Murray Baptist Church – 1/26/21 – Bible Study Outline – Philippians 4:1-23

At the beginning of the book of Philippians, it is the tag team of Paul and Timothy who are identified as the co-authors of this letter.

It is written to church body and the church leaders.

They use the standard greeting of grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. As you think of the purpose of the greeting, it is a reminder of what one should expect to receive from God and it also what one should expect to model once it has been received. Paul and Timothy are encouraging us to have it and model it. I being with Chapter 4 because of the recent losses of life and difficulty of circumstances of many people around us. We need encouragement Paul in a jail cell provides that for us.

V1. This verse appears to be the conclusion of the content in Chapter 3 and there are no grammatical links between verses 1 and 2.

V2. This verse is unique in that Paul mentions first names of people in his text rather than his greeting or his conclusion.

* The reason this stand out is that because this letter would have been read out loud in the Philippian church. This was not designed to be a circular letter to all churches but a letter to the Church at Philippi.
* It is fair to conclude that their differences would have been well known in the church. Another unique aspect of this is Paul doesn’t provide direct correction or take a side. He has a history of taking tough issues in the Church (1 Cor. 1:12; 5:1; 2 Cor. 2:1-8; Gal 1:6-10; 1 Tim1:3-4). He uses the language of pleading (v3) rather than language of command (Phil. 4:4-9). What ever the issue was (it doesn’t appear to be either a doctrinal or moral issue). It is more than likely a behavioral issue as Paul is emphasizes behavior rather than issues in this chapter.
* The first important point Paul makes through this situation is that believers and especially those in the same church need to be **like minded**. This is not group think or the inability to think for oneself. This is that we understand the mind of Christ and let that mind transform us. That our thoughts are his thoughts.

V3. This verse reminds us that spite of their differences both of the woman have been helpful to Paul in the cause of the gospel and are considered valued peers who names are written in the book of life. The takeaway for us today is don’t let behavioral issues keep believers separated if it doesn’t involve a doctrinal or moral issue. Many pastors believe that interpersonal issues can be more divisive than doctrinal or moral issues. The issue is generally not over right and wrong but between better and best. These issues are highly subjective, but each side inserts their position is “right” based on personal values and preferences.

Safeguarding against division – Rejoice

V4 – the first way is to rejoice. In what – in the Lord always. If we are focused on rejoicing in the Lord, we won’t have time to continue to bothered about what someone else did that is getting on our nerves. The modifier “always” speaks to the joy that a Christian has (one fruit of the Spirit), is that there is an enduring quality about it. It is not for just special occasions but for all occasions.

V5 – Speaks to gentleness, moderation, patience. A discipline in response as a way of life, as a pattern of behavior.

If you can rejoice, you can be moderate because you still have that which you rejoice over. Consequently you don’t have to be anxious or worry about anything – why because we deliver those concerns to the one who can alleviate them. We hand them over, we deliver them - through prayer.

V6 remind us how we give the issues of life up and V7 reminds us what we get in return. They are reminders of elements of our spiritual armor of God. Breastplate of righteousness guards our hearts, the helmet of salvation guards our heads. The practical application is receiving the peace of God rather than just trying to get a piece of God.

Staying on Track

Vs. 8 – How to know what to think about. Is it true? Is it noble or honest? Is it right? Is it pure? Is it lovely? Is it admirable? Is it excellent or worthy of praise? Then those are the things you think about. If it is true and honest but not worthy of praise then don’t focus on that. Focus on the good “real” things as opposed to imagined good things.

Vs. 9-10 – be a model. Life is your runway. What you are modeling should be what you seen and now are doing. An example is something that is demonstrated. A theory is something that is talked about but not necessarily demonstrated. Translation – do, don’t talk.

Secret Strength

Vs. 11-13 – Contentment in any situation (well fed or hungry, living in excess or in need. What is the key – I can do all this, I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. Then Paul gives examples (vs. 14-19)

* God supplies but he also can also send others to share in your troubles (v. 14)
* When he started ministering to churches, the Philippians supported him when no one else was (v.15)
* When he was in Thessalonica – the Philippians provided support for him more than once when he needed it (v.16)
* The Philippians supplied gifts and other things delivered by Epaphroditus. What was done for Paul was a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice that pleases God (v.18)
* Paul reminds readers and hearers that the same Good who has brought him through will also meet our needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. As God meets our needs we should give God the glory.