

>>>>>> Philippians - Lesson 12 <<<<<<<

- 1) As we move to this next set of verses, I could see where Paul might have thought that he could have downplayed their gifts to him by his discussion of contentment which we talked about last time.
- 2) That being true or not, he continues by reassuring these folks again of his appreciation for their gifts and how truly important they were to him.

Philippians 4:15–19 (NASB 2020)

¹⁵ You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first *preaching* of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone; ¹⁶ for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift *itself*, but I seek the profit which increases to your account. ¹⁸ But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

- 3) Not only were those gifts of support important but it turns out that the Philippians were really the only ones who were willing and/or able to help in this manner.
- 4) Then, he hastens to add that he is not in need at this point – all this was only to let them know how much he appreciated their support.
- 5) Of course, he thanks them specifically for the gift sent from them by Epaphroditus.
 - a) This is an important connection because Epaphroditus is the one delivering this letter.
 - i) He was the one who brought the gift, and also the one that was so ill he almost died after he arrived in Rome.
- 6) One thing I found interesting here was Paul’s phrase in the last of verse 18.

“... what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.”
- 7) This phrase is reminiscent of the phrase regarding most all offerings commanded in Leviticus.
- 8) Most were described as an offering such as a food offering or first fruits offering but all were “... an aroma pleasing to the Lord.”
- 9) We of course are no longer required to make burnt offerings through priests as in the Old Testament.
- 10) But we do give and we give in many ways.
 - a) In fact, as is often stated, this is one of our “sacrificial” acts of worship.

Do we ever consciously consider our offerings, our gifts to help others, our tithes, or any other gifts we may give as an “acceptable sacrifice pleasing to the Lord?” If not, why not?

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11) Along with this, there is the fact that offerings to the Lord in the Old Testament had to be made in certain ways.

- a) The sacrifice had to meet standards – usually non-blemished and many times first fruits.

Likewise, do you think that our offerings need to be made in “certain ways”?

To ask it another way – do we have requirements for the way in which we present our offerings and gifts?

12) Now, to the last 4 verses...

Philippians 4:20–23 (NASB 2020)

²⁰ Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

²¹ Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. ²² All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar’s household.

²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

- 1) Paul concludes this letter with customary benedictions and greetings.
- 2) One final thing that I think we must take note of here is in the greetings.
- 3) How wonderful it must have been for Paul to say and for the Philippians to here the greetings form “those of Caesar’s household.”
- 4) These folks were very likely not members of the emperor’s family but were instead likely to be:
 - a) Imperial slaves and freedmen who served in administrative roles.
 - b) Imperial civil servants.
 - c) Domestic workers in imperial residences.
 - d) Various other employees and officials connected to the imperial administration.
- 5) What is significant is that Paul’s message and the spread of the gospel had begun to penetrate even into the circles connected to the imperial court.

Any questions or comments about this or, for that matter, the study overall?

- 7) Hope you have enjoyed this study.
- 8) My hope also is that you see in Paul through this letter the fact that he did Choose Joy.
- 9) Our joy is under attack by life and the living of it every day.
- 10) When we feel like we are loosing that battle, this is a wonderful place for us to go in God’s word to find ways to stop the joy stealers.
- 11) Paul is an example and a mentor, teacher, and encourager for us throughout this letter.

12) Despite all the hardships behind him and I am sure those he suspected to be before him he could say with confidence – **“Rejoice in the Lord always”**