

PHILIPPIANS LESSON 8
THE JOY OF FREELY GIVING TO THE LORD
PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 – 23

KEY VERSE: PHILIPPIANS 4: 12

A. INTRODUCTION

***PAUL CONTINUES TO SUMMARIZE THE MAIN POINTS OF HIS GREAT EPISTLE**

a. IN 4: 10 – 23, PAUL RETURNS TO THE LOVE OFFERING THAT THE PHILIPPIANS HAD SENT TO HIM IN PRISON, RECALL THAT THEIR GIFTS TO PAUL WERE DELIVERED TO HIM BY EPAPHRODITUS

***PHILIPPIANS 2: 19 – 30 “THE JOY OF HAVING GOOD MENTORS IN THE CHURCH**

***PHILIPPIANS 2: 25 PAUL COMMENDS EPAPHRODITUS AND DESCRIBES HIM AS A CHOICE ROLE MODEL FOR THE SAINTS IN PHILIPPI**

b. PAUL NOW MENTIONS EPAPHRODITUS AGAIN IN 4: 18 AND IS CAREFUL TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL THANKS FOR THE GIFTS THAT WERE SENT BY HIM

c. EVEN THE TEACHER AND MENTOR, PAUL USES THE GIVING AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO FURTHER DISCIPLINE THE BELIEVERS AT PHILIPPI

d. PAUL CONTINUES THE THEME OF REJOICING, PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 PAUL NOW INSERTS SOME POWERFUL WORDS ABOUT BEING CONTENT IN THE LORD. HE WILL NOTE THAT GODLY CONTENTMENT EMPOWERS THE BELIEVER TO THRIVE IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER ONE HAS PLENTY OR IF ONE IS IN NEED.

***PHILIPPIANS 4: 13 BECAUSE OF GODS EMPOWERING GRACE, WE CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST JESUS WHO STRENGTHENS US**

e. THE MAIN THEME IN PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 – 23 IS THE LIBERATING GRACE OF CHRISTIAN GIVING – PAUL EMPHAZIES ON GIVING AT THE CLOSE OF PHILIPPIANS IS VALUABLE. PAUL KNOWS THAT SINCE THE TIME OF THE FALL (GENESIS 3: 1 – 19) WE ARE ACUTELY AWARE OF OUR MANY NEEDS – WE ARE DEPENDANT CREATURES THAT NEED TO BE FED – CLOTHES – AND SHELTERED. WE LIVE IN A FALLEN WORLD OF LIMITED RESOURCES. SO THE ONLY UNIVERSAL WILL TO SURVIVE TENDS TO MAKE US INTO “TAKING” PERSONS AND NOT INTO “GIVING” PERSONS – WE ARE BORN WITH THE SENSE THAT THINGS MIGHT RUN OUT AND WE MIGHT NOT HAVE ENOUGH TO MAKE US HAPPY.

f. THE PROBLEM WITH A “TAKING” PERSON IS THAT WE SERVE A GOD OF UNLIMITED GRACE. UNDERSTAND GOD IS A GIVING PERSON FROM FIRST TO LAST – THE GOAL OF DISCIPLESHIP IS TO BE LIKE GOD, THIS MEANS THAT, IF WE WANT TO BE TRULY HAPPY, WE NEED TO BE A GIVING PERSON

TOO. WE NEED TO ASK FOR THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, SO WE CAN SET ASIDE THAT “NATURAL” DRIVE TO TAKE AND INSTEAD SEEK THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT THAT GRANTS US THE JOY OF GIVING IN JESUS NAME.

***ROMANS 12: 8**

g. ONE OF THE GREATEST MIRACLES IN THE BIBLE WAS WHEN GOD PROVIDED FOR ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS. THROUGH OUT THE EXODUS, GOD GAVE THE JEWS MANNA FROM HEAVEN

***EXODUS 16: 11 – 18**

h. AS WE READ ABOUT THIS EXTRAORDINARY GIFT OF THE LORD, THE WORDS OF EXODUS 16: 18 PRACTICALLY LEAP OFF THE PAGE

i. THIS VERSE SEEMS TO SAY THAT THE ONE WHO HOARDED THE NANNA HAD NO SURPLUS, BUT THE ONE WHO WAS NOT SELFISH, THAT IS, THE ONE WHO GATHERED BUT A LITTLE, HAD NO LACK. THERE IS A SPIRITUAL PARADOX HERE THAT ECHOES THROUGHOUT THE SCRIPTURES.

***THE STINGY PERSON WILL EXPERIENCE POVERTY AND THE GENEROUS PERSON WILL ENJOY PLENTY**

***LUKE 6: 38**

j. PAUL TEACHING IN PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 – 23, THIS GIFT TO HIM BY THE WAY OF EPAPHRODITUS WOULD ENRICH THEM FAR MORE THAN IT HAS ENRICHED HIM.

B. DISCOVER

***QUESTION: WHAT RECURRENT THEME IN PHILIPPIANS DO YOU SEE AT THE BEGINNING OF 4: 10?**

***QUESTION: WHY DOESN'T PAUL SIMPLY SAY, “THANK YOU” TO THE PHILIPPIANS?**

***QUESTION: HOW DOES PAUL USE THE OCCASION OF THEIR GIFT TO TEACH ABOUT GODLY CONTENTMENT? PHILIPPIANS 4: 11 – 12**

***QUESTION: HOW DOES PAUL COMPLIMENT THE PHILIPPIANS IN PHILIPPIANS 4: 15 – 16?**

***QUESTION: WHAT SPECIAL JEWISH SETTING MIGHT PAUL BE REFERRING TO WHEN HE SAYS, “THEY ARE A FRAGRANT OFFERING, AN ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE, PLEASING TO GOD? PHILIPPIANS 4: 18**

C. DISCERN

a. PAUL GIVES US SOME INTERESTING AND POWERFUL INFORMATION

1. THE SELFLESS SERVICE OF EPAPHRODITUS OCCUPIES THE CENTRAL POINT OF THE LETTER
2. THE THEMES OF JOY
3. THE HUMILITY OF CHRIST
4. POSITIVE CHRISTIAN THINKING JOIN EVERYTHING TOGETHER

b. IN 2 CORINTHIANS 8: 1 – 9, PAUL COMPARES THE GENEROSITY OF THE MACEDONIANS (THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH WAS LOCATED IN MACEDONIA, GREECE) WITH THE RELUCTANCE OF THE CORINTHIANS TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON THEIR PLEDGE TO GIVE. PAUL THEN WRITES TO THE CORINTHIANS 2 COR. 8: 9 – SO JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE OF CHRISTIAN GIVING. HE REPRESENTS THAT EXTRAVAGANCE OF GRACE THAT IS TOTALLY GIVEN OVER TO THE WELFARE OF OTHERS.

c. HERE ARE SOME TIPS THAT MAY HELP IN LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

1. PAUL PRACTICES WHAT HE PREACHES. HE STRONGLY EXHORTED THE PHILIPPIANS TO “REJOICE IN THE LORD” PHILIPPIANS 3: 1; 4: 1, 4 PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 PAUL OPENS BY PERSONALLY REJOICING IN THE LORD.

2. PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 PAUL ADDRESSES THE SUBJECT OF CHRISTIAN GIVING AND RECEIVING

3. PHILIPPIANS 4: 11 – 13 PAUL AGAIN SPEAKS TO AN INTERNAL QUALITY OF MIND. HERE HE EXPOUNDS UPON THE IDEA OF “CONTENTMENT”

4. PHILIPPIANS 4: 19 PAUL TOUCHES ON THE PRINCIPLE OF “RECIPROCITY”, THAT IS, IF WE SINCERELY SERVE OTHERS IN CHRIST, GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF US.

D. PULLING IT ALL TPGETHER!

*QUESTION: WHERE ELSE IN PHILIPPIANS HAS PAUL WRITTEN ABOUT GIVING?

*QUESTION: FIND THOSE PORTIONS OF PHILIPPIANS THAT SPEAK OF SACRIFICIAL GIVING AND CONNECT THESE PORTIONS WITH PHILIPPIANS 4: 10

E. DEVOTE

a. ONE OF THE GREATEST QUESTIONS TO ASK ONES SELF! “WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE MEAN TO ME”?

*WHAT ARE THE SPIRITUAL MANDATES CONTAINED IN PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 – 13, AND HOW DO THEY RELATE TO MY PERSONAL LIFE?

*HEBREWS 4: 12 – GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE DYNAMIC NATURE OF GODS WORD

*THE DEVOTE STEP IS ALL ABOUT EMPOWERMENT

***LIFE IN THE KINGDOM CANNOT BE DONE IN THE FLESH, BUT IT CAN ONLY BE DONE IN THE SPIRIT**

***THE LOFTY GOALS OF PAUL IN PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 – 23 CERTAINLY ARE A CALL TO PRAYER.**

***ACTS 20: 35 LUKE RECORDS PAULS WORDS TO THE:**

a. EPHESIAN ELDERS. WHAT IS PECULIAR ABOUT THIS VERSE IS THAT THE GOSPELS DO NOT RECORD THESE EXACT WORDS OF JESUS. PAUL MAY HAVE PICKED UP ON A SAYING OF JESUS THAT WAS NOT INCLUDED IN OUR FOUR GOSPELS.

***WE ARE MORE LIKE GOD WHEN WE FREELY GIVE**

***WE ARE MOST BLESSED WHEN WE GIVE AND NOT RECEIVE**

b. LETS CHECK OUT THESE QUESTIONS BELOW

1. ON A SCALE 1 – 10 BEING THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF GENEROSITY AM I A GIVING PERSON OR A TAKING PERSON?

2. SAME SCALE: HOW WOULD YOU GAUGE YOUR LEVEL OF CONTENTMENT RIGHT NOW?

3. SAME SCALE: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU ALLOW YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES IN LIFE TO DETERMINE YOUR ATTITUDE?

4. SAME SCALE: DO YOU TRULY SEE GIVING AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP?

c. THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS THROUGH GODS WORD. HE IS ABLE TO CUSTOMIZE THE BIBLE TO ADDRESS OUR PERSONAL LIVES IN CHRIST

d. WE NEED ALWAYS TO INVITE THE LORD TO TRANSFORM AND MOLD US INTO THE PATTERN THAT PAUL HAS SET FORTH IN THE ENTIRE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

e. THE TEACHING IN PHILIPPIANS WE NEED TO:

1. AFFIRM AND EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF THE LORD

2. TRUSTING THAT GOD IS IN CONTROL

3. CULTIVATE POSITIVE, GOD – HONORING THOUGHTS

4. SACRIFICIAL GIVING

FOR THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH

F. DISCIPLE

***THERE IS NO GREATER JOY THAN ACTUALIZING THE BIBLE IN OUR LIVES**

***THE ENTIRE REASON FOR BEING IS TO MAKE GODS WORD COME ALIVE IN A FREE AND EASY WAY IN OUR DAY – TO – DAY WALK WITH THE LORD**

a. HERE ARE SOME GUIDELINES TO HELP THE SPIRITUAL MANDATE OF PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 – 23 BECOME REAL IN OUR LIVES:

1. ENHANCE THE JOY OF ANOTHER BY SUPPLYING A DEFINITE NEED IN THE LIFE – A GIFT CARD FOR FOOD, GAS & ETC.

2. EVERYTIME I BECOME DISSATISFIED WITH MY SITUATION IN LIFE, LOOK UNTO GOD FOR YOUR CONTENTMENT. REDIRECT YOUR THOUGHTS TOWARD THE LORD

3. SEEING GIVING AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP. EVERY TIME I GIVE, I COMMIT TO VISUALIZE MY GIFT AS DEVOTIONAL INCENSE RISING UP FROM THE ALTER OF GOD, MY GIFTS ARE AN ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE THAT IS PLEASING UNTO GOD.

***PHILIPPIANS 4: 18**

b. BEING DISCIPLED IN ACCORDANCE TO PHILIPPIANS 4: 10 – 23 WILL BE A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE! BECOMING MORE LIKE GOD, MEANS BEING TRANSFORMED FROM A “TAKING PERSON” INTO A “GIVING PERSON”. IT MEANS HAVING AN UNCHANGEABLE AND INEXHAUSTIBLE FOUNDATION FOR MY CONTENTMENT.

***IT MEANS THAT PARTICIPATING IN THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE CHURCH WILL NO LONGER BE A MATTER OF OBLIGATION BUT AN EXPRESSION OF MY WORSHIP AND DEVOTION TO GOD.**

***PERHAPS THE GREATEST BLESSING OF THESE CHAPTERS IS TO GIVE IT AWAY.**

***NOT ONLY PRACTICE THE BLESSING OF GIVING IT AWAY, BUT PRAY FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCIPLE OTHERS IN PAULS TEACHING ON GIVING.**

***PRAY THAT GOD WILL LEAD YOU TO SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER DISCOVERED THAT TRUE CONTENTMENT THAT COMES FROM THE LORD.**

***PRAY THAT THE LORD WILL LEAD YOU TO SOMEONE WHO IS TIRED OF THE DIMINISHING RETURNS OF TAKING ALL THE TIME.**

***PRAY GOD WILL USE YOU TO DISCIPLE ANOTHER IN THE JOY OF CHRISTIAN GIVING**

THE END!