of Him!
 2. Need some proof? See Abraham w/his son Isaac.
 1. Gen.22:2 Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.
 2. Abraham had to open his hands wider than any earthly man ever had to!
11. God wants to reign w/o a rival! - Keep your hands empty & your hearts warm! (Swindoll)
 1. Q: Can you name 1 person, or object, you need to loosen your grip on?
 2. Jim Elliot said, "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose!"
12. Do you feel you've made sacrifices to follow the Lord?
 1. Paul did not feel he lost anything worthwhile by trusting Christ.
 2. Instead, he gained everything really worth having! :)
13. (Phil 3:8) Paul had not failed at his religion. The point of his testimony is that he had seen a better way & chosen to follow it.
 14. Rubbish - (used only here!) could be speaking of excrement, dung, or trash, the kind thrown to the dogs! [Illus. Picking up doggy-doo in my backyard a few weeks ago...barefoot &...]
 1. Yep...all my works, squished right there on the bottom of my foot!
15. (9) Faith in Christ is the sole ground of acceptance with God! [Luther called, The great exchange!]
 1. This was why the whole reformation was fought.
 1. The 5 solas (5 Latin phrases) emerged during the Protestant Reformation & summarize the Reformers' basic theological beliefs in contradistinction to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church of the day.
 1. Sola scriptura (Scripture alone) is the teaching that the Bible is the only inspired & authoritative word of God & it is the only source for Christian doctrine, & is accessible to all - that is, it is perspicuous (easily understood) & self-interpreting.
 2. Sola fide (faith alone) is the teaching that justification (being declared right by God), is received by faith only, without any mixture of or need for good works. Though in classical Protestant theology, saving faith is always evidenced, but not determined, by good works.
 3. Sola gratia (grace alone) is the teaching that salvation comes by God's grace or "unmerited favor" only - not as something merited by the sinner.
 4. Solo Christo (through Christ alone) is the teaching that Christ is the only mediator between God and man, and that there is salvation through no other.
 5. Soli Deo gloria (glory to God alone) is the teaching that all glory is to be due to God alone, since salvation is accomplished solely through His will and action.
16. Here we have a Previously Proud Pharisee, now a humble bankrupt believer!
 1. Righteousness is either "from the Law", or "through faith in Christ!"
 2. Note it's defined as "from God" & "by faith."
17. To be found in Him, is Salvation truth! - Christ found in us, that's Sanctification truth!
 1. To be found in Him means that when God looks at me He sees Christ!

2. To have Christ found in me means that when other people look at me they see Christ!

1. When someone asks, "what is God like?" we should be able to say, "Look at the church" or "look at me!"

18. PAUL'S QUEST! (Phil 3:10-11)

19. (10) Notice the natural lead into Sanctification from vs.9's Salvation.

20. Here lies 3 Secrets of a Holy Life!

1. KNOW HIM! - Not just know about Him.

1. Knowing Him requires genuine interest! Spending quality time w/Him.

2. Having a progressive relationship where each person reveals Himself to the other; both listen; both talk; both respond!

2. KNOW HIS POWER! - The Power of His Res. (a dynamic power which operates in the life of the individual Christian).

1. Look how the Res. changed Peter's life!

3. KNOW HIS SUFFERING! - Know them more personally.

1. Trust in your own achievements brings you glory now, but leaves you spiritually bankrupt later! - Trusting in Jesus' accomplishments gives Him the Glory now, & results in your eternal righteousness forever.

21. (11) Attain - To arrive at a destination, finish the race.

1. That I may arrive at my destination! (see attained in vs.12 also)

22. (Phil 3:10,11) Amplified Version: [For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [which it exerts over believers], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [in spirit into His likeness even] to His death, [in the hope] That if possible I may attain to the [spiritual and moral] resurrection [that lifts me] out from among the dead [even while in the body].

Philippians 3:12-21

10-26-97 "Paul's To-Do List"

* INTRO:

* Start up in Phil 3:10.

* Intro: Christopher Columbus wrote in his diary, on his way to a New World, not yet discovered? Facing mutiny, many of his men wanted to turn around, and was in trouble most of the trip. Yet every day on his log the last entry that he would write was: "Today we moved WESTWARD!"

* The Christian life... "Quick Success???"

* Ask the Missionary...the Med. student...or the Marathon!

* In the kingdom of God there is NO "Get-(sp.)-Rich-Quick-Scheme's!"

* No "5 easy steps" to Godliness!

* Persistence will pay off! - Not for Salvation, but for Christlikeness!

* Outline: Paul's To-Do List! "Go for it; Forget it; Grab it; Spot it; Maintain it; Follow it; & Eagerly wait for it! {7 things}

1. GO FOR IT! (Php 3:12)

1.1. Press On - "Keep on the chase, run after, Pursue."

1.2. Think athletic terms! Lace up your running shoes,...we're going to the Isthmian Games[the famous Greek games played on Corinth's Isthmus]

1.3. Last part of the chapter the start gun went off for Paul (he told of his salvation).

1.4. Paul's about on his 20th mile of his 26 mile Marathon!

1.4.1. Oh, there's been some tripping along the way, but he always gets up. He gets off pace, sometimes slowing down, sometimes at a pace too fast, but he stays at his race, & runs on to completion! The crowd yells, "Paul are you finished"? He responds, "No way!...The race isn't over yet!...I Press on!"

1.5. Paul uses this same word but it's translated "pursue" in 1 Tim.6:11 for 6 things to chase! "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness."

1.6. Q: What mile of the race are you on? How's your pace?

1.7. Sometimes running can get monotonous, looking at the same runners back, same dirt, same scenery,...but take heart... Your On The Right Road!

1.7.1. "If your on the right road you'll get to the right destination!"

1.8. We need to "Press Toward the Eternal Tape! Don't focus on yesterday: either on your accomplishments(which can lead to pride); nor on your failures(which can lead to unnecessary guilt). - Look ahead & keep moving!

1.8.1. Will Rogers said, "Even if your on the right track, you'll still get run over if you just sit there!" {Press on!}

1.8.2. The American Bible Society says as we translate this, "I press towards the mark", the Navajo Indian would say, "I run with my mouth open!"

2. FORGET IT! (Php 3:13a)

2.1. Forgetting - "absolute & complete forgetting; no longer to influenced by or affected by."

2.1.1. Used for a runner not looking back once passing another runner, instead...focusing on the Tape set before him!

2.1.2. 2 Examples - When Cortez landed at Vera Cruz in 1519 to begin his conquest of Mexico with small force of 700 men, he purposely set fire to his fleet of 11 ships. His men on the shore watched their only means of retreat sinking to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico. With no means of retreat, there was only one direction to move, forward into the Mexican interior to meet whatever might come their way.

2.1.3. Julius Caesar landed on the shores of Britain with his Roman legions, he took a bold and decisive step to ensure the success of his military venture. Ordering his men to halt on the edge of the Cliffs of Dover, he commanded them to look down at the water below. To their amazement, they saw every ship in which they had crossed the channel engulfed in flames. Caesar had deliberately cut off any possibility of retreat! Now that his soldiers were unable to return to the continent, there was nothing left for them to do but to advance and conquer!

2.2. Q: In your race of life is there something you need to "forget", "put behind you"?

2.3. Q: Do you know that looking back only slows up your race?

2.3.1. "The best way to get even is to forget."

2.3.2. Maybe today is the day to forget & put it behind you? Ps.37:5 "Commit your way to the LORD(roll your ways upon the Lord)".

3. GRAB IT! (Php 3:13b)

3.1. Reaching Forward - Reaching = leaning, stretching, straining.

3.1.1. Like a runner leaning forward!

3.1.2. Or, like the Chariot Races in the Isthmian Games: a small round disk, wheel on each side, no rail, pulled by a horse or

2.

3.1.3. Straining, leaning forward, w/ every nerve & muscle to stay on!

3.2. Q: Does this intensity describe your race? Are you making deliberate progress in your life? Do you passionately pursue godliness? [Swindoll]

3.3. "Stretch , Strain, & Strive for the Prize!"

4. SPOT IT! (Php 3:14)

4.1. vs.14a - Goal - Skopos/A goal in which to fix the eye(LKGNT).

4.1.1. Fix on it, lock on it, Draw a bead on it!

4.1.2. Are word "scope" - I picture the cross hairs in a rifles scope(+).

4.1.3. Paul has turned the last curve & now is in the home stretch where he can see the goal.

4.1.4. Heb.12:2 "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith,"

4.2. Q: What are your eyes "fixed on"?

4.2.1. Prov.23:5 "Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven."

4.2.2. Ps.101:3 "I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me."

4.2.3. S. of Sol. 5:12 "His eyes are like doves by the water streams, washed in milk, & fitly set(mounted like jewels)." (sparkling/pure/& fitly set)

4.2.4. "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full into his wonderful face!"

4.3. Php 3:14c - Upward call - Our call is a heavenly calling(Heb.3:1)not just earthly!

4.3.1. One defined this, "The goal continually moves forward as we press on, but yet never out of sight."

4.3.2. At 1st I thought "how mean of God to be backing up as we are pressing forward" Then I pictured a father getting a toddler to walk!

4.3.2.1. [He leaves the coach behind him & walks wobbly to the parent, stumbling a few times along the way. The father picks him up, gets him balanced, & he starts again. Never giving up, for he longs to be with the father!]

4.3.3. Some have the motto "To keep from falling...Don't try!"[not the Christian]

4.3.4. The Scottish Preacher Alexander Whyte described the perseverance of the saints as, "falling down & getting up, falling down & getting up, falling down & getting up, all the way to heaven!"

4.4. Prize - The prize is Christlikeness!

5. MAINTAIN IT! (Php 3:15,16)

5.1. Stuart Briscoe interpreted vs.15,16 as, "I am complete in the sense that I have grown as far as I can at the present, & I am ready for the next lesson!"

5.2. vs.15a - Maturing - (Story) High in the Alps is a monument raised in honor of a faithful guide who perished while ascending a peak to rescue a stranded tourist. Inscribed on that memorial stone are these words: HE DIED CLIMBING. A maturing, growing Christian should have the same kind of attitude, right up to the end of life.

5.3. vs.15b - Paul very graciously allows them to grow at their own pace.

5.4. Note the shift from "I" to "us"!

5.4.1. The race is not Solo! We're running as a team. (Mical in gymnastic meets competes individually, & as a team)

5.4.2. Some runners in a race run by & don't even acknowledge your there, others encourage you along!

5.4.3. Help others to keep the high standard!

5.4.4. On the wall of a gymnastic class it said, "If you want to perform like a champion, you must practice like one!" - AMEN!

5.4.5. "Victory is a by-product of Obedience!"

6. FOLLOW IT! (Php 3:17-19)

6.1. vs.17 - Example - (Lightfoot) "to mark & follow Paul the pace setter!"

6.1.1. Like the Rabbit @ the Boston Marathon.

6.1.2. How do we chose a mentor? (Swindoll)

6.1.2.1. [1] Chose them slowly & carefully [2] Study their lives privately [3] Follow those most worthy of your personal admiration.

6.1.3. John Maxwell said, "A leader (to follow) is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way."

6.2. Php 3:18 - Enemies of the cross? Who?

6.2.1. 1st Judiazers - They denied the crosses value!

6.2.1.1. Paul said, "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (Gal.6:14)

6.2.2. 2nd Epicurean Antinomians - Epicureans(Acts 17:18)were Followers of Epicurus (341-270bc) who "abandoned as hopeless the search for pure truth seeking instead true pleasure through experience" (they were hedonist/greek for pleasure).

6.2.2.1. Antinomian = (against/law) their loose living gave the lie to the cross.

6.2.2.2. 1 Jn.2:4 "He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

6.3. Php 3:19 - "Their end isn't a Mansion, but Destruction!

They won't pick up their Cross, only a Croissant!

Their glory isn't the Right Aim, but their Shame!

Their mind isn't on Spiritual Birth, but on Physical Earth!

6.4. God is their Belly - Describe Roman eating - Vomitorium in Bet-Shean!

6.4.1. Belly is also used in a general sense, "all that belongs to the bodily, fleshly life of man, which perishes."

6.4.2. They are those driven by sensual appetites. Please self, not God.

6.4.3. They walk by Sight,...not faith!

7. EAGERLY WAIT FOR IT! (Php 3:20,21)

7.1. Php 3:20 - Some translate "we are a colony of heaven."

7.1.1. Colony - Rome would normally send out 300 veteran soldiers who served their time, w/their families, & settle them in a strategic location. They would speak Roman language, wear Roman dress, have Roman ceremonies, & Roman customs, They were stubbornly & unalterably ROMAN! Listen to the Roman Pride in Acts 16:20,21 "And they brought them(Paul & Silas) to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; "and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe."

7.2. Php 3:21 - New Bod's -

7.2.1. Lowly - Low back pains, headaches, toothaches, cracks & creaks.

7.2.2. Glorious - Picture: the feeling of a warm shower on a cold morning; laying down after a hard day; the feeling of cold water going down after good work out; A time when you've said, "I feel great"; & it's nothing like that!...it's 10 billion times better!!!

7.2.3. Someone said we are Heaven-bound people in a Hell-bound world!

8. END:

8.1. "Our Citizenship is in heaven" - Quote: Barclay pg. 69

8.2. Q: Does your conduct match your Citizenship? [5 questions/Swindoll]

8.2.1. [1] Can the waitress at the restaurant tell by the way you treat her that you are a citizen of heaven? (or tip her?)

8.2.2. [2] Can the people on the freeway tell a difference by the way you drive?

8.2.3. [3] Does your conduct match your citizenship behind the doors of your home?

8.2.4. [4] Whose morals do you observe when you're on a business trip alone?

8.2.5. [5] How do you treat others on the phone or at work?

Philippians 4:1-9

11-2-97 "Currying Worrying"

1. INTRO:

1.1. Story - A few years ago two ministers got into a fight about what they considered to be an important doctrinal matter.

* They settled the fight when the first minister told the second: "Look, what are we fighting over? We're both striving to do the Lord's work. You do it your way and I'll do it His way!"

1.2. When it comes to church fights we see everything from hand to hand combat to all out war! {From real bullets, to verbal bullets}

1.2.1. Catholic against Protestant(Ireland/war); Doctrinal issues(Calvinism vs. Arminianism); Denominational splits; Church splits; Christian Friend splits; & even Christian Husband & Wife splits!

1.3. Outline: The Principle; The People; The Peacemaker; The Presence; & The Persistent Pest!

2. THE PRINCIPLE(Stand Fast in the Lord)! (Phil 4:1)

2.1. Let's peek into a 1st century church skirmish.

2.2. Paul gives the #1 strategy: "Stand fast in the Lord!"

2.2.1. Persevere in the Lord, don't turn to the left or rt.

2.2.2. Story – A Hunter bought himself a new hunting dog. Took him out to track a bear. Got on a bear sent, but then followed a deer sent when it crossed the bear track. Soon followed a rabbit track. When the hunter caught up to the barking hound he was proudly barking at a mouse hole.

2.2.3. "Stand Fast" = Following Christ's teachings, respecting His word, modeling His priority, loving His people, & carrying out His will!"

2.2.3.1. Commit to doing this & you'll have no problem getting along w/other members of God's family.

3. THE PEOPLE(2 Ladies)! (Phil 4:2)

3.1. Wow! This conflict reached Paul's ear way over in Rome!

3.2. We don't know very much of this situation???

3.3. 2 friends/co-laborers/ Ladies are urged to harmony!

3.4. Euodia(Eu-o-thia) = "Prosperous Journey";

Syntyche(Soon-too-khay) = "Pleasant Acquaintance".

3.4.1. I think it went like this: (w/disgust)

"Hey, well you have a "Prosperous journey",

Oh yea, well it's a Pleasure to make your Acquaintance!"

4. THE PEACEMAKER(Mediator)! (Phil 4:3)

4.1. Some disputes require a 3rd person, a mediator.

4.1.1. Q: Who is this person? {We don't know/many ideas suggested} [Masculine].

4.2. They seemed to be acting like a couple of porcupines, sticking each other, whenever they'd come together.

4.2.1. (Swindoll) "They needed each other, but they needled each other!"

4.3. The ultimate goal w/church conflicts:

4.3.1. [1] Restoration – Not Discipline.

4.3.2. [2] The Rt. attitude, "Grace" – Not Force.

4.3.3. [3] The common ground, "Christ" – Not logic, church policy, tradition, or your will.

4.3.3.1. Rom.12:18 "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."

- 4.4. What little step can you take this week to pursue Peace?
- 4.5. Note the difference between Disagreeing, & being Disagreeable is an important one!
 - 4.5.1. Prov.18:19 "A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle."
5. THE PRESENCE(Gods)! (Phil 4:4,5)
 - 5.1. "Rejoice" – "Look up & don't miss the Glory!"
 - 5.1.1. In Pilgrim's Progress John Bunyan has a character who continually turns over the muck, over & over, w/ his muck rake!
 - 5.2. "Gentleness" = Humble, patient, steadfastness.
 - 5.3. Why? Because God's presence is near!
6. THE PERSISTENT PEST(Worry)! (Phil 4:6-9)
 - 6.1. PROBLEM SOLVING(or "Currying Worrying")! (6-9)
 - 6.2. To resolve a problem we often resort to : Worry, complaining, becoming depressed, or telling everybody who'll listen about your troubles. It may feel good temporarily...but it never gets the problem resolved!
 - 6.3. Q: Are you Addicted to Worry?
 - 6.4. We seem to play this sin down. It is an acceptable sin that doesn't even cause us to blush!
 - 6.4.1. Some ask, "how did David get away w/6 wives?" The culture accepted that in his day (though God never did!).
 - 6.4.2. Anxiety/Worry is acceptable in the 20th century! (Though not acceptable to God!)
 - 6.4.3. Many believers seem to be addicted to anxiety, & racked w/Worry!
 - 6.5. Let's look at God's Rehab Program for those addicted to Worry!
 - 6.6. Worry is: Being mentally harassed, emotionally agitated, burdened about things that haven't happened,...But They Could!!!
 - 6.6.1. Our word "Worry" is from the "Middle English Period" meaning "to choke or strangle".
 - 6.6.2. It means troubled, fretful, troubled w/cares, to turn over in the mind.
 - 6.7. We are told to "Stop being Anxious!"(lit.) (rwp)
 - 6.8. Cares are normal, man should have & will have cares! (ie. wise foresight, a nec. sense of responsibility)
 - 6.8.1. But it is what we do w/them is the key!
 - 6.8.2. We are to cast our cares where? (upon Him)
 - 6.8.2.1. 1 Pet.5:7 "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."
 - 6.8.2.2. Cast = to throw something upon something else(used for Jesus donkey)
 - 6.8.3. How do we cast our cares on Him? In Petitionary Prayer! {Anxiety is the Opposite of Prayer}
 - 6.8.3.1. Put them on the Back of God! – Let Him worry about your cares!
 - 6.8.3.2. We need to be like the guys on a submarine in a storm. Q: "Did you guys feel that storm?"...What storm?
 - 6.9. Don't be a prisoner to Worry (it will strangle your faith & make you unable to bear fruit).
 - 6.9.1. Picture sap running out of your tree & never making it up to nourish the fruit, each time you worry! {don't be a sap!}
 - 6.10. Q: Can you imagine a life w/o Worry?
 - 6.10.1. Jesus could, did, & took time to explain it!
 - 6.10.2. Mt.6:25-34 (4 consequences to Worry)
 - 6.10.3. [1] Our value system gets confused(25b"is not life...") [2] We become selfish(31"what shall we...") [3] Our Christian distinctives get blurred(32"whole vs.") [4] Tomorrow becomes a dread(34"whole vs.)
 - 6.11. Here's God's 5 Step rehab program for those addicted to Worry! Prayer; Peace of God; Positive thoughts; Positive Models; & The Potentate of Peace!
 - 6.12. PRAYER!
 - 6.13. Turn your Worry List into a Prayer List! & Turn your anxious Sniveling into Thanksgiving!
 - 6.14. To the unbeliever: "Ever wonder why we Christians pray? Take a look at our God!!!
 - 6.15. PEACE OF GOD!
 - 6.16. Here's the lasting benefits from the program.
 - 6.16.1. Peace from a divine origin!
 - 6.16.2. (L.B.) Phil 4:6,7 - "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."
 - 6.17. "Guard your hearts" – (lkgnt) "A military term picturing soldiers standing on guard duty & refers to the guarding of the city gate from within, as a control on all who went out."

6.17.1. Look again. Who's doing the guarding? Peace is! {This Peace is a Peace officer guarding something valuable...it's guarding your heart & mind!} [picture Caesaria gate]

6.17.2. Allow God's silent sentry called Peace protect your mind, emotions, & will.

6.18. POSITIVE THOUGHTS!

6.19. Deliberately keep your mind on Positive, Pure, Praiseworthy Points!

6.20. "If this list is suppose to be the meat & potatoes of our thoughts; Then worry is the Junkfood for our soul!"

6.21. True(truth); Noble(that which is majestic & awe inspiring); Just(right); Pure(morally pure, clean thoughts); Lovely(acceptable); Good Report(admirable, attractive); Virtue(the most comprehensive Gk. term for moral excellence); Praiseworthy(worthy of Praise).

6.22. "Meditate on these things!" – We are responsible for our thoughts & can hold them to High & Holy ideals!

6.22.1. At times I hold myself to these "Holy 8"! Other times I let them run anywhere they want to run, & as fast as they want to run there!

6.22.2. Story – Giving my dogs a bath. I put them on a leash & limit there freedom, but then comes the water & shampoo, & 10 finger massage(they start wiggling). It's interesting as soon as I let them off the leash they run as fast as they can in the back yard & go get filthy in the dirt!

6.22.2.1. SO w/our thoughts...Strap em Down to the "Holy 8"!

6.22.3. Homework – List 3 of each of the 8. "Then store em up in your mind, & let them drip like an IV down into your soul when needed!"

6.23. POSITIVE MODELS!

6.24. Paul – they Learned from his example; Received a wealth of know-ledge; they Heard his great teachings; & Saw a super example in him.

6.25. Q: Do you have someone who is a positive model to you?

6.25.1. Grab an inspiring biography(missionary, preacher, women of faith)

6.26. "These things Do!" – "Practice as a habit, continue to do".

6.27. POTENTATE OF PEACE!

6.28. The only one who can bring a Higher Peace than the worlds peace, is the One transcends the world around us.

6.29. When you're trying to get to sleep at night & you can't because of anxiety, listen to God's whisper, "Go ahead & sleep now, I'll sit up!"

6.30. (Barclay) "There is nothing too great for God's Power; & nothing too small for His Fatherly Care!"

7. WRAP UP!

7.1. Worry only: Postpones Prayer; Pillages the Peace of God; Pinches off Positive Thoughts; Pounds Positive Models; & Puts off the Potentate of Peace!

7.2. Benediction: (Heb.13:20,21)"Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Philippians 4:1-7

I. INTRO:

1. It's 2 a.m., and you're wide awake; palms sweaty, heart racing. You're worried about your kids, or your aging parents, or your 401(k). Your health. Your sex life. Something has your mind spinning like a hamster cage.

2. There is certainly a lot of anxiety going around. Anxiety disorder (which is what health experts call any anxiety that persists to the point that it interferes with one's life). It is the most common mental illness in the U.S. In its various forms, ranging from very specific phobias to generalized anxiety disorder, it afflicts 19 million Americans.

1. Stress is an external stimulus that signals danger, often by causing pain.

2. Fear is the short-term response such stresses produce in us.

3. Anxiety has a lot of the same symptoms as fear, but it's a feeling that lingers long after the stress has lifted and the threat has passed.

4. Depression is a prolonged sadness that results in a blunting of emotions & a sense of futility. (Times Magazine Article: Aug. 18, 2002)

3. The believers relationship to the Lord should make a difference!

1. A Difference in his/her relationship to people (unity)
2. A Difference in his/her own attitude (rejoice & gentleness)
3. A Difference in his/her own condition (anxious)
4. A Difference in his/her own circumstances (pray/peace)

4. Story - A few years ago 2 ministers got into a fight about what they considered to be an important doctrinal matter. They settled the fight when the first minister told the second: "Look, what are we fighting over? We're both striving to do the Lord's work. You do it your way and I'll do it His way!" [unity]

1. When it comes to church fights we see everything from hand to hand combat to all out war! [From verbal bullets, to real bullets!]

1. Catholic against Protestant (Ireland/war); Doctrinal Issues (Calvinism vs. Arminianism); Denominational splits; Church splits; Christian Friend splits; & even Christian Husband & Wife splits! (remember to pick 1 day this week to fast for marriages!)

2. Let's peek into a 1st century church skirmish.

II. OUTLINE: Unifying Power & Fortifying Power!

III. UNIFYING POWER! (Phil 4:1-3)

1. THE CONTENDERS! (Phil 4:1,2)
2. (2) So these 2 friends/co-laborers/ladies are urged to harmony!
 1. Euodia (Eu-o-thia) = "Prosperous Journey";
 2. Syntyche (Soon-too-khay) = "Pleasant Acquaintance".

1. I think it went like this: (w/disgust) "Hey, Euodia you have a Prosperous journey, Ok Syntyche, it's a Pleasure to make your Acquaintance!"

3. Boy, Church problems spread fast...all the way to Rome!

1. Are these women Christians? Yes, names in book of life.
2. Are these women mature Christians? Yes, were leaders (everyone in church knew their names; they labored with Paul).
3. So, leaders can have these divisions? Yes, & isn't an issue with false teaching or heresy.
4. What was the division then? We don't know.
 1. It must not matter, because the bible doesn't say.
 2. It's division that matters. Paint any story on it from lil church issues to big ones.
 3. But then again, "A smooth sea never made a skillful sailor!"

4. Illustration: It is said that when the British and French were fighting in Canada in the 1750s, Admiral Phipps, commander of the British fleet, was told to anchor outside Quebec. He was given orders to wait for the British land forces to arrive, then support them when they attacked the city. Phipps' navy arrived early. As the admiral waited, he became annoyed by the statues of the saints that adorned the towers of a nearby cathedral, so he commanded his men to shoot at them with the ships' cannons. No one knows how many rounds were fired or how many statues were knocked out, but when the land forces arrived and the signal was given to attack, the admiral was of no help. He had used up all his ammunition shooting at the "saints."

1. Are you wasting your ammunition on the other saints?

5. THE COUNSELOR! (Phil 4:3)

6. Some disputes require a 3rd person, a mediator.

1. Don't be embarrassed then when you need a mediator/counselor.

7. The ultimate goal w/church conflicts: [Phil 4:3]

1. The Common Goal? Restoration; Not Discipline.
2. The Right attitude? Grace; Not Force.
3. The common ground? Christ; Not logic, church policy, tradition, or your will.
 1. Rom.12:18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men
 2. Note the difference between disagreeing, & being disagreeable is an important one!

1. Prov.18:19 A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle.

IV. FORTIFYING POWER! (Phil 4:4-7)

1. THE PRAYER! (Phil 4:4-6)

2. (Phil 4:4) Rejoice - Your Joy is to be in the Lord & unchanging (always!)

1. Paul's own circumstances(in jail) reminded him of the joy available in the Lord.

3. (Phil 4:5) Gentleness - graciousness.

1. The gentle person does not insist on his or her rights.

4. (Phil 4:5) The Lord is at hand - can either mean the Lord is close by, at their side, or His coming is Imminent.

5. Jesus is the believers life power - There are 2 rules for this power to function: Never Stressful, Always Thankful.

6. NEVER STRESSFUL! (Phil 4:6a)

1. To resolve a problem we often resort to: Worry, complaining, becoming depressed; or telling everybody who'll listen about your troubles. It may feel good temporarily...but it never gets the problem resolved!

2. What good has worrying ever accomplished?

1. It has never made anyone stronger; or helped anyone to do God's will; or provided for anyone a way of escape out of their anxiety or confusion. (Streams In The Desert; pg.380)

2. Anxiety is a contradiction of the life of faith.

3. Worrying is absolutely forbidden by Jesus. Mt.6:31 Therefore do not worry, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or What shall we wear?

1. He does not mean we are not to think ahead or that our life should never have a plan or pattern to it.

2. He simply means that we are not to worry about these things.

4. Illustration: There is a part of the sea known as "the cushion of the sea." It lies beneath the surface that is agitated by storms and churned by the wind. It is so deep that it is a part of the sea that is never stirred. It's unaffected by all the turbulence that was above it.

1. The peace of God is an eternal calm like the "cushion of the sea." It lies so deep in our hearts that no circumstance or difficulty can reach it. We can go within and access that place at any time, and in doing so, we draw those around us into the presence of our God whose everlasting arms are beneath all of our stormy seas in life.

7. Worry is being mentally harassed, emotionally agitated, burdened about things that haven't happened...but they Could!!!

1. Our word "worry" is from the "Middle English Period" meaning "to choke or strangle". [It means troubled, fretful, troubled w/cares, to turn over in the mind]

1. We are told to "Stop being Anxious!" (lit.) (RWP)

2. Cares/concerns are normal, man should have & will have cares! (ie. wise foresight, a nec. sense of responsibility) - But it is what we do w/them is the key!

1. See, Life causes anxiety! But, what will you do with it???

3. * Worry vs. Concern = Be concerned for things we are responsible for; worrying is concerning ourselves over things which you have no control.

4. We are to cast our cares where? (upon Him)

1. 1 Pet.5:7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

2. Cast = to throw something upon something else. (used for Jesus donkey)

3. How do we cast our cares on Him? In Petitionary Prayer! [Anxiety is the Opposite of Prayer]

1. Put them on the Back of God! – Let Him worry about your cares! :)

2. We need to be like the guys on a submarine in a storm. Q: Did you guys feel that storm?...What storm?

4. Don't be a prisoner to Worry (it will strangle your faith & make you unable to bear fruit).

1. Picture sap running out of your tree, & never making it up to nourish the fruit, each time you worry! [don't be a sap!]

5. Q: Can you imagine a life w/o Worry?

1. Jesus could, & did, & took the time to explain it!

5. Mt.6:25-34 - 4 consequences to Worry:

1. Worrying causes our value system/or priorities to get confused (25b) "is not life..."

2. Worrying causes us to become selfish(31) what shall we...(eat/drink/wear)

3. Worrying causes our Christian distinctive's to blur (32a)

4. Worrying causes us to dread tomorrow (34)

8. ALWAYS THANKFUL! (Phil 4:6b)

9. To the unbeliever: "Ever wonder why we Christians pray? Take a look at our God!!!"

10. 3 words to describe prayer: prayer; supplication; thanksgiving.

1. Each contributes to a proper understanding of the comprehensive nature of the prayer life.

11. THE PEACE! (Phil 4:7)

12. Here's the lasting benefits from the program. - Peace from a divine origin!

1. (L.B. vs.6,7) Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

2. Paul's didn't envision a situation change or external needs met. This peace was a characteristic of GOD that invades the Christian!

13. Surpasses understanding - meaning, peace, even when we don't understand the whys!!!

14. Guard your hearts – "A military term picturing soldiers standing on guard duty & refers to the guarding of the city gate from within, as a control on all who went out." (LKGNT)

1. Look again. Who's doing the guarding? Peace is!

1. This Peace, is a Peace Officer guarding something valuable...it's guarding your heart & mind! [picture Caesarian gate]

2. It's God's silent sentry that protects your mind, emotions, & will.

15. Prayer: May the peace of God guard us & the God of peace go with us.

Philippians 4:10-23

11-16-97

1. Intro:

1.1. A Pastor mispronounced the 2 ladies names in vs.2 as "Odious & Soon-Touchy"!

1.1.1. "We still have people in the church that are either Odious or Soon-Touchy." {Soon-Touchy easily gets her feelings hurt, while Odious delights in hurting others feelings!}

1.2. If we Pray as we ought(4-7); Think as we ought(8,9); The Peace of God will Guard us(7), Go with us(9), & Give unto us the Power(10-13) & the Material Needs(14-20) we need for life & service.

1.3. Paul didn't have a wealthy organization to support him, but he did have a Great God who enabled generous friends to meet his needs.

1.4. We are going to look at:

[1] 4 Attributes of Paul's Sufficiency!

[2] 3 Attributes of the Philippi's Generosity!

[3] 3 Attributes of God's Liberality!

Four Attributes of Paul's Sufficiency.

1. PAUL IS AFFIRMING (Phil 4:10)

1.5. Paul is affirming..."your care flourished AGAIN"!

1.5.1. It has been about 10 years that Philippi has shown concern for Paul's welfare & ministry!

1.6. Paul returns to the theme of ch.1 "Partnership" in the gospel [Read 1:3-5]

1.7. Vs.10b – A quick qualifier!

1.7.1. Paul didn't want to be misunderstood!

1.7.2. Quote: The Best of Dear Abby [R.D.Jones put an add in his small town newspaper...but there was a typographical error]

1.7.3. Here was a problem of Caring, yet not having opportunity. "Often we have opportunity...but don't care!"

2. PAUL IS CONTENTED (Phil 4:11)

2.1. Here are some proverbs & sayings on Contentment!

- Content is the philosopher's stone that turns all it touches into gold.

- Enjoy your own life without comparing it with that of another.

- If we have not quiet in our minds, outward comfort will do no more for us than a golden slipper on a gouty foot. [John Bunyan]

- When life isn't the way you like, like it the way it is. [Jewish Proverb]

- Since the house is on fire, let us warm ourselves. [Italian Proverb]

- [Helen Keller] They took away what should have been my eyes,
(But I remembered Milton's Paradise)
They took away what should have been my ears,
(Beethoven came and wiped away my tears)
They took away what should have been my tongue,
(But I had talked with God when I was young)
He would not let them take away my soul,
Possessing that, I still possess the whole.

2.2. When it comes to Contentment are you a Thermometer or a Thermostat?

2.2.1. Thermometers – Merely register what ever the climate is around them!

Thermostats - Maintain a mature attitude in spite of life's highs & lows!

2.3. Q: Do you wish to have the gift of contentment like Paul?

Well....it's not a gift! - It is "learned"(11).

It is developed over time thru a growing trust in Christ.

3. PAUL IS FLEXIBLE (Phil 4:12)

3.1. Be Content to live in PlentyJ or PovertyL!

3.2. We must be able to “mount up w/wings like eagles”, but we must also know how to “come down”!

3.2.1. Are we able to live in life's Valley's?

3.2.2. Being able to “do all things” was referring to mostly things of abasement, hunger, & when we suffer needs!

3.2.3. The children of Israel weren't content in 1 of their 1st valley's!

3.2.3.1. Read Numb.11:1,4-6,10-15,31-34.

3.3. Let's mount back up with the Eagles. {some have learned to be abased, but not how to abound!}

3.3.1. Sometimes I believe it's easier being the Beagle rather than the Eagle!

3.3.2. Have you ever felt dizzy when you reached a mnt. Peak? (so do some Christians!)

3.3.3. Q: On a Roller Coaster which is scarier: the Dip at the bottom or the Pinnacle at the top?

Q: Is it easier to carry a cup that is ½ full or 1 that is full? {It's harder to keep your mortal hand steady!}

3.3.4. More Christians seem to bring more disgrace to the name of Christ in Prosperity than in Adversity!

3.3.4.1. When were satisfied w/earth we're content to do w/o heaven!

3.4. We need to learn how to sail w/a faint breeze or in a powerful gale!

3.5. Our Prayer: “Lord, Teach us “how to be full” – “Let not the gifts thy love bestows estrange our hearts from thee!”

4. PAUL IS CONFIDENT (Phil 4:13)

4.1. Q: Where do you put the emphasis on this verse? On, “I can do” or on “Through Christ”?

4.1.1. If we rely on Christ's power we can face all circumstances w/perfect contentment!

4.1.2. This was a confidence in Christ's Sufficiency!

4.1.3. Story - John Henry Jowett told about a small village where an elderly woman died. She died penniless, uneducated, unsophisticated, but during her lifetime her selfless service had made a tremendous impact for Christ.

On her tombstone they chiseled the words, "She did what she couldn't."

4.2. Paul never said: {Swindoll}

“I can do all things through Education!”

“I can do all things through Money!”

“I can do all things through Power!”

“I can do all things through Positive Thinking!”

* Someone had defined Positive Thinking as “self improvement by self-deception!”

“I can do all things through Confidence in myself!”

Three Attributes of the Philippi's Generosity.

1. THEY HAD COMPASSION (Phil 4:14,15)

1.1. Phil 4:14 – It says we “do well if we share in others Distresses”!

1.1.1. Today there are many saints in Distress around the globe: In China, Cuba, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Iran, & Uzbekistan.

1.1.2. Today is the “Int. Day of Prayer, for the Persecuted church!”

1.1.3. Statistics – 156,000 Christians were martyred last year!

1.1.3.1. [That's 17 every hour! That's 1 every 3 min.'s & 52 sec.'s!]

1.1.3.2. Read – Global News Briefs

1.2. Phil 4:15 – A metaphor is used here from the business world.

1.2.1. “Concerning” = “as to an account”.

1.2.2. The Philippians by their contributions had “opened an account” w/him. {credit & debit/deposit & withdrawals}

2. THEY HAD FRUIT (Phil 4:16,17)

2.1. Here's some fruit to your account: “We are known as the church that takes care of peoples needs!”

2.1.1. We are referred from other churches, apt. buildings, we even got one from Riv. Social Services.

2.1.2. We support approx. 25-27 Missionary's or Organizations.

2.1.3. That's your fruit...if you financially give!

2.1.4. What a blessing it is for me to see your fruit!

2.2. 2 Cor.9:10,11 “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, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.”

3. THEY HAD SACRIFICIAL COMMITMENT (Phil 4:18)

3.1. "I am full" – amply supplied(NIV)

3.1.1. Full, had a commercial meaning, "to receive a sum in full & give a receipt."

3.2. This was an offering scented w/your favorite perfume or cologne. One where God's nostrils go (sniff) Woah!

3.3. "Well pleasing to God" – Every Christian has a personal calling to Please God! {Geneva Study Bible}

3.3.1. We can please Him by: Faith(Heb.11:5,6); Praise(Ps.69:30,31); Generosity(Heb.13:16); Obedience to authority(Rom.13:1); Simple-mindedness in Christian service(2 Tim. 2:4).

Three Attributes of God's Liberality!

1. JEHOVAH JIREH (Phil 4:19)

1.1. "My God...your needs...His riches."

1.1.1. Paul saw the 3 blend beautifully in his own life & was confident that God would do the same for his beloved Philippians.

1.2. "No gift ever made any man the poorer!" {He who gives makes himself richer, for his own gift opens to him the gifts of God!} [Barclay]

1.3. "Needs" – Material & Spiritual!

2. GLORY (Phil 4:20)

2.1. He deserves the Glory! It's Him!

2.2. You might say, " but my health is failing; my marriage isn't on the rocks, it's over the cliffs, or my kids don't respect me anymore. How do I Glorify Him?

2.3. Here's a ch.4 survey of why God deserves all the Glory! It's because it's all of Him, listen!

2.3.1. Vs.1 – We stand fast, in the Lord.

Vs.4 - We Rejoice, in the Lord.

Vs.6 – We let our requests, be known to God.

Vs.7 – We receive the peace, of God.

Vs.9 – We follow Paul's example & gain, the God of Peace.

Vs.13 – We can do all things, through Christ.

Vs.19 – We can rest because, God shall supply all our needs.

3. GRACE (Phil 4:23)

3.1. Grace is probably Paul's favorite Theme!

3.1.1. Jn.1:17 "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

4. End:

4.1. Contentment!

As author Zig Zigler says, "If life hands you a lemon, take the lemon and make lemonade."

Charles Goodyear's lemon was a prison sentence, resulting from a contempt of court citation. While in prison, Goodyear didn't complain. Instead, he became an assistant in the kitchen. While there, he continued to work on an idea. In the process he discovered a method for vulcanizing rubber. His lemon, a prison sentence, became our lemonade. We have better tires, which means better travel and a better way of life.

Philippians 4:8-13

INTRO:

Pray for Ukraine Team: (Leave Sunday)

Quick Thinking: A man working in the produce department was asked by a lady if she could buy 1/2 a head of lettuce. He replied, "1/2 a head? Are you serious? God grows these in whole heads and that's how we sell them!" "You mean," she persisted, "that after all the years I've shopped here, you won't sell me half-a-head of lettuce?" "Look," he said, "If you like I'll ask the manager." She indicated that would be appreciated, so the young man marched to the front of the store. "You won't believe this, but there's a lame-brained idiot of a lady back there who wants to know if she can buy 1/2-a-head of lettuce." He noticed the manager gesturing, and turned around to see the lady standing behind him, obviously having followed him to the front of the store. "And this nice lady was wondering if she could buy the other 1/2," he concluded.

Later in the day the manager cornered the young man and said, "That was the finest example of thinking on your feet I've ever seen! Where did you learn that?" "I grew up in Grand Rapids, and if you know anything about Grand Rapids, you know that it's known for its great hockey teams & its ugly women." The manager's face flushed, & he interrupted, "My wife is from Grand Rapids!" "And

which hockey team did she play for?"

Paul now gives 2 lists: Things to Meditate on & things to Put into practice!

First, your thought life; then your model of effective Christian living.

Aging is a matter of fact(we're all getting older); Maturity is a matter of choice!

Leash Your Mind, Unleash Your Maturity!

LEASH YOUR MIND! (Phil 4:8)

1. (8) Paul now gives the standard for our thought life!

1. Deliberately keep your mind on Positive, Pure, Praiseworthy Points!

2. Note the importance of the mind & its right use.

1. Note what God can do for our minds - Is.26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace(Shalom Shalom) Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

2. "If this list is suppose to be the meat & potatoes of our thoughts; then worry is the Junk food for our soul!"

3. True (truthfulness); Noble (that which is majestic & awe inspiring); Just (right); Pure (morally pure, clean thoughts); Lovely (acceptable); Good Report (admirable, attractive); Virtue (the most comprehensive Gk. term for moral excellence); Praiseworthy(worthy of Praise).

4. Meditate - consider, reckon, take into account, to think on.

1. Pres tense calls for a "continual or habitual action".

2. We are responsible for our thoughts & can hold them to High & Holy ideals!

1. At times I hold myself to these Holy 8!

2. Other times I let em run anywhere they want to run, as fast as they want to run there.

3. Example: Different leashes to walk your dogs (eg: leash; lead(dog shows); choke chain; prong choke chain; retractable??? Allows dog to roam anywhere)

1. Why do most of our cities have leash laws? (on a leash & under control)

2. To protect other citizens from dog attacks when off of your property.

3. You've heard, "Leash your dog!"... Paul's saying, "leash your mind!"

1. Isn't that one of the 10 commandments, "don't wander onto your neighbors yard & start coveting his house, wife, servants, animals, or anything that is his." Ex.20:17

2. Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor.10:5b

1. Sometimes that takes the "pronged" choke chain!

3. Your mind needs different leashes at different times!

5. Homework – Come up with a few examples of each of the 8.

1. What's opposite? When your mind is thinking on things that are false; low morals; unjust; impure; unlovely; bad reports.

1. (i.e.) Whatever things are true (don't believe their lies, what does Scripture say on it?) Shift your impure thoughts to pure thoughts!

2. Then store em up in your mind. Let them become like an I.V. Drip; dripping these thoughts deep into your soul, when needed!

2. Your mind has to be thinking about something! (to stop thinking about red, you don't try to stop thinking about red; but start thinking about green!)

6. UNLEASH YOUR MATURITY! (9)

7. (Phil 4:9) These do! - these practice. Continuity & repetition of practice. (LKGNT)

1. So, practice as a habit & continue to do them.

2. They learned from Paul's example. They received a wealth of knowledge. They Heard his great teachings. They Saw a super example in him.

1. Q: Do you have someone who is a positive model to you?

2. No? Grab an inspiring biography (missionary, preacher, man/women of faith)

8. The God of Peace - The only one who can bring a Higher Peace than the worlds peace, is the One who Transcends the world around us.

1. When you're trying to get to sleep at night & you can't because of anxiety, listen to God's whisper, "Go ahead & sleep now, I'll sit up!"

2. "There is nothing too great for God's Power; & nothing too small for His Fatherly Care!" (Barclay)

3. Worry only: Postpones Prayer; Pillages the Peace of God; Pinches off Positive Thoughts; Pounds Positive Models; & Puts off the Potentate of Peace!

9. CONTENTMENT & CHRIST! (Phil 4:10-13)

10. (11b) Don't picture Paul writing at a desk in an office, but from a dark prison cell.

11. (12) Verse 13 is connected to Phil 4:12!

1. Be Content to live in Plenty or Poverty!

1. We must be able to mount up w/wings like eagles, but we must also know how to come down! (eagles don't only ride the high winds. In Alaska they sit on the beaches!)

2. Q: Are we able to live in life's Valley's?

3. Being able to "do all things" was referring to mostly things of abasement, hunger, & when we suffer needs!

4. (Message) I'm just as happy with little as with much, with much as with little. I've found the recipe for being happy whether full or hungry, hands full or hands empty.

12. Let's mount back up with the Eagles.

1. Some have learned to be abased, but not how to abound!

2. Sometimes I believe it's easier being a Beagle rather than an Eagle!

3. Q: Have you ever felt dizzy when you reached a mnt. peak? (so do some Christians!)

4. Q: On a Roller Coaster which is scarier: Dip at the bottom or Pinnacle at top?

5. Q: Is it easier to carry a cup that is ½ full or one that is full?

1. More Christians seem to bring more disgrace to the name of Christ in Prosperity than in Adversity!

2. We need to learn how to sail w/a faint breeze or in a powerful gale!

6. Our Prayer: "Lord, Teach us how to be full. Let not the gifts Your love gives, estrange our hearts from You!"

13. (Phil 4:13) Where do you put the emphasis on this verse? On, I can or on through Christ?

14. The secret of the "I can" life lies in the 2 words...through Christ!

1. That is the secret of spiritual victory...through Christ!

15. I believe too many have read this verse like the man who in reading through his bible for the 1st time, ran to the bottom of the page which read, "I can do all things."

1. He thought, "now Paul you've taken it too far!" Then he turned the page... "through Christ who strengthens me."

2. I think so many that use this verse, only hear the first part!

1. There's nothing more pathetic than wishful thinking!

2. It's not Positive Thinking: someone defined as self improvement by self-deception!

3. The true Christian position is to accept that which God appoints, & to say, "I can do all things through Christ!"

3. Story: John Henry Jowett told about a small village where an elderly woman died. She died "penniless, uneducated, unsophisticated", but during her lifetime her selfless service had made a tremendous impact for Christ. On her tombstone they chiseled the words, "She did what she couldn't."

16. Paul never said: (Swindoll)

I can do all things through Education! I can do all things through Money!

I can do all things through Power!

I can do all things through Positive Thinking!

I can do all things through Confidence in myself!

17. Who strengthens me - So, how can I live the can do life? Well, this is how...I can do all things through Christ, when I allow Him to do all things through me!

1. I can heal this marriage through Christ, when I allow Him to do all things through me!

2. I can battle this addiction through Christ, when I allow Him to do all things through me!

3. I can say no to _____ through Christ, when I allow Him to do all things through me!

4. I can find my career through Christ, when I allow Him to do all things through me!

18. So, we learned last week, when anxiety appears, the cure is Prayer! This week Paul adds, When life is disorderly, the cure is mental & practical discipline.

19. He who made the little slave-baby the strong champion of the Exodus; & the shepherd-lad the slayer of Goliath; & the captive Daniel prime minister of mighty Babylon; He who transformed Simon to Cephas, Saul into Paul, & has made 1000's of his humble followers spiritual giants, can enable you & me to "do all things" if we live in the secret of that little phrase, "through Christ"!