

**>>>>>> *Philippians - Lesson 10* <<<<<<<**

- 1) We are going to begin this time by taking a couple of steps backwards.
- 2) First, to address one of the questions from last time and second, to go even further back to shed a little different light on a passage we looked at a couple of weeks ago.
- 3) Both of these I think will have value and increase our understanding of this wonderful letter of Paul’s to the Philippian church.
- 4) As to last week’s question – it had to do with verse 20 of chapter 3.

***Philippians 3:20 (NASB 2020)***

<sup>20</sup> For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

- 5) The question was regarding other translations and I think the meaning in context for the word citizenship.
- 6) Turns out, there are actually 4 different nouns used in the New Testament that are translated “normally” as either citizen or citizenship.
- 7) The word used here is πολίτευμα (politeuma).
  - a) It is actually unique to this verse in all the New Testament.
  - b) As you might expect, the word has a range of meanings.
    - i) Citizenship
    - ii) Commonwealth
    - iii) A form of government
    - iv) The administration of civil affairs
  - c) However, when one looks at the primary meaning as put forth in BDAG it turns out to be not citizenship but commonwealth or state.
  - d) Paul uses a related verb πολιτεύεσθε (politeuetha) in 1:27

***Philippians 1:27 (NASB 2020)***

<sup>27</sup> Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ...

- e) This verb politeuetha here translated “conduct” here means to ‘conduct one’s life, live, lead one’s life’<sup>15</sup>
- f) Based on the root word, a scholar named Brewer in the Journal of Biblical Literature: translates it as ‘discharge your obligations as citizens’
- g) Most translations do not but, I found two that do bring this idea to the table; the CSB (Christian Standard Bible) reads...

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<sup>15</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 846.

***Philippians 1:27 (CSB)***

<sup>27</sup> Just one thing: As citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ...

h) the NLT (New Living Translation) reads...

***Philippians 1:27 (NLT)***

***Live as Citizens of Heaven***

<sup>27</sup> Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ...

i) Another interesting translation I found for 3:20 was the KJV.

***Philippians 3:20 (KJV)***

<sup>20</sup> For our conversation is in heaven...<sup>16</sup>

j) Of course I thought that was rather odd until I found this explanation.

The King James Version (KJV) translates πολίτευμα (politeuma) in Philippians 3:20 as "conversation" due to the historical meaning of the word "conversation" in 17th-century English. In this context, "conversation" does not refer to verbal discourse but rather to one's conduct, behavior, or way of life...

- 8) This connection between our obligations as citizens and how we conduct our lives it appears is given special emphasis here in Philippians.
- 9) Now, let's cut back to the original concern and try to, in light of these findings, determine what that really means.
  - a) First, based on the words used here, beginning back in 1:27 which we just read and in verse 20 of chapter 3, it is about our responsibilities as citizens of God's kingdom that Paul is talking about.
- 10) So, we might ask why is this important to emphasize in this particular letter? Actually, there is a uniqueness about Philippi that might clear this up.
- 11) As we mentioned in the introduction to this study, Philippi was a true Roman colony.
  - a) This is rather important distinction.
  - b) It would mean that there was a lot of civic pride in the town and that the citizens (including perhaps some of these new Christians) took pride in being Roman citizens at this level.
  - c) You may also recall from Acts that it was Philippi where Paul's Roman citizenship was a factor.
- 12) Long story short, Paul is likely trying to emphasize the fact that a Christian's citizenship overrides all other obligations.

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<sup>16</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: King James Version\*](#), Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version. (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2009), Php 3:19–20.

- a) Jesus Christ is Lord – not Caesar.
- b) Paul has clearly emphasized this fact back in chapter 2

**Philippians 2:9–11 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>9</sup>For this reason also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and *that* every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**As for us today, is this still a valid concern? Does our loyalty lie with government and our leaders or in our Lord and His kingdom?**

- 13) I know this was a lot but I hope at least it was a little interesting and clarifying.
- 14) However, before we exit this - Rick made the point which is 100% true that citizenship in today's terms also implies what rights and privileges we have as citizens.
- 15) Though I do not believe, based on the context we have talked about here, that Paul had that in mind but it does not change the fact.

**So as citizens of the Kingdom, what are some of the rights and privileges we have?**

**As citizens of the Kingdom what are some rights and privileges that we will not have?**

- 16) Our loss of “rights” and/or privileges as we know them will not be an issue in the kingdom.
- 17) Further, rights as we have them today are wonderful, but I think we would all agree that we as Christians will relinquish those rights if required to do so to keep our citizenship in God's Kingdom.
- 18) Ok, I want quickly to revisit one other thing from a couple of weeks back. Let's go back and read Phil 3:7-10

**Philippians 3:7–11 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>7</sup>But whatever things were gain to me, these things I have counted as loss because of Christ. <sup>8</sup>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 *mere* rubbish, so that I may gain Christ, <sup>9</sup>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, <sup>10</sup>that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; <sup>11</sup>if somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

## ***“Choosing Joy – Notes – 2024***

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19) We talked about the things Paul lost and all of his sacrifices which led to three vital changes in Paul’s life – things he was trying to gain.

- a) That he could know the power of His resurrection
- b) That he could know the fellowship of His sufferings
- c) That he could be conformed to His death

20) We then talked about what each of those meant.

- a) Power of His resurrection
  - i) The power of the Holy Spirit which raised Christ.
  - ii) It also raises us to an eternal life with Christ when our life here is done.
- b) Knowing the fellowship of His sufferings
  - i) As Paul suffers (even now in prison) he feels that closeness to Christ.
  - ii) As and when we suffer because of our faith we also should feel that closeness.
- c) And finally – Conformed to His Death?
  - i) One commentator summed up what we were thinking here.

We cannot know the victory of the resurrection without personally applying the crucifixion. We must die to ourselves before we can truly know either the power of His resurrection or the fellowship of His sufferings.

21) The emphasis was on these three things that Paul was trying to gain which is all true.

22) However, Bill Mounce, in a blog post this past week pointed out that something was left very much undefined because of the construction here – “that I may know Him.”

23) His contention is that in truth, the three things we defined lead us and Paul to that very thing – knowing Him.

24) Again – not head knowledge but relational knowledge – forming a deep relationship with Christ.

25) And that is the reason I wanted to come back to this.

- a) We are all seeking to deepen our relationship with Christ – to be more in a relationship where we know Him and for sure He knows us.
- b) These three things when brought truly and deeply into our lives can help us in that quest.
  - i) His burial and resurrection – our dying to self and looking to Him as the inspiration for living a resurrected life.
  - ii) Understanding His sufferings and knowing that as we are in a relationship with Him He is always there and loves us and will help us as we suffer.

26) Again, we must NOT miss the fact that Paul wants first **to know Him** and he wants to know these other things to further that knowledge – relationally knowing Christ.

27) Ok back to where we were last time...

***Philippians 4:4–7 (NASB 2020)***

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all people. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

***What are things that define a gentle spirit?***

- a) Not boisterous.
- b) Being able to disagree without quarreling or arguing.
- c) Caring about others and their feelings.
- d) Contending for the faith without harshness.

28) Paul begins this thought with an imperative “Rejoice”.

- a) He has just talked indirectly about complaining and arguing in speaking to the two ladies and now, he talks about worrying and having a gentle spirit.

***Can a person “Rejoice in the Lord” and be complaining and arguing?***

***Yes?                      No?                      Why?/Why Not?***

***Can a person “Rejoice in the Lord” while being anxious (worrying)?***

***Yes?                      No?                      Why?/Why Not?***

29) Before we discuss Paul’s solution, we need to consider that there is a facet of being anxious that may indirectly affect Paul’s proposed solution.

***Is worrying a subtle (or perhaps not so subtle) distrust of God?                      Why?***  
***Why not?***

30) John MacArthur really sums this up well:

People become worried, anxious, and fearful because they do not trust in God’s wisdom, power, or goodness. They fear that God is not wise enough, strong enough, or good enough to prevent disaster. It may be that this sinful doubt is because their knowledge of Him is faulty, or that sin in their lives has crippled their faith.<sup>17</sup>

31) So, Paul then gives us solution for this goal – not being anxious about anything.

32) Bluntly – if you are anxious and worrying then turn to God.

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<sup>17</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., [Philippians](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 2001), 283.

<sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

- a) Prayer with conditions – first pleading.
- b) Looking at the word for **pleading**, we have an “urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God”
- c) The second condition Paul places on this prayer is thanksgiving.
- d) Again, I think MacArthur is right on point here:

Thankful prayer brings release from fear and worry, because it affirms God’s sovereign control over every circumstance, and that His purpose is the believer’s good.

6) He further points out that Rom. 8:28 gives us a clear picture of this very fact.

**Romans 8:28 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>28</sup>And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.