

>>>>>> Philippians - Lesson 05 <<<<<<<

- 1) When we last met, we read Phil 2:14-18 and left with a couple of questions from those verses.
- 2) So, let's read the verses again as we get started.

Philippians 2:14–18 (NASB 2020)

¹⁴Do all things without complaining or arguments; ¹⁵so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, ¹⁶holding firmly the word of life, so that on the day of Christ I can take pride because I did not run in vain nor labor in vain. ¹⁷But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. ¹⁸You too, *I urge you*, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.

- 3) As we begin this set of verses, Paul, unlike the last set begins with what seems to be a simple command – basically, don't complain or argue.
- 4) We saw a perfect example of what that means in the last chapter. I call us back to Phil 1:12-18.
 - a) Paul's attitude in these verses is absolutely amazing!
- 5) He goes on to tell us here that if we do these things, there are some things that are given:
 - i) Prove ourselves to be blameless, innocent, children of God, and above reproach.
 - ii) Lights in the world holding to the word of life.
- 6) The obvious question is "how do we do this?" – as selfish humans, this is not easy.
- 7) Leaving that as a given and getting back to the question in two parts.

1st – How would our lives be impacted if we set our minds and hearts to accomplish these two things?

- 8) Personally, I know from the times I succeed, if I could (and I am trying) accomplish this in my life, I would be happier and more at peace.

Second question –

How would the kingdom (the immediate portion that we are a part of) be affected?

- 9) As to the kingdom, our brothers and sisters don't like to hear us complain and especially argue so for their part, I am sure it would be better.
- 10) For those whom God puts in our path to whom we are trying to show Christ – there is no doubt that their impression of "Christ living in us" would definitely be more like what it should be.
 - a) I like the idea of being a light and not causing people to think wrongly about Christ.
- 11) So, basically we win if we just do this. Too bad it is so hard!!!

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12) Except for the “Too bad it’s so hard” part, I think this is exactly what Paul is telling the Philippians in his last statements.

13) In essence, if they do this:

- a) He will be able to take pride in them.
- b) He will not have labored in vain.
- c) He can rejoice and share his joy over them with them.
- d) And finally, they too can rejoice in themselves and share with him.

14) The last item here calls for another question – perhaps obvious but maybe not. Paul says in verse 18

¹⁸ You too, *I urge you*, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.

When we succeed in getting something “right” – does it allow us to feel prideful or boast? Of course not! the question then becomes...

Is there a marked difference in being prideful and rejoicing over getting it right?

15) These last two items bring out another facet of Paul’s desires for them.

- a) That is the joy that those who love us and set examples for us is increased when we follow what they have taught us.
- b) And this in turn will bring a joy to our hearts knowing that they have joy.
- c) It all fits together but properly, without pride or boasting.

Philippians 2:19–30 (NASB 2020)

Timothy and Epaphroditus

¹⁹ But I hope, in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. ²⁰ For I have no one *else* of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. ²¹ For they all seek after their own *interests*, not those of Christ Jesus. ²² But you know of his proven character, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child *serving* his father. ²³ Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things *go* with me; ²⁴ and I trust in the Lord that I myself will also be coming shortly. ²⁵ But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need, ²⁶ because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. ²⁷ For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly, so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned *about you*. ²⁹ Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold people like him in high regard, ³⁰ because he came close to

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death for the work of Christ, risking his life to compensate for your absence in your service to me.

- 1) This is all about two fellow workers and brothers in Christ.
- 2) First, he mentions Timothy.
 - a) Trusted companion and someone whom Paul considered to be his “son in the faith”
 - i) Paul had led Timothy to the Lord on his first missionary journey.
 - ii) It is important to remember also that Timothy was with Paul, Luke, and Silas when the Church at Philippi was founded.
 - (1) This of course means that Timothy has a familiarity with these folks and they with him that makes him the perfect choice for this ministry.
 - b) The indication Paul is giving here is that he will be sending Timothy but, not right away.
 - i) As he indicates, he will be waiting a bit to “see how things go with me.”
 - ii) And from his comment
“that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition,”
the expected time would be long enough for Timothy to at least send word back to Paul about the church’s condition.
 - iii) Once that has taken place and Timothy is there then Paul plans to wrap up things in Rome and come to Philippi himself.
- 3) The other person Paul mentions is Epaphroditus.
 - a) Paul obviously has high regard for him as well.
 - b) He is from Philippi and was sent to Paul by the congregation as a messenger and probably also as a helper.
 - c) One big item here is that he became very ill during his stay in Rome and from what Paul says here, he almost died.
 - d) What is not stated here outright but is a fact none the less is that Epaphroditus is leaving immediately and carrying this letter back to his congregation.
- 4) By sending Epaphroditus and promising to send Timothy, Paul is letting these folks know that all he has been telling them about how he feels is true, and he is backing that up with actions.
- 5) I think we can rest assured when they see Epaphroditus in person and are able to read this letter they will truly be doing exactly what Paul tells them to do next – rejoicing!

- 6) Moving now into chapter 3 verse 1 to 6

Philippians 3:1a (NASB 2020)

The Goal of Life

¹ Finally, my brothers *and sisters*, rejoice in the Lord.

- 1) As we have discussed, the overall tone of this letter is one of joyfulness and being joyful.
- 2) Paul just finished speaking about two men in whom he and the Philippians took great joy.
- 3) It is not surprising then that he would make a strong statement like this.
- 4) We have not really talked about joy, rejoicing, or being joy filled, so let's ask a couple of questions.
- 5) First, let's look at JOY.
- 6) Webster says:

Joy is a feeling of great happiness or pleasure that can be caused by good fortune, success, or a sense of well-being. Joy can also be used as a noun to describe something that gives joy. As a verb, joy means to experience joy or to rejoice.

Is that definition (or some part of it) what Paul has in mind when he uses the word joy?

Is this the joy that is a fruit of the Spirit from Gal 5?

- 7) The Life Application Commentary says this about joy which I truly think is right on point for the discussion we are having.

Often happiness is mistaken for joy, but the two are very different. Inward joy comes from knowing and trusting God; happiness comes as a result of pleasant circumstances. Inward joy is lasting; we can feel joy in spite of our deepest troubles; happiness is temporary because it is based on external circumstances.⁶

- 8) So, let's talk about the other word that is actually part of this verse – REJOICE.
- 9) Again, turning to Webster:

To rejoice is to feel or express joy or great delight, or to give joy to or gladden:

Is rejoicing primarily outward or inward?

⁶ Bruce Barton et al., [*Life Application New Testament Commentary*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 855.