

1601 - The Book of Philippians

Chapter 1 - GRACE AND PEACE

Philippians is a letter of joy and encouragement in the midst of adverse conditions. Paul is writing from prison but his natural circumstances are secondary to his concern for his friends at Philippi.

I. GRACE AND PEACE... A GIFT FROM GOD

PHILIPPIANS, CHAPTER 1

Philippians 1:1-2 (NKJV)

“Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: {2} Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Definitions: The Greek word “*charis*,” means grace. It’s the divine influence of God upon your heart, which reflects in your life. It’s God’s unmerited favor - a gift you could never earn. Grace is God’s gift , stored up in heaven, awaiting your need. It is intended to provide for you or others through you, for any circumstance. It is always sufficient. It is a demonstration of God’s loving care and concern. The Greek word “*eirene*,” pronounced “i-ray'-nay;” means peace. It can be also mean “*quietness, rest, wholeness and prosperity.*”

Joy: the Silent Partner of Grace and Peace

Paul is in prison, but the same grace and peace he prays for the Philippians, is what sustains him. He writes:

{3} “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you...”

{4} “always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy,”

Paul knew the joy of the Lord in every trial he faced. Joy as Paul knew it is part of God's grace. You cannot make yourself joyful for very long. You must live under the umbrella of heaven and receive your joy from God.

Christian Fellowship

Paul feels one with these people who are so far away. They can deliver grace and peace to each other because of their fellowship, their relationship, their “*koinonia*.”

II. THE BELIEVER'S ATTITUDE – CONFIDENT OF VICTORY IN CHRIST

Philippians 1:3-6 (NKJV)

“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, {4} always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, {5} for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, {6} being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;”

A. All the Way with Christ

In Verse 6 Paul says he is confident. The Greek word for “*confidence*” means, “*to be assured and content in one's belief -- to trust, and yield to that belief.*” Paul is assured and content with his belief that the Lord Jesus will finish what He started in Paul's Philippian friends. They will all go to their ultimate victories.

James 1:2-3 (NKJV)

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, {3} knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.”

God has given us the ability to endure the trials, so we can go all the way with Christ. Paul made God's grace a continuing part of His life. He actively and gratefully received it daily... and willingly dispensed it to others.

III. PAUL'S PRAYER: LOVE... TO THE GLORY AND PRAISE OF GOD

Philippians 1:9-11 (NKJV)

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, {10} that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, {11} being filled with

the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

Prayer Wish #1: from Verse 9

We would ***“abound still more in knowledge and all discernment.”***

1. The Greek word Paul uses for ***“Abound”*** means, *“to be in excess, abundance, enough and to spare, to excel, to increase, and to remain (over and above).”*
2. The Greek word translated ***“knowledge”*** means, *“correct understanding of what is really going on.”* *“Judgment”* is the ability to make proper decisions.
3. All of this comes from ***“your love,”*** - not your brains or education or experience. The prayer in these verses is actually saying, ***“And this I pray, that the love in you may increase (even to excess) beyond what you need, with enough to spare for others so all of you will know the truth about your circumstances and make good decisions every time.”***

Prayer Wish #2: from Verse 10

We would ***“approve the things that are excellent.”***

To ***“approve”*** means to *“try”* or *“test out.”* This verse prays we would try out only ***“excellent things”*** for our lives... things that God approves of, things that cause us to grow in Christ.

Prayer Wish #3: also from Verse 10

We would be ***“sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.”***

1. The Greek word for ***“sincere”*** means, *“to be judged in the light and found to be pure.”* In Biblical days gold was judged in sunlight to determine its degree of purity. Today, we must judge ourselves in the light of the Son.
2. To be ***“without offense”*** means, *“to act in a way that does not lead to sin.”* This verse actually says, *“that you may be judged in the light and found to be pure, without sinful actions, until the day Jesus returns.”*

Philippians 1:9-11 (paraphrased): “I pray four things for you:

1. {Verse 9a} ***“That the love in you may increase beyond what you need, spilling out on others, so all of you know the truth about your circumstances, making good decisions***

every time.”

2. {Verse 9b} *“That you test only what God wants you to experience.”*
3. {Verse 10} *“That at the end of the age you may be judged in the light of the Son of God and found to be pure and without sin.”*
4. {Verse 11} *“That your abounding love will fill you with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.””*

IV. IN CHRIST: CONFIDENCE IN ANY SITUATION

Philippians 1:12-14 (NKJV)

“But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, [13.] so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; [14.] and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.”

A. Unpleasant Things happen in Life

We all go through trouble, though many of us do not have as much trouble as the Apostle Paul had. God uses our times of testing for various reasons. For example:

1. The tests purify and help us grow in spiritual maturity.
2. the tests build our character (To show the Christ in us).

B. Paul's lifestyle within his imprisonment gives us the example of victory “In Christ.”

1. You can be in a difficult situation and still be in the will of God. Give thanks to Him, not for the trouble, but for His presence with you in your trouble.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)

“in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

2. Your trouble never has the power to separate you from God.

Romans 8:38, 39 (NKJV)

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor

angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

**One translation:
“from the place of
omnipotent power.”**

3. There are no surprises in heaven. God has a plan for you.

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

C. You are “in Christ.” Expect good news.

Philippians 1:15-18 (NKJV)

“Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from good will: {16} The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; {17} but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. {18} What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.”

In *Verses 15-18*, Paul says that the issue is not “why people preach the Gospel.” It always brings good news. Paul rejoices (even while imprisoned) because being “in Christ” is available to everyone who hears the Gospel. Paul has this attitude of joy because he knows his life, with all its trouble, can still accomplish the purposes of God. (Romans 8:28-29)

V. OUR LIFE IS CHRIST

Philippians 1:19-21 (NKJV)

“For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. [21.] For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

A. Living is Christ

How we see things should be measured by The Word, not our circumstances. Jesus is life and life more abundantly. Christian

living is Him! We are in spiritual union with Christ. When we are out of step with Him, confusion, doubt and loss of peace results.

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NKJV)

“Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.”

B. Living for Christ

Philippians 1:22-26 (NKJV)

“But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. {23} For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. {24} Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. {25} And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, {26} that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

Paul was a “No Choice Christian.” He would not neglect the people God had given him to love and care for. He would never do anything that would oppose the will of God.

C. The Corporate Life of the Church

Philippians 1:27-2:2 (NKJV)

“Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, {28} and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. [29.] For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, [30.] having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me. [2:1] Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, [2.] fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”

- Consolation in Christ
- Comfort of love
- Fellowship of the Spirit
- Like-minded
- The same love
- One accord
- One mind