

## **"Paul's Letter to the Philippians – 'On Seeking One's Own'"**

### **Review:**

**Phil. 2:5** Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus . . . ***This is a very great exhortation indeed and immediately leads here in this letter to the Philippians to some very practical applications. If we have the mind of Christ, we will also be strongly motivated to fulfill these additional principles:***

#### **Phil. 2:12-16**

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

13 **For it is God which worketh** in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 **That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;**

16 **Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.**

- ***How Salvation Works – The Exhortation (Verse 12)***

**Phil. 2:12** Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

- ***And now we get to that great verse 13 to underscore what we have just now been saying about works, good works, fruit unto God for his glory:***

- ***How Salvation Works – The Lord's Working (Verses 13)***

**Phil. 2:13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure.

- ***“for it is God which worketh in you . . .”: This “worketh” points directly back to verse 12 and the words “work out”. The two go together.***
- ***“For” introduces this because the apostle is explaining the previous verse here. “With fear and trembling . . .” are words that need***

*explanation, it would seem. And I would agree and probably you would as well. AND IS THIS JUST WHAT WE MIGHT FORGET SO EASILY? THAT IT IS THE LORD GOD THAT IS DOING THE WORK. BUT THE APOSTLE HERE REMINDS US THAT IT IS PROPERLY SPEAKING “WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING” THAT WE BEAR HIS FRUIT!*

- *“both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure . . .”: We can only scratch the surface here. But the central theme of the letter is found here in these words, namely that the Lord God is working all things according to his will [and ours!]: “both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure . . .”.*

*That we as his people are in the center of this perfect will is most blessed to know, especially when we are in the midst of our many trials from which we are clearly NOT exempt.*

- ***How Salvation Works – The Believer’s Working (Verses 14-16)***

***Phil. 2:14-16***

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 **Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.**

- *Though the subject of the apostle here is what is called so mistakenly so often today “good works” [leaving the door wide open to the liberal focus on “social justice” so-called], that is not what the apostle has in mind here. Rather he writes so powerfully of how our lives might indeed “shine” with the very glory of God and his abundant grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- *And that will be only IF WE IN OUR LIVES HERE ARE “Holding forth the word of life”. YES, ALSO, “blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world”. AMEN.*

### **Today's Scripture:**

#### **Phil. 2:17-24**

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

### **Today's Outline:**

- ***Our Rejoicing Together is Always Appropriate (verses 17-18)***
- ***But Our Joy on this Earth Is Often Challenged (verse 19)***
- ***Timothy's Example of Self-Sacrifice is to be Ours Also (verses 20-22)***
- ***So Take Every Opportunity for Fellowship with the Brethren (verses 23-24)***

#### **I. Our Rejoicing Together is Always Appropriate (verses 17-18):**

##### **[READ ] Phil. 2:17-18**

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

- ***Paul's expectation and hope was for the glory of God to be displayed in him! This was stated before in this letter in chapter 1 and verse 20: That "... Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death."***
- ***Verse 18 implies confidence in the Philippian believer's response to Paul's own testimony as written here. There is great power in this kind of exhortation, isn't there?***

#### **II. But Our Joy On This Earth Is Often Challenged (verse 19):**

**[READ ] Phil. 2:19** But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

- *Our challenges are not for us alone, but they are shared not only by Christ himself but also by the brethren. Many truly care for our needs. So Paul's concerns for the brethren demanded his own sacrifice of Timothy's presence. Timothy's great value to Paul was overshadowed by his care for the brethren. This is a deep and constant concern, his care for all the churches:*

**2 Cor. 11:27-28**

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 **Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.**

- *So Paul's joy was mingled with sorrows and many burdens. The sorrows will always be with us but the joy of the Lord **SHOULD** be dominant and that is the apostle's message here.*

**III. Timothy's Example of Self-Sacrifice is to be Ours Also (verses 20-22):**

**[READ ] Phil. 2:20-22**

20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22 But **ye know** the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

- "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state": *These words, chosen by the Holy Spirit, describe in the proper way our brother Timothy. His words here are so strong regarding him, as if he is intentionally overstating the truth just to make his point. But I do not believe that. The apostle's words here are not political hyperbole. They are the truth. He does not leave it at that either. He continues with these words: "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's".*
- *For an amazing recommendation for Timothy is not out of place here, is it? Timothy has already been held high in chapter 1 verse 1 as Paul's associate in Rome. But here he is offered also as our example of sacrificial service.*
- *Note that there is an implied judgment here of others and that is inevitable — some will be singled out by their lives, whether by man, or, finally by God! Praise be to God for he alone sees the heart!*

- *Let's not miss the apostle's reference to Timothy here as an example for the believers. His great sacrifice on for Paul in Rome was just what they would have expected since they knew his sacrificial life among them all there in Philippi. He surely also had the "mind" of our Lord Jesus as they were also encouraged to know for themselves.*

#### **IV. So Take Every Opportunity for Fellowship with the Brethren (verses 23-24):**

##### **[READ ] Phil. 2:23-24**

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

- *But Paul's sending of Timothy will be delayed for good reason. Why? Because he wants the believers to have the full story about his imprisonment and what the apostle's present status is. Paul believes that he may be released soon, it seems.*
- *Paul also believes as he writes here that such delays due to the circumstances at hand are always within the ability of the Lord God to control. His abilities are not limited as are ours. And he reveals here a great and important thought that we should also never forget: The value of personal fellowship and the benefit of the Lord's provision of other believers for our spiritual blessing demand our recognition. In this case Timothy was of great benefit to Paul. But he would be of greater benefit to the church in Philippi when he came to them — and doubly great, Paul himself might also be present with him. If the Lord so willed, all would be great indeed.*
- *So his confidence was that this delay perhaps would be met with a double portion of blessing as he hoped to come himself for shared and mutual fellowship. We do not know if that hope was met or not. But his confidence would be met in many case. As he has already written in this letter multiple times, God's will shall be done, even in our mortal bodies:*

##### **Phil. 1:19-21**

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and [my] hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but [that] with all boldness, as always,

[so] now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether [it be] by life, or by death.

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

### **Conclusions and Application:**

- *There is such great consolation in Paul's words here in this letter, isn't there? Such an earnest expectation and hope indeed. Our boldness will be the consequence of sharing Paul's confidence in the sovereign working of our Lord God. If so, then the power of God's word shall be met with a proper response in each of us.*

*Indeed, "it is God that worketh in us . . ." Amen?*

- *Our outline was this:*
  - *Our Rejoicing Together is Always Appropriate (verses 17-18)*
  - *But Our Joy On This Earth Is Often Challenged (verse 19)*
  - *Timothy's Example of Self-Sacrifice is to be Ours Also (verses 20-22)*
  - *So Take Every Opportunity for Fellowship with the Brethren (verses 23-24)*
- *The bottom line: The many challenges we shall face in this life are nothing to be compared with the joy that we shall have when Christ shall call us to that much expected heavenly calling. They are nothing indeed compared to the glory that shall yet be ours.*

*Let us seek the best for others irrespective our what we would have for ourselves. And, may this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus now and forever!*

- *And, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us", Rom. 8:18. So enjoy the Lord and his abundant grace always. Amen.*

**It will be worth it all (Esther K. Rusthoi, 1940)**

*It will be worth it all:  
when we see Jesus!  
Life's trials will seem so small  
when we see Christ.  
One glimpse of his dear face,*

*all sorrow will erase.  
So, bravely run the race  
till we see Christ.*