**The book of Philippians**

**Introduction**

 The City of Philippi was named after Alexander the Great's Father Philip. Paul went there during his second Apostolic journey.

 It is more accurate to call their journeys exactly what they were, Apostolic Journeys, because they were carried out by apostles.

 This does not mean that our mission work today should carry the same title because we are not apostles, because the office of apostle was for the early church, and not for us today.

 In order to fully understand the book of Philippians the reader must understand it in its proper context. Paul writes Philippians long after his initial visit to the region.

   Paul had no intentions of going to Philippi until God used the Macedonian Call to get his attention as he originally desired to enter deeper into Asia and Bithynia but was forbidden by God. Read Acts 16 before reading Philippians.

**Chapter One**

**Christ magnified in my body**

**1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Paul and Timotheus:** Paul begins this epistle with his name as its first word, as he does in all of his epistles. Timotheus was from Lystra, who Paul had circumcised because all the Jews in that area knew his father was a Greek. Acts 16:3

 The claim of Paul’s apostleship is missing from this epistle, because the Philippians knew Paul from the very first day that the gospel had come to them.

 It is an epistle about being a servant of Jesus Christ, so defending his authority would be out of place in such a letter.

**To all the saints in Christ Jesus:** The epistle was written to all the saints in Philippi. It is also for all of us in the body of Christ. All who are in Christ are saints, if you are saved today, you are called a saint by God.

**With the bishops and deacons:** The title of bishop is a scriptural title, which many have quit using because of those who have misused the title during the dark ages.

 We should not abandon scriptural titles given to the body of Christ by God. Notice here there are bishops at the church in Philippi, which is because they needed more help due to their size. The same was true of deacons.

**Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ:** Grace and peace are what we have received from God today.

 God is dispensing grace to us instead of wrath because of what Christ did for us on the cross. He hath taken away the enmity between God and us. Notice that it is God who dispenses grace and peace, not Paul.

**3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, 5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;**

**Making request with joy:** The words joy, rejoice, rejoiced, and rejoicing appear sixteen times in this short epistle.

**From the first day until now:** This a reference that the original church members in Philippi would remember when Paul met them at the riverside in Acts 16:12.

 Lydia, a Jew, was the first convert in Philippi, and soon after there was the Philippian Jailor with his family, all Gentiles.

 Then the young maiden who was formerly possessed with a spirit of divination got saved. This was the first group of people in Europe to hear and believe the gospel of the grace of God. Acts 20:28.

 The Philippians fellowshipped in the (singular) gospel from the first day in Acts 16:12 until now (when they had received this letter many years later.

 Paul never preached two or three gospels as some teach. After Paul had arrived in Rome in Acts 28. The Philippians were still fellowshipping in the same gospel that Paul preached when he first came to Philippi in Acts 16.

**6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:**

**A good work in you:**The same work which was begun in them in Acts 16, he was still performing, and Christ will continue it until the end of this dispensation.

**The day of Jesus Christ:** This is the rapture of the Church. Upon that day this corruptible body will put on incorruption, and this mortal will put on immortality.

 Christ's work in us will be complete on that day. We will have our new bodies that will enable us to sit in the heavenlies with him. 1st Corinthians 15:53.

**7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.**

 Paul is writing this epistle while he is in Jail in Rome (Acts 28). He mentions the gospel that he was preaching back in Acts 16, and he makes no distinctions from the gospel he is still preaching after Acts 28. They are the same.

**The defense and confirmation of the gospel:** They helped Paul defend the confirm the gospel by their prayer and financial support while he was in prison, and by continuing the work started there in Philippi.

 No other letter had been written to the Philippians telling them of another gospel that they should now be preaching as hyper dispensationalists teach.

**Ye are all partakers of my grace:** 2nd Corinthians 1:7.

**8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;**

**In the bowels of Jesus Christ:** Paul longed after the Philippians in his inner-most being. Your love will abound for others as you receive more knowledge from God’s word.

**In knowledge and in all judgment:**The more knowledge of God’s word you have, the easier it is to judge whether things are good or bad.

**10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; 11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.**

**Ye may approve things that are excellent**: This phrase is used in Romans 2:18 regarding the law.

 A Jew should have approved the things that are excellent concerning the law, just like a believer today should approve the things Paul has taught to the body of Christ. They are excellent.

**The fruits of righteousness:** Sin is the opposite of righteousness. Fruit is synonymous with what we do. We should produce the fruits of love and joy.

**12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; 13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; 14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.**

**The things which happened unto me:** Paul was beaten, shipwrecked, and imprisoned for the furtherance of the gospel. Paul’s testimony emboldened many to speak the word without fear.

**My bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace:** It was noticed and received by those in Caesar’s own household (the palace). Philippians 4:22.

**15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: 17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.**

**I am set for the defense of the gospel:**Paul's desire was that believers would preach Christ out of love, allowing his testimony for the defense of the gospel to motivate them to serve God. Philippians 1:8.

 Paul was not moved by those things, and instead he gloried in the fact that more people were being reached with the gospel because of his bonds.

**18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.**

**In pretence, or in truth:** Paul was able to find something to rejoice about in any situation he found himself in. He did not focus on his circumstances; he focused on how Christ could be magnified in his circumstances.

**19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,**

**This shall turn to my salvation:** Paul is speaking of his deliverance from prison. The words deliverance and salvation are often used interchangeably.

**20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.**

**Christ shall be magnified in my body:** Whether Paul was allowed to live and continue to serve Christ, or by his death, it was his desire to live, and die in such a way that Christ would be magnified in his body.

**21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**

**For me to live is Christ:** Christ is to live through us, so the longer we live, the more he can live through us.

**To die is gain:** To Paul, to die is a selfish thing, because it is merely gain for himself. It is an eternal release from the brief sufferings of this world, but Paul's concern was for others, not himself.

**22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. 23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. 25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; 26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.**

 Paul wanted the Philippians to abound even more than they were. If by his living it would produce more fruits of righteousness, then Paul would choose to endure more hardships so others could be blessed.

**27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;** *Ephesians 4:1-6.*

**The gospel of Christ:** Since the gospel of the grace of God is mentioned as being preached by Paul in Acts 20:24 then we can be sure that this gospel of Christ which is mentioned sometime after Paul’s imprisonment is the same gospel.

 The epistle to the Philippians is God's gift to the body of Christ today to help us to be the kind of ambassadors that God wants us to be while we are at home in the body.

**With one mind:** We are to exemplify the oneness that is in the Godhead in our churches and in our families.

**The faith of the gospel:** 1st Corinthians 15:1-4.

**28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. 29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; 30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.**

**An evident token of perdition:** Our adversaries think if we are persecuted, we must deserve what we are getting. When we are vocal about our faith, we will see opposition to the extent of our zeal.

**Chapter Two**

**The Mind of Christ**

**1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, 2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.**

 Paul begins here to direct his attention to a problem in the Philippian church which if not dealt with, he knew would eventually fester and divide this great church.

 The problem had to do with two women in the church named Euodias and Syntyche, who are mentioned by name in chapter four, but part of their problem with one another is the source of Paul's dealings here in chapter two.

**3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.**

 This was most likely the root of the problem between these two ladies who had done many things for the Lord in the past but now had gotten sidetracked by the devil through the instrument of pride.

 Paul reminds us that we are to esteem others better than ourselves and the only way that we can do that is to esteem Christ, and his calling for us, as better than anything that we can devise.

 In order to have joy, or to get it back in our lives, you must place Jesus first, others second, and yourselves last. This will help you rejoice when you have lost our joy due to your own circumstances.

**4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.**

 This is one of the primary places where Satan gets a foothold in a believer’s life, or in a church.

 People then lose their joy because of self-centeredness and begin to focus on building themselves up by climbing upon the backs of others instead of offering someone else a hand in what they need or are trying to do for the Lord.

**5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

 We are to have the mindset that Christ had to be able to humble ourselves regardless of what position we may have obtained in this life and be willing to become servants to reach our fellow man as Christ did.

 Christ Jesus was fully God, and fully man at the same time at the incarnation when God took humanity upon himself.

 He even went so far as to pay the ultimate sacrifice for man, when he took our place for us and paid the wages of our sin on the cross. Not just any death, but the death of the cross.

**9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

 The angels, both fallen and not, will bow with all the saved, and the lost of every age, before our Lord and Master Jesus Christ one day, there will be no exceptions.

**12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

**Work out you own salvation with fear and trembling:** The salvation that is inside each believer must be worked out, not worked for.

 This has nothing to do with ones meriting their own salvation. It has to do with doing God's good pleasure, or his will for us in our lives. We should be about making all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery.

 There was a problem in the church between two women and they needed to work it out in order to have "deliverance" from that situation.

 To be divisive in the body of Christ is something that should never happen because it causes greater problems in the body. To be unified in one task, God’s will, is to do as these verses say, and is the responsibility of each assembly.

 God does not wink at the problem causers, but says they should work it out in fear and trembling. This means they should work it out quickly before God decides to work it out himself without them.

**14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.**

**Shine as lights in the world:** How can we be shining lights in the world when we are promoting ourselves at the expense of others, this is contrary to the ministry of Christ as laid out in the last five verses?

   One of the mysteries revealed to the apostle Paul is that of the hypostatic union, or that of Christ becoming a man.

 He is the perfect example of what humility is by what Paul has just recorded about his devotion to his father’s plan in his humbling himself even to the point of going to the cross.

 We can only begin to understand how to live and act as a Christian when we are willing to give of ourselves for others as Christ did for us. There would have been no quarrel in the church of Philippi if everyone followed the example of Christ.

**Holding for the word of life:**Is to continually present the gospel to other people, and to defend it when attacked.

**In the day of Christ:**When all that is done for Christ in the body will be judged, and the doers receive their rewards.

**17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me. 19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.**

**If I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith:** The church at Philippi was not unique in the fact that they had problems due to pride.

 Paul states that just about every minister he can think of had the same problem they were experiencing, and that Timothy was the best one who would be able to help them at this present time with their most important issues.

 With Timothy it was just natural for him to help the church in Philippi because he was not concerned for his place in the church or what amount of power he had in the church.

 Timothy was genuinely concerned about doing the Lord's work and resolving whatever issues were there that were keeping this church from having the joy it once knew when it was gladly serving the Lord.

 Timothy also loved the people dearly as he was with Paul in Acts 16 when the church started, so he had a strong connection with them all and wanted what was best for them.

**22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. 24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.**

 Paul was waiting to see how his trial would go in Rome, so he could not go to Philippi himself because he was a prisoner for our sakes.

 Instead of pouting about his own circumstances he was busy about the work of the Lord. He was practicing what he preached.

 Timothy was uniquely qualified to help this first church of Europe because he was half Jewish and half Gentile which is a mini picture of the church the body of Christ.

 Jews and Gentiles in one body. That was Timothy. God knew what he was doing in having Timothy go there.

**The Example of Epaphroditus**

**25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. 26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.**

 Epaphroditus was named after the Greek god Aphrodite, a god of lust and immorality. His parents named him such because of their devotion to this pagan god which was no god but rather a demon masquerading as a deity.

 When Epaphroditus was saved he no doubt had a huge break from his past way of life and had to suffer much from everyone he knew but he like Paul considered all that but dung that he may win Christ.

 This love for Christ so moved the Philippian church and Paul that when he was sick and nigh unto death that they sorrowed greatly for him.

 His visit, Paul knew, would help to get them heading in the right direction because he truly was a bright light shining in the dark world.

 When this epistle was written, Paul's Acts ministry had passed. God was now giving his final revelations to the body of Christ, the church, through Paul.

 These final revelations filled up and perfected or made complete, the word of God for this dispensation. Those epistles were Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and I and II Timothy and Titus.

 They (Paul's final epistles) were what Paul was talking about in 1st Corinthians when he said, "When that which was perfect is come then that which is in part (the sign gifts) would be done away".

 Paul could not heal himself, Timothy, or Epaphroditus because the gifts given to the church in its infancy were no longer required once they had a completed revelation for this age.

**28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. 29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: 30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.**

 By Paul sending Epaphroditus, he knew that they would get excited and refocus on the things of God which would bring about rejoicing or new joy in their life.

 This in turn would bring great joy to the apostle Paul because when the church had joy, they would be serving the Lord and that is what truly pleased the Lord.

 We must follow the examples that Paul has given us here to resolve issues in our churches today and not give in to the flesh, for it is only Satan and his minions who rejoice when we continue on without joy.

**Chapter Three**

**The Faith of Christ**

**1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. 3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**

**Beware of dogs:** The Religious. Psalm 22:16.

**Beware of the concision:** Those who mutilate the flesh, who have confidence in their flesh (that they are the descendants of Abraham).

**We are the circumcision:** Paul is writing to the one new man that is circumcised in the heart, and not in the flesh. There is neither Jew nor Greek today in the body of Christ, we are all one.

 Outside the body of Christ however the distinction remains leaving the world with three separate, and distinct classes of people.

 Two of which remain are natural men (both lost Jews and lost Gentiles) which cannot understand the things of the Spirit, and the one that remains is a spiritual man who can discern spiritual things.

**4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.**

**Circumcised the eighth day:** Leviticus 12:3 & Acts 7:8.

 Paul, it is said, was the best Christian who ever lived, and that is true, but prior to his conversion he was one of the most righteous Jews to ever to have lived.

 In God's eyes he was the chief of sinners, the leader of the rebellion against God and his church in Jerusalem. That is what Paul meant when he said he was the chief of sinners, not that he was a moral reprobate.

 He was leading, as a chief, the nation of Israel in a war against the Jewish church headquartered in Jerusalem.

**7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.**

 All those things meant something in the eyes of those he associated with at that time, but as far as eternity goes, they were nothing and would not gain him access to heaven.

**8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,**

 Paul tells us to know Christ we must not put any faith in our deeds for they are nothing but a stumbling block to receiving the righteousness of Christ.

**9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**

**The faith of Christ:** Paul says that our righteousness is not through the law, nor is it through our faith in Christ, but rather through the faith of Christ. It is his faith that Paul is referring to, not ours.

***Galatians 2:16 says, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.***

 Our faith in him is weak at times, his faith is perfect continually. We obtain our righteousness through the faith of Christ.

**10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;**

**The power of his resurrection:** Paul tells us that it is through faith that we may know him and experience the power of his resurrection.

 Without faith it is impossible to please God, and they that come to him must come to him by faith. You cannot know Christ or experience the power of his resurrection through the law, but only through faith.

**The fellowship of his sufferings:**We know Christ better when we have gone through suffering for the same cause(s) that Christ suffered.

**11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.**

**The resurrection of the dead:** Here it sounds to the superficial reader that Paul hopes he will get to heaven, but Paul is not saying anything of the sort.

 This problem occurs because people don't associate verse eleven with its context as the end of a thought that began in verse eight. It is all one sentence, or one thought if you will.

 Paul had attained the power of Christ's resurrection but he nor we have yet attained unto the resurrection of the dead. You have to be dead first in order to be resurrected.

 Paul is speaking here of attaining Christ likeness in all of his ways which Philippians tells its readers we are to strive for in this life.

 Until this mortal puts on immortality at the resurrection of the dead it is impossible while we remain in these mortal bodies.

**12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.**

**Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect:**The word perfect here means a finished product. Paul had not finished his course yet.

**That I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ:**Paul was apprehended of Christ, and he wants to apprehend everything he was apprehended for to teach it to us.

 Paul continues the thought and declares he has not yet attained his new resurrected body that is free from the effects of sin. He is following or trying to conform his actions to be as close to what they will be like in heaven as he humanly can.

 Paul says he was not already "perfect" which means complete or a finished project, it does not mean sinless perfection. Jesus himself was mentioned as being made perfect through his sufferings in Hebrews 2:10.

 Jesus was the sinless Son of God, but he was made perfect, or complete through his sufferings. You are not a finished product yet because God is not finished with you.

**13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

 Paul clearly states that he has not reached that final state (apprehended) and neither has anyone else on this side of the grave, or the rapture.

 He has however decided to know Christ better by forgetting the failures of the past and striving towards the things of God that are before us.

 Paul is not pressing towards the mark to earn the prize of a sinless body, he is pressing towards holiness so that he may be more like Christ in this corrupt world and thus be a better witness, not so that he may merit salvation.

**15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.**

**As many as be perfect, be thus minded:** Our state is what is being mentioned here by Paul, not our standing. We are perfect in our state if we have by faith received the faith of Christ.

 Our state is made perfect because it is through Jesus Christ that we have obtained it and not through any work of the law. If Paul could not merit salvation by his adherence to the law, then no one could.

 The only thing Paul was lacking, and we are lacking today is our death or the rapture so that we can receive the inheritance of our faith completely. We are being made perfect (not sinless) a completed project; we are not one yet until we leave this world.

**16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. 17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)**

**Let us mind the same thing:** Paul tells the Philippians to follow him (meaning his teachings received from heaven) and the example of his new life in Christ.

 Not only that but he tells them that they are to mark those who walk contrary to Paul and Timothy because they are the enemies of the cross, because they are putting the emphasis on keeping the law to obtain righteousness and are making void the work of the cross.

 We are to concentrate on things above such as the fate of a man's soul and not upon the things of this earth that we may enjoy or possess.

 The end of the life of a believer who is earthly minded will be someone who comes to God with empty hands. They have nothing to show for their life here.

 The end of a life for a lost man is far worse, for while he has nothing to bring to offer the Saviour, he also has no Saviour to keep him from eternal damnation.

**20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.**

**For our conversation is in heaven:** In this verse Paul shows believers how we are to behave ourselves in this world. We are to have our conversation in heaven.

 What that means is that our speech is to be different, seasoned with the salt of God's word if you will, so that others will be drawn unto Christ by us.

 Verse twenty-one sums up the whole chapter. It says that Christ will change our bodies, so they will be like his. His thoughts will be our thoughts one day and we will never have another sinful thought pass through our mind.

 Not only will the kingdoms of this world be subject unto him but also the hearts of all mankind will be subject unto him as well.

**Chapter Four**

**Rejoice in the Lord always**

**1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.**

 Paul had joy from his converts in that area and he could rejoice by just remembering those faithful saints there in Philippi.

 Those you win to Christ will be your crowns that you can one day lay down at your Saviours feet, but until then, they serve as your joy.

 When you lead someone to Christ, or you disciple them, you are storing up joy that can be accessed by simply meditating on them.

 If you have nothing to joy about then the remedy is simple; get some fruit (converts) to meditate on for when times get tough.

**2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.**

**I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord:** These two women who once helped Paul build the church, now were helping to divide it because of their disagreement on some secondary personal issues.

 They needed to be refocused on the original task they had when they were working with Paul.

**With other my fellowlabourers whose names are in the book of life:** Most people just read over that and don't ask themselves who he is speaking of. Their names are not so important but who they are is.

 They are Jewish kingdom saints from Jerusalem most likely. They understood Paul's message, and saw the diminishing of Israel, and were helping Paul with his program.

 Like Barnabas, John Mark, Luke, all kingdom saints. Remember all of Israel's advantages were gone by this time because the Acts period is now over. Not in Acts 16 but at the time Philippians is written.

**4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.**

 The words joy and rejoice are used three times in the first four verses and twenty times throughout the epistle.

 The word joy needs no explanation but how to have it does. There are times when you have no joy, but we are still commanded to rejoice by God's word. Verse four tells us that in order to have joy we must rejoice in the Lord.

 When we meditate on the things of God, we refuel our joy thus fulfilling the command to rejoice. You cannot help but be joyful after meditating on what God has done for you eternally.

 The problem lies when we focus on our earthly conditions, we tend to lose our joy especially if we see someone else doing better than us when we ourselves are serving the Lord.

 Just saying "praise the Lord" will not fill our joy tank up, but when we meditate on the things above, we keep our joy tank full, and we are even able to help give someone else joy by talking to them about the Lord.

**5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.**

 All men is a reference to both the saved and the lost. Christians will be strengthened seeing other Christians walking how they ought to walk. Some Christians are like a roller coaster, high and then low, high then low.

 What about that would attract a lost person to Christ? Nothing! That is exactly how a lost person is built to act in his flesh because he is of the flesh.

 We who are in the Spirit are to walk after the Spirit, so we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

**The Lord is at hand:**The Lord is coming soon is another way of saying this in modern English.

**6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

**The peace of God:** This is not the same as our peace with God. The former is when we trust in God's plan in every area of our life knowing that he is in control, while peace with God is when you accept God's free gift of eternal life.

 You were as a lost person at war with God until you accepted his Son and then something better than a cease fire is declared, peace!

**8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.** **9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.**

**Those things, which ye have both learned, and receive, and heard, and seen in me do:** Paul admonishes us today in the body of Christ to do what we have either seen him do, heard from him verbally, or learned from him in written form.

 It is then that we will have the God of peace with us. Paul did what we are to do. Most who know how to rightly divide the word of truth do very little in the area of replicating the actions of the apostle Paul.

 He started multiple churches, and the gospel went throughout all the known world in just fifteen to twenty years while many of us do what we have learned from the apostle Paul.

 If Paul is your apostle, and you really follow him then follow more than his doctrine. Follow his example, and do what he did (make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery).

**10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.**

 Paul was taken care of by the Philippian church on more than one occasion for which he was eternally grateful. When we have opportunity to give to others, especially in the ministry, do we remember them and give?

 The Philippian church was the church that Paul mentioned in second Corinthians that was in deep poverty, but it still gave sacrificially to Paul and to the church in Jerusalem.

**11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

**I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me:** Paul was not naming and claiming that he could move a literal mountain, or declaring a marriage will be restored.

 He was stating that he can do all things that are in accordance with God's will for his life through the power of Christ. Jesus is the Christ, not a good luck charm or a Buddha whose belly we can rub to get his favour.

 Paul was able to accomplish God's will for his life even though no one for a while communicated with him financially, not even the Philippians. God subsidizes what he authorizes.

**14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.**

**Ye did communicate with my affliction:** When Paul mentions that the Philippians communicated to him it is a reference to their sending to him financial aid to help in his ministry.

 Paul was just being real with this church and very grateful for their assistance. You do well when you support God's workers in the ministry.

**15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.**

**In the beginning of the gospel:** This was not the beginning of a new gospel being preached beginning with them. He didn't preach one gospel in Turkey, and cross over into Europe and preach another one there as some teach.

 While it is obvious that the context here is that Paul is commending the Philippians for their giving, in doing so he further gives a better understanding of just when that was.

 The Philippian church had its beginning in Acts 16 and that was just a few years after Paul had begun preaching the gospel of the grace of God which was different from what the twelve had been preaching (the gospel of the kingdom) back in Israel.

**16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.**

**Ye sent once and again unto my necessity:**The Philippians sent Paul support while he was ministering in Thessalonica.

**Fruit that may abound to your account:** What we give is seed that turns to fruit, or sustenance to the receiver, and it is a plus in our account with God which will not go unrewarded at the judgment seat of Christ.

 God keeps records of what we give to our local churches, and missions.

**18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.**

**An odour of a sweet smell:**When you bless God's servants the very God of Heaven receives an offering from you that relates to the good temple offerings of the past. They were and are received by God. Genesis 8:12.

**19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. 20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

 God will supply all our needs, not all our wants.

**21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you. 22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household. 23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.**

 The church in Philippi, because it had such a close relationship with the apostle Paul, had grown close to those that currently lived in Rome.

 Even while in jail in Rome, Paul had reached into the very heart of the empire having influenced people in Caesar's very own house to trust in Christ. You never know just who you will reach and from where.

 As Paul often does, he ends his letter with "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all", because this is the age of grace and Paul is the chief propagator of the grace message.

 Surely the grace of our Lord will be with us if we put into practice the principles taught in this epistle. Paul's epistles are filled with words of wisdom on how to live down here from day to day.

**The End**

**Philippians Test**

To submit a test for grading simply copy and paste the questions with **the answers in bold font** in an email to tests@dofgbi,org

 **Introduction**

1. What book and chapter tells of Paul's coming to Philippi?

2. Who wrote the book of Philippians?

3. From where and when was the book written?

4. On what Apostolic Journey did Paul visit Philippi?

5. Why did Paul circumcise Timothy?

6. In Acts 16:4 what is meant by Paul delivering the decrees from the apostles to the churches? Was Paul under the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Church?

7. Did Paul initially intend to come to Philippi?

8. What two families made up the nucleus of the Philippian Church?

9. How does Paul's response in verse thirty-one about how to be saved differ from that of Peter's in Acts 2:37-38?

10. Did anyone start speaking in tongues immediately upon their believing in Jesus in Philippi?

**Chapter One Test**

1. What is missing from Paul's opening remarks that is in almost all of his Epistles? Why is it missing?

2. What is the Theme of Philippians and how does it come about?

3. Why does Paul address the saints ahead of the Bishops and Deacons in this Epistle?

4. What did Paul mean in verse five when he mentioned "from the first day until now"?

5. What did Paul mean by the use of the word salvation in verse nineteen?

6. What is "the day of Jesus Christ"?

7. How did Paul say the Philippians love could abound more and more?

8. What two reasons does Paul give for his imprisonment?

9. What attitude should we as believers have concerning possibly losing our life for Christ?

10. Is it more needful for others for us to remain here serving God or to be with Christ?

11. What did Paul desire for the Philippian church in verse twenty-seven?

12. To what extent should we expect to suffer for Christ's sake as we serve Him?

 **Chapter Two Test**

1. Paul uses Christ as our example of how to help those that are without (the lost) by our following his example of what character trait that is the opposite of Pride, what is it?

2. In verse five we are given the perfect way to think of things and to see them as God does, what is that way that Paul speaks of there?

3. What does it mean to work out your own salvation?

4. What did Paul say about Timothy concerning the church at Philippi?

5. What did Paul say about Epaphroditus' commitment to the church at Philippi?

**Chapter Three Test**

1. What does it mean to have no confidence in the flesh?

2. What is to be our attitude about our past worldly accomplishments?

3. The righteousness which is of God by faith is through what?

4. How can we know Christ and experience the power of his resurrection?

5. How do we as believers press toward the mark?

6. What did Paul mean when he said that believers should be perfect?

7. What did Paul mean in verse eleven?

8. Paul tells us to be followers of who?

9. Why are our bodies going to be changed?

**Chapter Four**

1. What internal problem was there in the church at Philippi?

2. What was the probable cause of the problem that Paul politely addressed in verse six?

3. What two solutions were given in verses 8 and 9 that are applicable in any situation?

4. What is the subject of verses ten through nineteen?

5. What does it mean when Paul said that the Philippian church "communicated" with him?

6. Did other churches communicate with the Apostle Paul?

7. What happens spiritually when we communicate with God's servants?

8. Does God supply all of our wants if we serve him faithfully?

9. What verse tells us that we can do whatever God has commissioned us to do? verse 13