

Schedule

Thursday:

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Check-in
6:00 pm	Welcome (Erynn Sprouse) and Dinner
7:30 pm	Introduction to Philippians (Sandi Smith)
8:30 pm	Ice Breaker Games
9:00 pm	Devotional (Kayla Hyde)
9:30 pm	Free Time / Games

Friday:

8:00 am	Early Riser Devotional
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Breakfast
10:00 am	Chapter 1 (Sarah Fallis)
11:00 am	Break
11:30 am	Chapter 2 (Carla Moore)
12:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm	Chapter 3 (Erynn Sprouse)
2:30 pm	Free Time
5:00 pm	Devotional and Singing (Priscilla Smithey)
6:00 pm	Dinner
7:30 pm	Somebody Help Me Please!

Saturday:

8:00 am	Early Riser Devotional
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Breakfast
10:00 am	Chapter 4 (Evelyn Bonner)
11:00 am	Announcements
12:30 pm	Lunch

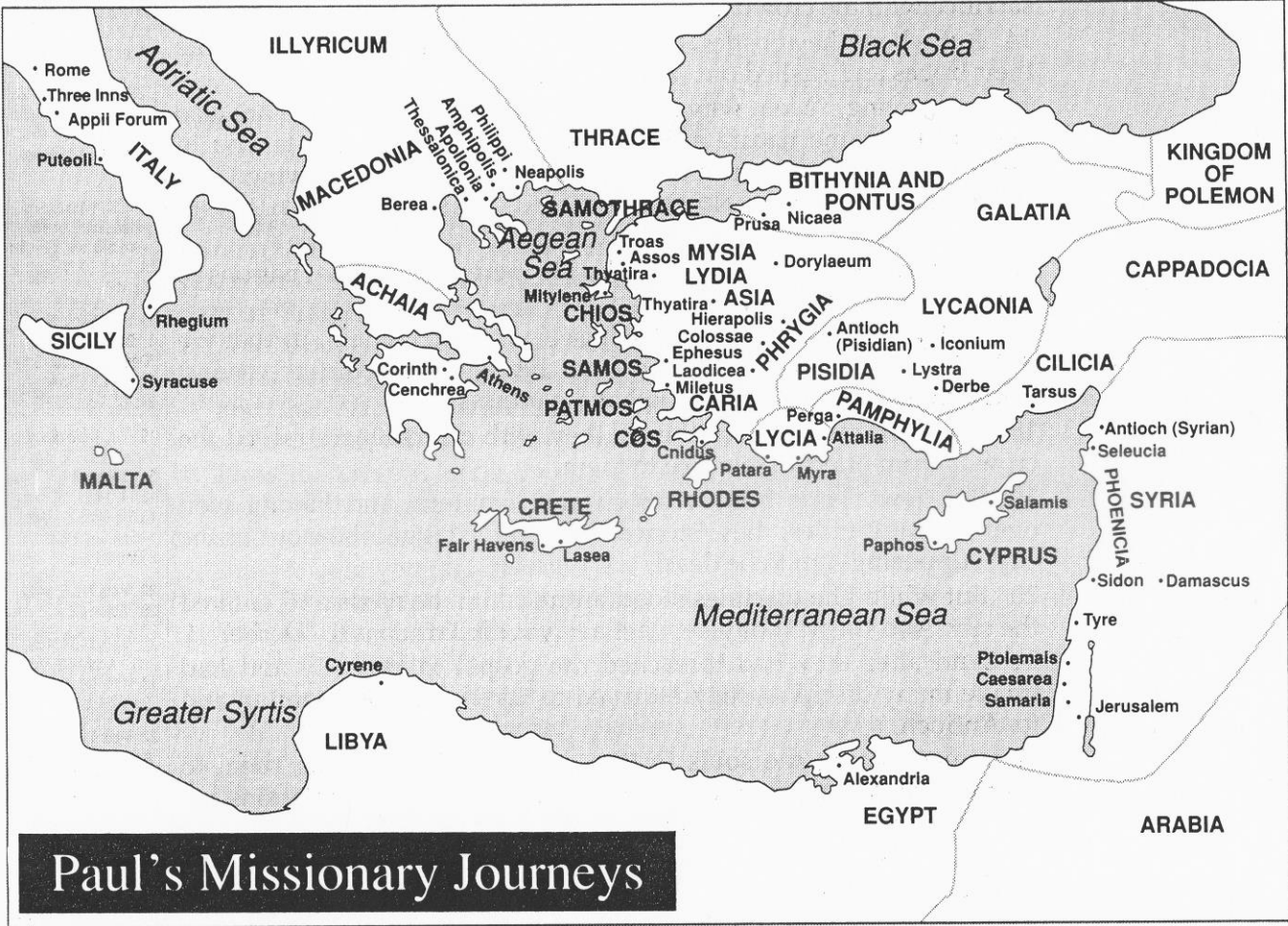
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Sandi Smith

Raised the daughter of a faithful gospel preacher, Sandi Smith is a member of the Smithfield church of Christ in the Fort Worth area where she teaches Bible classes regularly. She also teaches the Acts and James through Jude classes for the Brown Trail School of Preaching Wives' Program. She has been married to her husband, Joe, for 20 years. They have four children whom they home school, ages 13 to 17, who are now all Christians themselves. Sandi loves teaching Bible classes and speaking for Ladies' Day events. She also enjoys hospitality in her home, crocheting, baking, and reading.

Introduction to Philippians



Who: The author of Philippians is _____.

When: He wrote Philippians in about _____ from _____.

Where: He wrote this letter to the church in Philippi, a _____ colony in Macedonia. Our first introduction to Philippi can be found in the book of _____ during Paul's _____ missionary journey.

Notes about the city historically:

Notes about the city Biblically:

Some of the key people we know from Philippi/Philippians:

1. Paul and Silas
2. Luke
3. Timothy
4. Lydia

5. A slave girl

6. The Jailor

7. Epaphroditus

8. Euodia and Syntyche

Why: The key words in Philippians will provide an idea of its main theme or purpose.

- 38 Christ (Christ Jesus)
- 22 You (you all) – [G5216]
- 20 One/same/united – [G1520, 846, 4861]
- 18 Mind/attitude – [G5426, 1380]
- 16 Brethren/church/beloved/saints – [G80, 1577, 27, 40]
- 14 Rejoice/joy – [G5463, 5479]
- 13 Gospel/word – [G2098, 3056]
- 12 Know/knowing – [G1097]

Can you put together a thematic statement with the words used most frequently in Philippians?

Sarah Fallis

Sarah Fallis recently retired as assistant professor of mathematics at the Northwest Campus of Tarrant County College; she teaches 2 courses part time now since she retired. She holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics and English from East Texas State University (now Texas A&M, Commerce), a master's degree in mathematics and education from Texas Woman's University, and has done graduate work in Bible and counseling at Abilene Christian University.

Sarah is married to Gary Fallis who served 15 years as instructor in the Brown Trail School of Preaching in Bedford, Texas and is now the coordinator of the Graduate Program for the Bear Valley Biblical Institute of Denver. In addition to her work as a mathematics professor, Sarah was Director of the Women's Program at the school of preaching and taught regularly in that program. She has taught Bible classes for children, teenage girls and women and is currently teaching the Ladies' Bible class at the Bridgewood congregation in Ft. Worth. Her work has included workshops and lectureships such as World Vision for Christ in San Antonio, Texas, Oklahoma Christian University Lectureship, Ft. Worth Lectures, North Texas Bible Teachers' Workshop in Dallas, Texas and numerous ladies' days and retreats, including The Mid-Atlantic Retreat and Cold Harbor Road Lectures in Virginia, the Connecticut Ladies' Retreat, and the European Christian Women's Retreat in Spyer, Germany in 2007. Sarah travels with Gary each summer to Tanzania, East Africa and other mission areas, teaching and maturing the women. Gary and Sarah have two children—a daughter, Tonya, who lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and a son, Paden, who lives in Brooklyn, New York with his wife, Bethany.

Philippians Chapter 1

Unconquerable Gospel → Unconquerable Faith → Unconquerable Life

Salutation:

- Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ. [servant, slave; literal or figurative; voluntary or involuntary]
- To all the saints in Christ Jesus—must be “in Christ” to be saints [consecrated, set apart, holy—see also 1 Pet. 2:9-10] How do we come into Christ?
- Bishops and deacons—the church in Philippi was organized according to the New Testament pattern. [See 1 Tim. 3:1-13 & Titus 1:5-16.]
- Grace and peace—Paul’s common greeting:
 - Grace—*charis*
 - Thayer: “That which affords joy, pleasure, delight; the spiritual condition of one covered by the power of divine grace.”
 - Vine’s: “...stress on its freeness and universality, its spontaneous character, as in the case of God's redemptive mercy, and the pleasure or joy He designs for the recipient; thus it is set in contrast with debt...”
 - Barclay: “*Charis* is a lovely word; the basic ideas in it are joy... brightness and beauty... And, that beauty is born of a new relationship to God—the relationship of grace. With Christ life becomes lovely because man is no longer the victim of the law of God; he has become the child of the love of God. With Christ there comes the supreme beauty of discovering God the Father.”
 - Peace—*eirene*
 - Vine’s: “Harmonious relationships between men, or between God and man that is accomplished through the gospel.”
 - Thayer: “...the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is...”
 - Barclay: “It never means a negative peace... the absence of trouble. It means total well-being, everything that makes for a man’s highest good.”

- I. **Joy of Community**—1:1-11 [Obedience to the gospel brings us into a community of saints.]
 - II. **Joy of Adversity**—1:12-26 [Philosophy says, “Attitude determines altitude” or “Outlook determines outcome.” Faith says, “I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able...” (2 Tim. 1:12)]
 - III. **Joy of Integrity**—1:27-30 [“Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel...” (1:27)]
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- I. **Joy of community**—1:1-11.
 - A. Thanksgiving for community—1:3-8
 1. Partners in grace—v. 7.
 2. Partners in the work of the gospel—both in defense and confirmation—v. 5, 4:10-19.
 - a. Defense—against attacks from the outside: human philosophy, immorality, idolatry; examples today: evolution, abortion rights, same sex marriages, political correctness, etc.
 - b. Confirmation—building up the strength of the body from within: responsibility of elders and teachers, but also of each of us (Eph. 4:11-16).
 3. Partners in suffering for the gospel—no Christian suffers alone—v. 7; 28-29.
 4. Partners with Christ—v.7-8.
 - B. Prayer for the Philippians—1:9-11
 1. Knowledge, discernment/judgment—1:9-10→ study, wisdom to apply, grow.
 2. Goal 1: be sincere—2 meanings:
 - a. It may come from *eile* which means sunshine and *krinein* which means to judge, describing that which is able to stand the test of the sunshine, that which can be exposed to the sun, held up to the light of the sun without any flaw appearing. Our character should stand the test of the Light of God’s Word.
 - b. It may be derived from a word which means to whirl round and round as in a sieve so as to sift until every impurity is extracted. Our character should be sifted and pure, free from the impurities and evil desires, thoughts or deeds—altogether pure.

3. Goal 2: without offense—literally means “a smooth road”—does not cause any to stumble (1 Cor. 10:32; Rom. 14:13; Acts 24:16). A person may be faultless, but hard and harsh; good, but so critical of others that they repel others from goodness.
 4. Goal 3: filled with the fruits of righteousness—could refer to Gal. 5:22-23: “fruit of the Spirit;” or to John 15:1-8.
- C. Ultimate purpose—the praise and glory of God. Refer to Eph. 1 and note the number of times Paul refers to similar expressions.
- D. Application: Christ, in His death and resurrection not only saved us individually, but He created a new community—something that had never existed before. A new relationship with God resulted in a new relationship with our fellowmen.
1. Do we value that community—the church—both the local congregation and the universal body?
 2. Are you doing all you can for the maturing and growth of the body? (Note also, Eph. 4:11-16)
 3. Is your congregation knit together? Or is it a loosely connected group of people who come together 2-3 times a week to engage in “spiritual” things? How can you contribute to being “knit together?”
 4. What about our prayers for one another? Are they like Paul’s? And, are we thankful for our brothers and sisters, having them in our hearts and loving them as Christ does?
- II. **Joy in Adversity**—1:12-26.
- A. Bonds destroy barriers—1:12-14.
1. “Furtherance/advancement” of the gospel—describes the progress of an army or an expedition; removing the barriers which would hinder the progress of an army.
 2. Opened the door for new opportunities.
- B. He taught those who guarded him—Praetorian Guard – instituted by Augustus; 10,000 hand-picked troops. Paul had access to the highest ranking and best of the Roman government. His appeal to Caesar (Acts 28:16-30).
1. Paul was not a prisoner of Rome—“A prisoner of Jesus Christ” (Philemon 9, 13; Eph. 3:1).
 2. All in the government were aware that he was a different kind of prisoner.
- C. Application: Paul did not see his imprisonment as a hindrance, but as a help to the progress of the gospel. He wasn’t shackled by the circumstances, but used

the circumstances to God's glory. At the beginning of this imprisonment: Acts 28:20, to the Jewish leaders in Rome—"...for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." Then, note his attitude during his final imprisonment: 2 Tim 2:8-10—"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

1. Do we let circumstances get in our way of serving Christ? Examples: young children at home; have to work; poor health.
 2. What about opposition? Do/will we stand fast?
 3. Do we chain the Word by our timidity, fear and inaction?
- D. The All-important proclamation—1:15-18
1. Other Christians were encouraged by his example—loved him and the gospel he preached.
 2. Some had impure motives—they were self-seeking and preached solely to benefit themselves—selfish ambition. Now that Paul was in prison it seemed to some a good opportunity to advance their own prestige and party. They were not false teachers. What they taught was true; their motive for teaching was the problem.
 3. Application: Paul was not guided by personal jealousy or resentment. As long as Christ was preached, he did not care who received the credit. He did not care what other preachers said about him or how they treated him.
 - a. Do we resent it because someone else gets credit that we do not?
 - b. Do we regard someone as an enemy who criticizes us (either justly or unjustly)?
 - c. Preacher's wives—do we want the world to know about Christ or do we want the world to know what our fantastic preacher-husbands have done for Christ? Are we interested in the "brotherhood ladder?"
 - d. Are we into the preacher comparing business? Bro. So-N-So is the best preacher in the brotherhood?
 - e. Or what about those of us who speak at retreats and ladies' days? Do we compare? Do we rate one another? Do we think a sister is a false teacher because her opinion on some verse (of no real consequence) differs with ours?

- f. Do we label a church or individual because they don't do things "our way?"
 - g. Do we follow men instead of Christ? Are we more interested in the prestige of our congregation than in glorifying Christ?
 - h. Do we focus more on a brother or sister's motives (whether we know the motives or not) than on the truth the brother or sister teaches?
 - i. Look again at Paul's example: he was not centered on self; he had risen above "personalities;" all that mattered was that Christ was preached! May God help us follow that example!
- E. The joyful outcome—1:19-26
1. Paul realized he was acting both for time and eternity in this situation. Instead of becoming bitter, he chose, by faith, to become better.
 2. Human help—their prayers for him (v.19). Paul was constantly asking for prayers of the brethren. (1 Thess. 5:25—pray for us; 2 Thess. 3:1-2—pray that Word may have free course; 2 Cor. 1:11—helpers together by prayer for us; Philemon 22—pray for sick; Rom 15:30-32—for his journey to Rome.) Paul was never too big or important to humbly ask for the prayers of others.
 3. Divine help—supply of the Spirit. (Spirit strengthens the inner man, Eph. 3:16).
 4. Paul's one hope or desire—that he will never be shamed into silence. In Christ, he will find courage. (See also Rom. 1:16-18 and 2 Tim. 1:12).
 5. If Paul lives, he will preach, and therefore, glorify Christ.
 6. If he dies, it will be known that he died for having preached Christ, so He will be magnified and Paul will receive that eternal reward he so cherished.
 7. To "depart..." The word means "strike camp, loosen the tent pegs and going on, loosening the mooring ropes, pulling up the anchor, and setting sail." For the Christian, each day's march in one day closer to home.
 8. Application: Do we live daily in view of eternity?
 - a. What about our prayers? Do we also seek divine help through meditating on the Word so His Spirit can strengthen us?
 - b. Are we in danger of being shamed into silence? Have there been times when you should/could have spoken, but didn't because of fear, etc.?
 - c. How can you magnify Christ? A telescope is smaller than a star, but it brings the star closer and into focus so we can see it clearly. Does your life bring Christ closer and into focus for others? What about your

children, your husband, your close friends? Magnifying Christ also changes how we interact with those in our lives.

- d. Can you say, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain?”
- e. Think about these: For me to live is _____ and to die is _____.
 1. money & leave it all behind
 2. fame & to be forgotten
 3. power & to lose it all

III. Joy in Integrity—1:27-30

- A. Live worthy of the gospel, like Eph. 4:1-3
- B. Paul uses a word meaning to be a citizen of Rome. A Roman colony (like Philippi) was a little bit of Rome in the area of the empire away from the city. Citizens of a Roman colony spoke Latin, wore Roman dress, obeyed Roman law, etc.; they stubbornly insisted on being Roman. How does Paul apply that word to Christians? We are citizens of Christ’s kingdom within the world. We are a holy nation within a worldly nation. We are a Christian culture in the midst of a worldly culture. Now, wherever we are, live by the “heavenly citizenship” rules that identify us as citizens of that kingdom – worthy of the gospel.
- C. As citizens of the kingdom of God, we are to:
 1. Stand fast—the world is full of Christians on retreat. Many conceal or play down their Christianity. Children’s song, “This Little Light of Mine.”
 2. Be unified—the world is characterized by strife and quarrels. Christians are to be ONE. See Eph. 4:1-3—we keep “the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace” by having those qualities in our life. If we have verses 1-3, verses 4-6 will be easier to maintain.
 3. The Philippians have been given the privilege to suffer for Christ. Do we see suffering as a privilege? (Matt. 5:10-11; Acts 5:41; Acts 16:25)
 4. If we suffer, we will be vindicated, and the “adversaries” will be judged. (1 Pet. 4:1-6 & 12-17)

Notes for personal study to help us make the statement “For me to live is Christ...” true in our lives. Paul saw Christ as:

- The beginning of life (2 Cor. 5:17).
- The continuation of life (Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3); Paul lived in Christ’s presence (Eph. 3:16).
- The inspiration of life (Heb. 12:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:14-15).
- The task for life (2 Tim. 1:12)

- The strength for life (Phil. 4:13,19); Paul was made perfect in his weakness (2 Cor. 12:9-10).
- The reward for life (Col. 3:4).

Carla Moore

Born and raised in Texas! I spent many years in a university setting, since my father directed two campus ministry works while I was growing up. After John and I married in 1986, he also directed the campus work at Southwest Texas State University (where we both went to school). In 1994, we began working with the Southwest congregation in Austin where John taught full time in the Southwest School of Bible Studies. Then in 2001, we began full time work with the Dripping Springs congregation – where we remain today. We have three sons: Jordan (married to Erin since 2010), Jacob (engaged to Alyssa – wedding is set for May 16, 2014!), and Micah (currently unattached until he grows up). ☺ My favorite things to do include family time, traveling with John, reading, and getting to know my sisters in Christ.

Philippians Chapter 2

General information / outlines of Philippians:

Outline of Philippians

Warren Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2007), 627

- I. The Single Mind
 - A. Fellowship of the Gospel - 1:1-11
 - B. Furtherance of the Gospel - 1:12-26
 - C. Faith of the Gospel - 1:27-30
- II. The Submissive Mind
 - A. Example of Christ - 2:1-11
 - B. Example of Paul - 2:12-18
 - C. Example of Timothy - 2:19-24
 - D. Example of Epaphroditus - 2:25-30
- III. The Spiritual Mind
 - A. Paul's Past – 3:1-11 (*The Accountant – “I count”*)
 - B. Paul's Present – 3:12-16 (*The Athlete – “I press”*)
 - C. Paul's Future – 3:17-21 (*The Alien – “I look”*)
- IV. The Secure Mind
 - A. God's Peace – 4:1-9
 - B. God's Power – 4:10-13
 - C. God's Provision – 4:14-23

Simple Outline of Philippians

Avon Malone, *Press to the Prize: Studies in Philippians* (Nashville: 20th Century Christian, 1991), 17-18

- Ch. 1: Christ is our *purpose* (see v. 21)
 Ch. 2: Christ is our *pattern* (see v. 5)
 Ch. 3: Christ is our *prize* (see vv. 13,14)
 Ch. 4: Christ is our *provision* (see vv. 13, 19)

Contents of Philippians

David L. Roper, Truth for Today Commentary, Ephesians and Philippians (Searcy: Resource Publications, 2009), p. 377

1. Paul's salutation (1:1,2),
2. Thanksgiving and prayer for the Philippians (1:3-11),
3. Insight on Paul's imprisonment – and suffering in general (1:12-30),
4. Encouragement to foster unity by being humble and obedient – as Christ was (2:1-18). (This is the great theological section in the letter.)
5. A plan to send Timothy in the future, and a plan to send Epaphroditus immediately (2:19-30).
6. Warnings against false teachers, with Paul himself held up as the proper example to follow (3:1-21).
7. Miscellaneous exhortations – for unity, joy, and right thinking (4:1-9).
8. Gratitude expressed for their gift, with teaching on contentment (4:10-20).
9. Conclusion – with personal greetings and blessing (4:21-23).

Interesting quotes:

“Paul did not find his joy in ideal circumstances; he found his joy in winning others to Christ. And if his circumstances promoted the furtherance of the gospel, that was all that mattered!” (Wiersbe, p. 630)

“God sometimes uses strange tools to help us pioneer the gospel...Paul's chains (1:12-14), Paul's critics (1:15-19) and Paul's crisis (1:20-26).” (Wiersbe, p. 631)

“As was Paul's custom in all his letters, he took the opportunity to *commend* them (see 1:3-7), *command* them (see 2:5), *caution* them (see 3:2), and *correct* them (see 4:2).” (Roper, p. 375)

“‘*In Christ*’ was one of Paul's favorite expressions...He used it to convey the relationship we have with the Lord – a relationship so special, so close, so intimate that it can only be communicated by saying that we are ‘*in Him*.’ A Christian lives ‘in Christ’ as a bird lives in the air, as a fish lives in the water, and as a tree is rooted in the soil. A Christian is ‘different’ from those about him because he is always aware of the encircling presence of Jesus.” (Roper, p. 379)

CHAPTER TWO

V. 1: *“So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,”*

The word “so” connects chapter two with the previous chapter, where Paul has encouraged the Philippians to not be frightened by their opponents, and to stand firm in one spirit, with one mind and working side by side to further the gospel (1:27-28).

These words – “encouragement”, “comfort”, “participation in the Spirit”, “affection” and “sympathy” summarize great blessings to be found in the Christian walk.

- Encouragement (*paraklesis*) – called alongside, also translated “exhortation” and “consolation”
- Comfort (*paramuthion*) – similar in meaning to “encouragement” also translated “consolation” and “incentive”
- Participation in the Spirit – some discussion about whether or not it means the human spirit or the Holy Spirit, most widely used translations use a capital “S” indicating the Holy Spirit, however there is no definite article (“the”) before the word for “spirit”.
- Affection, Sympathy – also translated compassion. If you know and love God, then you will also love others (1 Jn 4:11, Col. 3:12).

V. 2: *“complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.”*

Paul was asking the Philippians to add to the joy the Philippians had already given him. KJV uses the word “fulfill”. Being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind – literally, “think the same thing, one in soul, thinking one thing.”

He wanted them to be of the same mind, love, united in spirit and intent on one purpose – in their “attention (mind), attitude (love), affection, and aim.” (Roper, p. 434).

God hates “one who sows discord among brothers” (Prov 6:19) – He loves unity.

Regarding unity:

“A slogan often heard in days past was ‘In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; and in all things, charity.’ It was understood that ‘matters of faith’ are those principles clearly

taught in God’s Word (see Rom. 10:17). On these, we must be united. ‘Matters of opinion’ are subjects regarding which no definitive statement is found in the Bible. On these, we can disagree – as long as we do so without being disagreeable.” (Roper, p. 436)

V. 3-4: *“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*

Since Paul was emphasizing unity and selflessness and humility in this letter, we wonder if Epaphroditus had brought news of some discord among the Christians in Philippi to Paul in Rome. If so, it must have worried him.

“In a gracious way, Paul was saying to the church, ‘Your disagreements reveal that there is a spiritual problem in your fellowship. It isn’t going to be solved by rules or threats; it’s going to be solved when your hearts are right with Christ and with each other.’ Paul wanted them to see that the basic cause was selfishness, and the cause of selfishness is pride. There can be no joy in the life of the Christian who puts himself above others,” (Wiersbe, p. 635).

“Humility is not self-deprecation, but self-forgetfulness.” (Roper, p. 438).

Humility is difficult for so many of us – we want to be thought well of, to be admired and respected. This passage is stressing that our *motives* - for whatever we do - must not be simply to be better than someone else. We are to regard others as more significant, or better than us. It doesn’t necessarily mean that they ARE better or more important, but that we should *regard* them as such. Wiersbe says that “the believer’s eyes are turned away from himself and focused on the needs of others.” (p. 635). Consider also Romans 12:3 – we are not to think of ourselves more highly than we should.

Paul follows this with four examples of a submissive mind: the mind of Jesus (2:1-11), Paul himself (2:12-18), Timothy (2:19-24) and Epaphroditus (2:25-30).

v. 5-11: *“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”*

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Since Paul had told the Philippians to practice unity, he is now saying that a selfless attitude contributes to that unity. Having the mind of Christ is to have his attitude, or as one translation says, "Let this disposition be in you which was in Christ Jesus."

"Paul regarded as inappropriate to the body of Christ the selfish eye, the pompous mind, the ear hungry for compliments and the mouth that spoke none, the heart that had little room for others, and the hand that served only the self." (Fred B. Craddock, *Philippians*, Interpretation (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), p. 38.

Having the mind of Christ is a commandment.

What is characteristic of a submissive mind? Wiersbe suggests that a submissive mind *thinks of others*, not himself, *serves*, *sacrifices*, and *glorifies God* (p. 636,637).

- One that thinks of others, and not of self. Jesus was the prime example. Jesus existed in the form of God. He was equal with God. He was God (John 1:1-4, Col. 1:15, Heb. 1:1-3) yet He did not cling, or did not consider His place in heaven to be "something selfishly to be held on to (Wiersbe, p. 636) – He thought of us and our need instead of Himself.
 Christians are to prefer one another and love one another (Rom. 12:10), we are to encourage one another (1 Thes. 5:11), we are to bear one another's burdens (Gal 6:2) and instead of judging one another we must be careful not to cause one another to stumble (Rom 14:13). All of these indicate a mind that thinks of others instead of self.
- One that serves. Again – Jesus *emptied* Himself. Of what did He empty Himself? J. B. Lightfoot said that He stripped Himself of the "glories, the prerogatives of Deity." 2 Cor. 8:9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich." Jesus took on the form of a servant (doulos) – a slave – He made Himself completely dependent upon and obedient to God, beginning not only in human form, but as a helpless infant. Paul says that Jesus (1) emptied Himself, (2) became human, (3) used His humanity to humble Himself even more as a

servant/slave and in obedience to the Father (Matt 20:28), and (4) took His body willingly to the humiliating death on a cross.

“What grace! From heaven to earth, from glory to shame, from Master to servant, from life to death, ‘even the death of the cross!’” (Wiersbe, p. 636)

- One that sacrifices – no greater sacrifice than that of Jesus, and it was done willingly. Our human nature is to avoid sacrifice, or to expect it from others to our benefit. Teaching our children to sacrifice and serve others is a necessity – and they will learn true happiness from it (but as parents, we have to be willing to sacrifice and serve as well – if they do not see it in us, they will not learn it themselves.) “It is one of the paradoxes of the Christian life that the more we give, the more we receive; the more we sacrifice, the more God blesses. This is why the submissive mind leads to joy; it makes us more like Christ,” (Wiersbe, p. 637).
- One that glorifies God – of course, all that we do should glorify Him and not us. Jesus glorified God in everything that He did. Our conduct should be that which glorifies God even when others would like to speak against us (1 Pet. 2:12). In our present day and time, we seem to rarely suffer serious persecution. But if the occasion ever arises, we should not be ashamed of it (1 Pet. 4:16) but be glad that God can be glorified through us.

There are some disagreements over what Paul meant by Jesus “being born in the likeness of men,” (v. 7). Some argue that he wasn’t truly human, but “like” human. But John 1:14 (along with several other places) says that Jesus “became flesh”. So, being “born in the likeness of men” must simply mean that He entered the world through a birth process like all mankind does. There is also some disagreement about who is “under the earth” as mentioned in verse 10. Some indicate that he means the dead (Rom. 14:9) and others believe that he is referring to the lost, since God’s family is found “in heaven and on earth” (Eph. 3:14-15).

“Therefore” in verse 9 ties his thoughts to what is stated before. *Because* Jesus humbled himself to the point of death, God has highly exalted Him. Often I have quoted 1 Peter 5:6 to my children: “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you...” I can’t help but wonder if I have misapplied that passage, as I have looked more carefully at Philippians 2:9. I used it to impress the importance of humility to them, with the hope that if they live humbly, at some point in their lives God would use them for some purpose – not selfishly, or for their glory but perhaps to use their humility and in the

process bring glory to God. It seems that the passage in Philippians indicates that “the proper time” may be on Judgment Day, rather than while we live. We may not see it in this lifetime, but we will when He returns.

Verse 11 is a comforting verse to me. When I think of the terrorists of September 11, 2011, or the Nazis who murdered millions, knowing that they have passed from this life, I know that their knees have finally bowed before Jesus – their tongues have confessed that He is Lord. Yet I also know that God is saddened by their unbelief and disobedience (2 Pet. 3:9).

V. 12-18: *“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.”*

Again, “therefore” ties his previous thoughts to what he is currently saying. Because Jesus was obedient, the Philippian Christians (and we) must be obedient as well.

Paul is not present with them, though he wants to be. He is telling them that whether he is present or not, they are to carry on with their work as Christians. It is always tempting to be more diligent when someone is watching and supervising. And the Lord is always aware of everything that is going on in our lives.

“Work out your own salvation” is troubling to some. “Paul’s words disturb some commentators. For instance, his words disturb those who think human efforts have nothing to do with salvation – because the words, taken at face value, suggest some relationship between an individual’s work and his eternal reward. These words also disturb those who teach that a person, once saved, can never fall – because the words imply that, unless a Christian works, the salvation he once enjoyed can be lost,” (Roper, p. 454).

Many passages teach the necessity of works (1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 5:10; Col. 1:10; Jas. 2:24; 1 Pet. 1:17) and many others teach that we are saved by grace through faith, and that a saving faith is an obedient, working faith (Rom. 11:6, Eph. 2:9; 2 Tim. 1:9). Ephesians 2: 8-10 says “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

The Greek translation of the words in verse 12 has the idea of bringing something to completion, in the sense of working out a mine to get all of the ore from it, or working out a field to harvest all that it has produced. Charles B. Williams’ *Translation in the Language of the People* translates the phrase as follows: “...so now with reverence and awe keep on working clear down to the finishing point of your salvation.”

The words “with fear and trembling” indicate awe and respect, rather than being overwhelmed by anxiety. Roper says “a person in this frame of mind will not be driven away from God, but rather to Him,” (p. 456).

Verse 13 reminds the Philippians (and us today) that it is God who is at work in us. Paul had just told the brethren at Philippi that they needed to be obedient and to work for the Lord whether he was present or absent. If you think about it, we are spoiled today with the ability to communicate almost immediately with people all over the world. The Philippians may have had questions for Paul, they needed his counsel and his guidance as well as his companionship, but their only means of contacting him was through a letter that likely took weeks and weeks to arrive. Perhaps Paul used these words to remind them that they did not need his physical presence as much as they thought they did – and to remember that their strength and their will came from God instead of Paul. Richard Francis Weymouth’s *The New Testament in Modern Speech* says “for it is God Himself whose power creates within you both the desire and the power to execute His gracious will.” God gives us the desire and motivation (the *energeo* – energy) to work for Him.

Weirsbe notes that God works through His word, through prayer, and through suffering. When we receive God’s word (1 Thes. 2:13) and make it part of us (as the saying goes, “get into the word of God until it gets into you,”) and when we apply it, there is POWER that comes from it. So many scriptures encourage us to pray – Ephesians 3:20, Romans 8:26-27 and others. 1 Peter 4:12-19 speaks of suffering and the good that can come from it. Paul surely went through more

than one fiery trial, but when you consider the account of his time in the Philippian jail, you can see how suffering worked to draw others to Christ. “It was not the earthquake that brought conviction to the man; the earthquake almost led him to suicide! It was Paul’s encouraging word...This kind of love broke the man’s heart...,” (p. 640).

Verses 14 and 15 stress that we should do all things without being discontent, murmuring, complaining and disputing. When our attitude reflects joy instead of grumbling, we shine. Paul contrasts the Christian life with the worldly life. Worldly people complain but we rejoice. Worldly people are “crooked and twisted” or, as J.B. Phillips’ translation says, “living in a warped and diseased world,” (*The New Testament in Modern English*) but Christians stand tall, measured by the straight word of life (v. 16). Worldly people live in the dark but Christians shine brightly, drawing others to them.

It is interesting to note that verse 15 speaks of Christians living “*in the midst* of a crooked and twisted generation...” Weirsbe says “Paul did not admonish us to retreat from the world and go into a spiritual isolation ward. It is only as we are confronted with the needs and problems of real life that we can begin to become more like Christ. The Pharisees were so isolated and insulated from reality that they developed an artificial kind of self-righteousness that was totally unlike the righteousness God wanted them to have. Consequently, the Pharisees forced a religion of fear and bondage on the people (read Matthew 23), and they crucified Christ because He dared to oppose that kind of religion. It is not by leaving the world but by ministering to it that we see God’s purpose fulfilled in our lives,” (p. 639).

Verses 16 through 18 show us how joy can come from submission. Human nature makes us believe that to surrender is to lose. However, when it comes to living for God, *surrendering is winning!* In two verses (17 and 18) that speak of sacrificing – and most likely very difficult sacrifice – he also speaks so much about joy and rejoicing. Not only did Paul know that he would rejoice if he were to suffer in this way – but he wanted the brethren to rejoice with him. It is hard to imagine being joyful about one of our missionaries enduring suffering for the cause of Christ, but that is what Paul was encouraging them to do.

Roper outlines this series of verses this way: work **reverently** (v. 12, “with fear and trembling”), work **confidently** (v. 13, “it is God who works in you”), work **willingly** (v. 14, “do all things without grumbling or disputing”), work **blamelessly** (v. 15, “without blemish”), work **steadfastly** (v. 16, “holding fast...”) and work **cheerfully** (v. 17,18, “rejoice with me”).

V. 19-24: *“I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy’s proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.”*

Paul hoped to send Timothy soon to Philippi, because he trusted that Timothy was “genuinely concerned” about the brethren there. Timothy had received a servant’s training of sorts while in Derbe and Lystra and the brethren there (and at Iconium) reported good things about him (Acts 16:2). He must have been quite a submissive man, concerned about how he would be received by the Jews. Though he was Greek, he submitted to being circumcised so that the Jews would accept him – even though circumcision was not required by God. Timothy’s training must have been gradual. Wiersbe says “The submissive mind is not the product of an hour’s sermon, or a week’s seminar, or even a year’s service. The submissive mind grows in us as, like Timothy, we yield to the Lord and seek to serve others,” (p. 642). We have such an impatient nature and we want others to immediately trust us and think good things of us and speak well of us. But we should remember that it takes time to prove ourselves, and that the only admiration that matters is that of the Lord.

Evidently Paul thought his time in prison in Rome was coming to an end, because he thought he would send Timothy “soon” when his trial concluded. He seemed to expect his trial to go well, since he trusted that he would also go to Philippi shortly.

It is a bit difficult to understand Paul’s meaning when he says that “I have no one like him...they all seek their own interests.” It sounds as though he is discouraged, but that contrasts with the entire letter’s mood. It could be that he simply means that the Christians in Rome were busy tending their own true mission field, and were unable to take time away to travel 700 miles to Philippi.

V. 25-30: *“I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow*

upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me."

Paul seems to not be able to say enough good about Epaphroditus. He describes him as a brother, worker, soldier, messenger, and minister. He must have been quite a man! Epaphroditus carried messages and money to Paul from Philippi to Rome – a long trip even if you have a vehicle and a highway, much less on foot or horseback. It would have been dangerous as well, to carry funds that far. But Epaphroditus was willing and able to take care of Paul's need. While he was in Rome, he ministered to Paul, perhaps he saw to Paul's food and clothing needs, and kept him company. Now Paul is asking Epaphroditus to carry this letter back to the Philippians.

When he was in Rome, he became deathly ill. Paul speaks of being grateful that his friend lived, and he encouraged the Philippian brethren to honor him (and men like him) upon his return. Not only was Epaphroditus longing for the Philippians, but he was upset because *they* were worried about *him*! What a servant – unselfish and willing to help others. I imagine, too, that Paul did not want to see him go, but he knew that the brethren at Philippi were worried about his health and wanted to receive him back among them.

Philippians 2 speaks of the wonderful examples of submissive and sacrificial living: Jesus, who left heaven to serve us, even those of us who deny Him and despise Him; Paul, who was willing to be sacrificed for the sake of Christ; Timothy, who had genuine concern for God's people; and Epaphroditus, who served Paul and the brethren in a most unselfish way!

Erynn Sprouse

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Erynn and her flock of fellas make their home in Dublin, TX where they enjoy gathering with the saints, homeschooling in pajamas and hunting for geckos on the porch. Her goals include inspiring women to dig into their Bibles for the meat of God's word, mastering bread baking and above all seeing her family in Heaven.

Philippians Chapter 3

3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

- Finally--
 - The majority of reliable English translations render this “finally,” yet it should be noted that this word can be expressed as a transitory phrase such as “and now”, “whatever happens” or the like. Jesus uses this word in Luke 12:26 “...why do you worry about *other matters*?” Cf 1 Cor. 11:34 (“remaining matters”).
 - No matter how it is translated, Paul here sets apart what he is about to say for emphasis, essentially highlighting what follows.
- my brethren-- cf 4:1 “my beloved brethren whom I long to see my joy and crown... my beloved” This is a congregation Paul holds dear. He is not using this term lightly!
- rejoice-- This is the 12th of 16 occurrences of joy/ rejoice/ share in joy in the book of Philippians.
- to write the same things again is no trouble to me--
 - Commentators have various ideas as to what “same things” Paul refers to here. Possibilities include:
 - he refers to a previous letter which is not preserved for us (cf. 1 Cor 5:9-- there was a previous and unpreserved letter to the Corinthian church).
 - he refers to the admonition to rejoice and does not mind repeating it (cf 4:4). “If the Philippians looked to the Lord for joy, this would guard them against the reliance on self which Paul was about to discuss.”
 - he refers to the warning he is about to give against false teachers (cf 1:15a, 17, 28).
 - Paul is more than willing to tolerate a small (and even great) inconvenience in order to help the Philippians.
 - Repetition of even basic truths can be a good and beneficial thing.

3:2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

- Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision--
 - This phrase marks an abrupt change in tone. Paul has been quite lovey-dovey and here is rather harsh toward those who would harm his beloved brethren. “A mother may give the first impression of being small, gentle, and loving. However, if anyone were to threaten that mother’s child, she could turn into a passionate fury!”¹. Here the situation facing the Philippians is extreme and calls for an extreme warning.
- beware--
 - “be ready to learn about something that is needed or is hazardous, *watch, look to, beware of*”²
 - We cannot bury our heads in the sand when it comes to false doctrine and other dangers! We must be vigilant and learn about them in order to defend ourselves. In a war, one must first understand the enemy before doing battle (cf Matthew 10:16-- we must be shrewd as serpents).
- dogs, evil workers, false circumcision--
 - seems to refer to the Judaizers who have been causing problems in the church since Acts 15:1. If Philippians was written around AD 60-62, and the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 was in AD 51, these heresies have been doing their damage for around 10 years.
 - evil workers-- not these people are workers! This is a word used especially of agricultural workers. They aren’t sitting around waiting and hoping for someone to show interest in their teachings (as some of us do!); they are working and they are evil-- morally reprehensible.
 - false circumcision-- see 3:3

3:3 for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

- we are the *true* circumcision
 - note: the italicized “true” is not there for emphasis, but to indicate that this word is not in the original Greek manuscripts; it is added for our understanding. Literally,

¹ Roper, David L. Ephesians and Philippians. Searcy, AR: Resource Publications, 2009. Print. Truth for Today Commentary: an Exegesis & Application of the Holy Scriptures. (485)

² Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed.) (179). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Paul says “we are the circumcision” but it is more readable for it to say “we are the true circumcision.”
- Circumcision is often used to stand for the whole Law and in the New Testament as a term for the Jews. Depending on the context, the term may specifically reference those Jewish false brethren who sought to compel Gentile Christians to be circumcised and keep the Old Law (cf Acts 15:1, Gal 2:7-8, 12).
 - Paul essentially says Christians are God’s chosen people now in the days of the New Testament. We are the true circumcision, circumcised in heart (Rom 2:29, Col 2:11, 1 Pet 2:9,10).
 - Some versions here have “mutilate.” Paul uses a play on words here. For “circumcision” (NASB) in 3:2, he uses KATATOME-- a word which more typically refers to a mutilative practice of the pagans. Since the New Testament’s institution on the day of Pentecost, circumcision means nothing to one’s spiritual state. To compel one to be circumcised for the sake of salvation is to abandon true Christianity for a false religion (Galatians 1:6,7). The Judaizers were no better than pagans for compelling Gentile Christians to keep the Old Law. Christians, on the other hand, have the only true circumcision. For “circumcision” (NASB) in 3:3, Paul uses PERITOME-- the usual word for the Jewish rite of circumcision.
 - worship in the Spirit of God
 - “‘Worship in the Spirit’ does *not* refer to the charismatic exercises carried on by some religious groups today. The excesses of many of these services are the opposite of the dignity that should characterize worship.”³
 - This is part of a contrast set up between the false circumcision who put their confidence in fleshly accomplishments and their own righteousness vs. the true circumcision (Christians) who put worship as God would have them do and whose confidence and pride is in Christ alone.
 - cf. John 4:24
 - put no confidence--
 - confidence-- depend on, trust in
 - picture someone leaning on something, taking their ease. That’s what this word is talking about. You stick out your elbow, rest it on something and then lean on over. What happens if that something isn’t solid or anchored? It slips out from under you and you’re on the ground! That’s just the kind of support the flesh is.
 - flesh-- refers not just to the physical body, but *everything* of the physical realm.

³ Roper 488

3:4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:

- If anyone had cause to put trust in his own abilities, standing, credentials, etc. to earn his/her salvation, it was Paul. This is his preface to revealing much about who he was BC (Before Christ). It is hard for us to grasp just how important a man Saul of Tarsus was before he became Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. His confidence in the flesh could have been great. Paul often uses his past in a masterful way. When someone needs convincing that even the most sinful of men can be saved, he reminds them that he, the chief of sinners, is saved (1 Timothy 1:15). In this case, people must be reminded that their own credentials are nothing to put confidence in, so he explains that even his very illustrious resume is nothing to boast in, but is in fact rubbish.
- It's always a temptation to depend on our own efforts and try to earn our own way to Heaven. Such a gift of salvation can make us feel obligated to work for it. Imagine that your friend gives you something you have been wanting and perhaps even saving up for. She says she saw it on sale and knew you wanted it, so she bought it for you. Amazed, you say to her, "What do I owe you for it?" and she says, "Nothing." Most of us don't feel quite right leaving things there. We try to persuade our friend to take something for this amazing gift... but she persists and will not name a price. So we say something like, "Well at least let me pay for lunch!" When we realize the amazing and wonderful gift we have been given by God in salvation, it is sometimes difficult to accept that we really owe nothing for it. We ought to work, though, not to earn our salvation, but because we love God. Our offer to buy our friend's lunch in this case is not done necessarily out of love. The cost will be much less than the cost of the item, but it is a small gesture of "I owe you SOMETHING; at least I can do this." We buy the lunch out of a sense of obligation. In a spiritual sense, we sometimes do the same thing. "Well, at least I can do good works... at least I can teach Sunday School... serve the poor... spread the gospel." But as soon as we think that we are paying back or in some way earning the gift we have been given, we are putting our trust in the flesh. Sometimes we may buy our friend's lunch just because we want to express love and appreciation for her. This is the same kind of motivation our Christian works should have.

3:5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;

- "Paul's statements gave proof that he was 'an authentic Jew.' The apostle established ritual purity ('circumcised the eighth day'), racial purity ('of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin') and cultural purity ('a Hebrew of Hebrews')"⁴
- a Pharisee--

⁴ Roper 493

- the strictest sect of the Jewish faith
- Paul was not just any Pharisee. Acts 26:2-24 records Paul’s account of his conversion given before King Agrippa. In 26:10, Paul says that he cast his vote against the Christians. If he had a vote to cast in such matters, it means he was a member of the Sanhedrin, the 70 most elite Jews of his day, those set as rulers.
- Not only was Paul a Pharisee sitting on the Sanhedrin, but he was also educated at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). If it is hard for us to grasp how important Paul was, it is even more so for Gamaliel.
- He was the grandson of the very well respected and much-loved Hillel.
- “The learning of Gamaliel was so eminent and his influence so great that he is one of only seven Jewish scholars who have been honored by the title ‘Rabban.’”⁵

3:6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

- If his resume and heritage were not enough to earn him “brownie points,” his fervor and actions just might have been. This is the part in a job interview where you’ve just finished rattling off your Ivy League background and now you talk about how you’re a go-getter and you’ve won every award there is out there.

3:7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. **8** More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, **9** and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, **10** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; **11** in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

- This is often depicted as Paul’s profit/ loss statement, like an accountant’s worksheet. It’s an apt illustration. On the loss side, Paul lists these things he has just ticked off (circumcised on the eighth day, etc.), but not only that. He adds anything else that might have been counted as a profit and then everything else besides. He stamps it with a giant red LOSS and then lists what he gains: knowing Christ.

⁵ Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (838). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

3:7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

- On Paul’s previous career track, he had a lot going for him, but he counts it all of no account at all.
- gain--
 - profit, something earned, advantage.
 - cf Phil 1:21- the only gain Paul counts now is Christ and being with Him.
- loss--
 - “Having to do with suffering the loss of something, with implication of sustaining hardship or suffering, *damage, disadvantage, loss, forfeit*”⁶
 - If Paul had continued on the career path laid before him as Saul of Tarsus, he wouldn’t have been likely to want for much and certainly could have saved himself much trouble. But all those things which could have saved him he considered lost, gone, taken off of his balance sheet.
- for the sake of Christ
 - Paul didn’t lose these things to no end or purpose; he counted them loss for Christ
 - We do not typically give up something of great value that will cause us a hardship. For example, I have a very expensive juicer in my garage... sitting... gathering dust. It is of great monetary value, but it would not cause me a hardship if it were gone. If a friend needed it, I would likely be willing to give it to them for the sake of our friendship. It will not give me any suffering for it to be gone. On the other hand, I use my oven on a near daily basis. If a friend needed an oven, I would not be very likely to pull mine out and give it to her, even for the sake of our friendship because it would cause me hardship to do so. Paul, though, counted his reputation and credentials as loss for the sake of Christ even though it cost him dearly and caused suffering and hardship.

3:8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

- This is like in the cartoons when a starving person finds a chunk of crusty bread and eagerly begins devouring the meal... but then he spots IT. His mouth drops open, his eyes bug out and he stares. As the scene pans over, we see IT. There before him is a

⁶ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed.) (427–428). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

veritable mountain of the best food imaginable. He looks at the dry bread in his hand, makes a disgusted face, throws the former treasure to the ground, and races toward the mountain of goodies.

- Paul looks at what he once took great pride in-- his life as a Jew-- and is repulsed. Not only that, though: he looks at anything that could possibly distract Him from the cause of Christ and he is disgusted with it. Everything is thrown to the ground and left in filth as he races toward Christ (cf Hebrews 12:1,2).
- I count all things to be loss--
 - Not only his reputation and illustrious resume, but *everything* (cf Matthew 13:44-45).
 - This is in the present tense. Paul counted all things loss in the past and continues to do so every day.
- surpassing value--
 - the value of knowing Christ is higher than anything Paul had or could possibly have on Earth.
 - This word appears three times in the book of Philippians: 2:3, 3:8, 4:7.
 - It is also used to refer to someone in authority (Rom 13:1, 1 Pet 2:13).
- knowing Christ Jesus my Lord-- in Greek there are two words for “know.” It is typically explained that one is an experiential knowledge (GINOSKO) and the other is an intellectual knowledge (OIDA). This is the experiential knowledge. By abandoning the world and living as Christ, we come to know Him.
- rubbish-- That which is thrown to the dogs, dregs, refuse, what is thrown away as worthless. Spoken of the refuse of grain, chaff, or of a table, of slaughtered animals, of dung, and figuratively of the filth of the mind.⁷

3:9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith,

- “‘In Christ’ was one of Paul’s favorite expressions (see Rom 3:24, 6:1, 8:1, 9:1). He used it to convey the relationship we have with the Lord-- a relationship so special, so close, so intimate that it can only be communicated by saying that we are ‘in Him.’ A Christian lices ‘in Christ’ as a bird lives in the air, as a fish lives in the water, and as a tree is rooted

⁷ Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

in the soil. A Christian is 'different' from those about him because he is always aware of the encircling presence of Jesus."⁸

- not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ
 - righteousness-- being counted as right in the sight of God
 - Paul presents two hypothetical options: a) righteousness earned by his own Law keeping or b) righteousness given by God, granted through faith in Christ.
 - He chooses the righteousness granted by God which is *only* available through faith in Christ.
 - If something is only available through QVC, you know that you won't go down to Walmart and find it. You must get it from QVC in the way that QVC says to get it and for the price they set. You might go to Walmart and find a knock-off that looks similar, but it won't be the same thing. Likewise, righteousness that leads to the resurrection from the dead (3:11) only comes from God and it only comes on the basis of faith in Christ. The righteousness that one works for and attempts to earn looks the same, but it is only a knock-off and will not ultimately lead to the resurrection from the dead.
 - His own efforts are fruitless. Not only fruitless, but they are part of the filth/ rubbish/ refuse he has counted loss in order to gain Christ. These things of the world are not just lower on Paul's totem pole-- they're GONE. Striving for his own righteousness would leave him without Christ.
- the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith
 - Again, this righteousness is only on the basis of faith. It can be summed up this way: "Dependence on anything other than Christ = loss... Dependence on Christ = profit."

9

3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

- Paul already enjoys a special relationship with Christ, but does not count himself as completely knowing Jesus. His knowing his savior deepens as he experiences life in Christ.
- power of His resurrection-- the power of Christ's resurrection is the hub of Christianity. It is the "good" of "good news"! If we say that Christ lived and died... that's not really good news. But say that He lived, died and was raised on the third day... THAT is good

⁸ Roper 379

⁹ Roper 496-7

news (cf 1 Cor 15:12-20). It is by the power of the resurrection that we are raised from the dead ourselves.

- fellowship of His sufferings-- Paul counts being persecuted for the sake of Christ (having fellowship with Christ through suffering) a gain on his figurative profit/ loss sheet. cf Acts 5:41
- conformed to His death-- cf Romans 6:3-7; Gal 2:20, 6:14

3:11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

- Here is the crux of the whole matter. Paul has suffered all things loss ultimately so that he may gain resurrection from the dead. Of course, all will be resurrected, but only those found righteous will be resurrected to life (cf John 5:28-29).

3:12 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

- Not that I have already obtained it-- obtained what? What he has lost all for: knowing Christ (3:8). Even the apostle Paul did not count himself as one who fully knew Christ. Full knowledge of Christ can only come with the resurrection when we will be in His presence continually.
- become perfect-- “Particularly with the meaning to bring to a full end, completion, reaching the intended goal, to finish a work or duty (John 4:34; 5:36; 17:4)...(Phil. 3:12, not that I have already completed my course)”¹⁰
- press on-- this is the same word translated “persecute” in Acts 9:4, 5, 22:4, 7, 8, 26:11 (pursuing), 14, 15.
- I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus
 - lay hold/ laid hold-- “In allusion to the public games, to obtain the prize with the idea of eager and strenuous exertion, to grasp, seize upon”¹¹ (cf 1 Cor 9:24).
 - The riddle here is to figure out what “that” refers to.
 - In part, it refers to the reason Christ “laid hold” of Paul. Paul strives to achieve the goal set for him by Christ. It is as though Paul had been hired to do a job and now earnestly works to do that job.
 - It also refers to what he has just been talking about. He has given all up so that he may know Christ... not just as a friend, but such a relationship as can only be

¹⁰ Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

¹¹ Ibid

described as being “in Christ.” He wants to experience the things Christ experienced and live as Christ lived. For our part, we were not specifically chosen on a road to Damascus with a blinding light, but those who obey the gospel were chosen in advance as those who would receive this same blessing: to be in Christ.

- Acts 9:15 records God explaining to Ananias the task He has chosen Paul for: to bear His name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel. This was a charge Paul considered an honor and a gift (cf Rom 1:5, Gal 2:7).

3:13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies behind* and reaching forward to what *lies ahead*, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- Paul knows he hasn’t arrived, so to speak, but he leaves the past in the past and keeps on keeping on, headed always toward that final call to Heaven for those in Christ. Though Paul is not yet fully Christ-like, he continues on.
- 3:12-14 as a section is chock full of words indicating a great strain and effort.
- laid hold-- same word as 3:12
- forgetting what lies behind-- “forgetting” is the same as used in Matthew 16:5, Mark 8:14 when the disciples fail to bring bread with them. It wasn’t on their minds. Likewise Paul doesn’t dwell at all on what has already past.
 - Remember that Paul was one who persecuted the church. Not just persecuted, but actively sought to destroy God’s people. He imprisoned them, obtained letters of authorization to pursue Christians in other cities. In Acts 8:1, he was “in hearty agreement with putting [Stephen] to death.” Acts 9:1 records that he was “breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.” This kind of violence is far reaching and in his new Christian life, it seems likely that he would have had dealings with people whose family and friends he had imprisoned. In fact, Acts 21:8 records that Paul and his fellows stayed with Philip who was one of the seven selected in 6:5 and more than likely was a friend of Stephen, murdered while Saul of Tarsus looked on with hearty approval.
 - 1 Timothy 1:16 gives us yet another reason Christ chose the persecuting Benjamite as His own ambassador to the Gentiles. If Christ could forgive *this* man, He could forgive anyone.
 - Some even today feel that their own sinful past is too great to overcome. They feel that their deeds will haunt them always and their guilt causes them to reject Christ, His church and His offering of forgiveness through faith. What a shame! It’s true that we can never be worthy. We can never work hard enough to gain our righteousness.

Our flesh deserves no confidence. It is *only* through “righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith that we may know Him and the power of His resurrection” (3:9, 10).

- The five step solution for the guilt ridden is the same today as it was for Paul:
 1. have faith in Christ
 2. count the good, bad and ugly as rubbish
 3. forget what is behind
 4. reach toward what is ahead
 5. press on
- reaching forward-- “It is rare that one can use a word meaning ‘to stretch out’ or ‘to reach toward’ in this context of [Philippians] 3:13. It may be far better to use an expression such as ‘to earnestly seek those things that are ahead’ or ‘to do one’s best to reach what is ahead’ or ‘to strongly desire to experience what is ahead of me’ or ‘... what lies in the future.’”¹²
- press on-- same as 3:12
- prize-- with this choice of words, Paul continues his underlying reference to the public games. This word typically refers to the wreath or garland given to winners of the games. Here Paul uses it metaphorically to refer to Heavenly reward, but the double entendre adds depth to our understanding.
- upward call-- cf Heb 3:1

3:15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;

- Paul shifts suddenly from his own experience and example to a plural focus-- us.
- perfect-- this word seems quite contradictory since Paul just said in 3:12 that he is not perfect. He uses the word in a different sense here, though. In 3:12, he acknowledges that he is not perfect, as we use the word (flawless). Here in 3:15, however, he uses it to mean maturity. “Earl F. Palmer said that there may be ‘an intentional play on words on Paul’s part: If you are mature, you know that you are not perfect; if you think you are perfect, you are not mature.’”¹³
- attitude-- mind set/ attitude is a major theme in Philippians.

¹² Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.). New York: United Bible Societies.

¹³ Earl F. Palmer as quoted by Roper, 508

- if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you
 - There are three main interpretations for this phrase, all of which carry with them the confidence Paul had that further revelation/ learning would not contradict what he had already taught:
 1. considering this is still the age of miracles, it could be that Paul has in mind a miraculous revelation of God's will concerning these other attitudes.
 2. full revelation of truths, like full perfection, will be revealed in eternity
 3. further instruction from godly influences will eventually instruct on such matters where there may be dissent.
 4. "The way Paul dealt with possible dissenters is instructive. Considering Paul's apostolic authority, he might have been tempted to say, 'What right have you to disagree with e? I am an apostle!' At times, Paul did assert his apostolic authority (see 1 Cor 14:37, 38; 1 Thess. 2:13), but he apparently did not thing that approach was called for on this occasion. Instead, he was gentle with those who disagreed with him, expressing confidence that, over time, they would learn better." ¹⁴

3:16 however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.

- It has been said that if you are not moving forward, you're drifting backward. Paul here warns us not to let that happen. It can happen even to the most mature among us. There are far too many stories of men who were once elders/ deacons/ preachers but who are now estranged from Christ.

3:17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

- join in following-- literally imitate together. This word comes from MIMETES, where we get our word "mimic."
- observe-- this word is sometimes used in the sense of "watch out" and carries the idea of examining. As we observe those who walk according to the pattern, it is not sufficient to simply say "Oh yes, Susie does as Paul does. She is a good example" and move on. We are to examine and try to learn from those whose examples are worthy.
- walk-- refers to a manner of life. cf Eph 4:1
- pattern-- TUPOS-- used of a prototype or example, a pattern to be followed. Think of a sewing pattern.

¹⁴ Roper 509

3:18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are enemies of the cross of Christ*,

- walk-- again, this speaks of a manner of life. In this case, though, the manner of life is not one to be followed because they are not patterning their lives after Christ and His life. Instead they are enemies of Christ.
- of whom I often told you--
 - He may have told them while there in person or perhaps in a previous letter (see 3:1).
 - This may refer to those Judaizing teachers.
 - Paul did not miss an opportunity to remind his beloved brethren of spiritual dangers. Sometimes today we may see a brother or sister headed down a path which we feel may lead to a spiritual trap, but we consider it none of our business. Granted, Paul was an apostle and inspired writer, but he counted it his duty to warn his brethren. Likewise, we ought to help our brethren in their walk. cf Gal 6:1
- even weeping-- Paul was not gloating; rather he was weeping over those who had walked away. This word is not just a trickle of tears. It is often used of weeping that comes with mourning (cf Matt 2:18). Paul is truly grieved by these souls' state. Likewise, when someone chooses a path away from Christ, we ought to weep over their souls, not gloat and feel superior. cf Rom 9:1-3
- enemies of the cross of Christ-- the cross is where the redemptive work of Christ took place. When someone attempts to earn their own righteousness, they essentially reject the redemptive work of Christ on the cross in favor of their own efforts at salvation, trusting in their own flesh. Reliance upon anything but Christ-- including the Law given by God but now nailed to the cross (Col 2:14, Rom 7:4)-- for salvation causes one to be an enemy of the cross.

3:19 whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

- whose god is *their* appetite
 - "god" here refers to something that is of prime importance in one's life. When we set something or someone other than God Almighty as the prime importance of our life, that something or someone becomes our god, our idol.
 - If those referred to are the Judaizers, it may be that this refers to the dietary laws of the Old Law and their keeping of these laws.
 - appetite could also be figurative. Their god is their own desires. Whatever they want to do, or be or have becomes their god.

- glory is in their shame--
 - "... could apply to [Judaizers'] boasting about keeping the Law when they should have been ashamed of their shortcomings."¹⁵
 - what should be a shame is instead what they are proud of, boastful of.
- set their minds on earthly things--
 - set their minds-- this is the same word as seen twice in 3:15 for attitude. It speaks of the mind. Some scholars believe that the mind [PHRONEO] is Paul's primary concern with the Philippian church. If so, this verse contains a key concept.
 - Judaizers would have their minds set on keeping the rites and rituals of the Old Law.
 - their confidence is in the flesh, making them enemies of the cross of Christ, but not only that, their minds are set on things here... temporary things. cf 2 Cor 4:18
 - cf 4:8

3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

- citizenship is in heaven-- during this time Roman citizenship was a valuable commodity. Some could purchase citizenship, but it was very expensive and unattainable for most. In Acts 22:28 we learn that Paul was born a citizen (uncommon for a Jew). It is likely because of this citizenship that he was not killed as a trouble maker. Instead, he appeals to Caesar on the basis of his citizenship. For Paul to say that his citizenship is in Heaven is to count yet another gain (Roman citizenship) as rubbish.
- eagerly-- cf Rom 8:25

3:21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

- transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory--
 - cf 1 Cor 15:35-57
 - transform-- To transform, change the outward form or appearance of something.¹⁶ Our essence will not be changed, only our outer body.
 - body of our humble state-- refers to our earthly, frail, aging bodies.

¹⁵ Roper 518

¹⁶ Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

- body of his glory-- our bodies will be like that of Jesus in His now glorified state
- “The application to the subject at hand is obvious: Why center your attention on the flesh when the flesh is going to be changed? Your heart should be set on *a heavenly purpose*: the transformation of your ‘lowly body’ (Phil 3:20; RSV)”¹⁷
- exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself
 - exertion-- ENERGEIA-- where we get our word energy
 - power-- His power is such that he can subject all things. He has power to be master over all. This is the power He is going to apply to transform our bodies into new bodies like his own.

¹⁷ Roper 524

Evelyn Bonner

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Philippians Chapter 4

Intro: It goes without saying, but shall be said, a solid understanding of Philippians chapter 4 is only obtained with the reading and understanding of chapters 1-3.

“Therefore” is a key word to begin this chapter. It is the “because” to the question “why?”

Therefore in this chapter lets us know that the words written before are there for these reasons...

- **Reason #1 - 4:1**...so that you stand fast in the Lord... v. 1:27; 2:16; & 3:8-9
- **Reason #2 - 4:2** ...I beg Euodia & Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord...v. 1:27; 2:5 & 16; 3:8-9.
- **Reason #3 - 4:3**...I urge true yokefellow help...
Some contend that this true yokefellow is a collective address to all fellow workers in Philippi. Others suggest this is a reference to a specific person called true yokefellow as a description of their character. In the Greek the word is Syzygos which also is used as a person’s name. The word in the text is not in the plural in the Greek which leans to the latter view.
- **Reason #4 - 4:4**...Rejoice in the Lord always...

The rest of the verses in this chapter are grouped in context.

Meaning several verses are grouped together in order to bring out the author’s intent.

- **4:5-7** - Key words: 5 - moderation (gentleness)
6 – anxious, prayer, supplication, thanksgiving
7 – peace, surpasses, guard
- **4:8-9** - Keywords: 8 – are, meditate
9 – do, peace
- **4:10-19** - Key passage: 4:14
- **4:20-23** - Key passage: 4:22

TLC Retreat Survey

Help us make the Texas Ladies in Christ Retreat even better next year! Give us your thoughts...

Using a 0-10 scale (0 = worst, 10 = best):

1. Overall, how would you rate the TLC Retreat? _____
2. Was it a good value for the price paid? _____
3. Were your expectations for the weekend met? _____
4. Overall, how would you rate the location / accommodations? _____
5. Overall, how would you rate the speakers? _____
6. Did the speakers meet your expectations? _____
7. How well would you say the Bible was taught / expanded on? _____

Give a brief answer:

8. Who would you suggest as a future speaker? _____
9. Did you enjoy a "book" study? What other book or topic would you suggest?

10. Would you come again next year? _____
11. Would you recommend TLC to a friend? _____
12. How would it affect you if TLC was in another part of the state (any other location/camp suggestions)? _____
13. What was your favorite part of the TLC Retreat?

14. What was your least favorite part of the TLC Retreat?

15. Use the back of this form to give us any other comments or suggestions you may have.