

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS
PHILIPPIANS



Building Foundations Philippians

Study Guide

Acknowledgments

The lesson outlines and notes in this booklet are based on New Tribes Mission's method of chronologically teaching scripture and were prepared by Tim McManigle and Scott McManigle of FBC Missions. Special thanks to Lisa Grams and Lane Martin for editing.

Table of Contents

Progression Toward Maturity, Page 3

PHILIPPIANS *Building Foundations*

Lesson	Page
1	7
2	11
3	17
4	20
5	24
6	29
7	34

6/25/26
Revision 5

Progression Toward Maturity

Phase 1: *Relationship with God* (Revelation 4:11; 1 Corinthians 1:9)

- The Call of God Is First to Himself.
- Foundation for Salvation (“Creation to Christ”)

Phase 2: *Position with Christ* (1 Corinthians 1:30a)

- We Become a New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- Foundation for Salvation (“Positioned in Christ” and “New Birth Explained”)

Phase 3: *Dependence upon the Spirit* (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13-14)
- Church Is the Pillar and Foundation of Truth (1 Timothy 3:15)
- Acts/Building Foundations

Phase 4: *Practical Sanctification–Identification with Christ, Co-crucified with Christ, Conformed to Image of Christ* (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:28-29)

- Romans to Revelation/Building Foundations
- Principles of Spiritual Growth
- God’s Masterpiece–The Cross
- Looking unto Jesus Lessons

Conclusion: *Recommended Order of Study*

Detailed Explanation of Each Phase

Phase 1: Foundation for Salvation (“Creation to Christ”)

The Christian life is a relationship; therefore, our desire is to lead our readers into a deep and intimate relationship with God. In order to grow into that level of relationship with God, there are foundational truths that must be clearly

taught and understood. These foundational truths include the following:

- The attributes of God – His love, power, grace, omniscience, omnipotence, justice, immutability, hatred of sin, faithfulness.
- The sinfulness of man, his helplessness to save himself, and his need for a Savior.
- Only God can provide a way of salvation.
- The Gospel

Phase 2: Foundation for Sanctification (“Positioned in Christ” and “The New Birth Explained”)

The moment someone is born again, there is an immediate change of position that takes place in his or her life. At that very moment, one becomes a child of God and is taken out of Adam and placed into Christ. All that Christ is and all that Christ has become ours. Therefore, before service to God is considered, one must be grounded in an understanding of who we are in Christ. Some important foundational truths that should be emphasized in Phase 2 teaching include the following:

- Placed into Christ
- Justified (declared righteous) and accepted in Christ
- Child of God
- Restored to oneness with God
- Eternally secure in Christ
- His Divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness through His finished work on the cross.
- Our part is to believe.

Phase 3: Dependence upon the Spirit and Introduction of the Church (“Acts/Building Foundations”)

The position change that takes place in every believer's life at salvation is immediate and complete. The daily "living out" of that position, on the other hand, is a growth process. It is the progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is

working all believers through in His process of conforming us to the image of Christ.

In order for believers to move on to maturity, we must learn to walk and depend upon the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our purpose in Phase 3 teaching is to reveal the Holy Spirit's ministry and His faithfulness to lead, guide, feed, and protect God's children, as well as to introduce the church. Some of the important foundational truths that should be emphasized include the following:

- The Holy Spirit's ministry to lead, guide, feed, protect, and establish us in truth
- To emphasize the FAITHFULNESS of the Spirit to fulfill all that Jesus promised
- To reveal the early church's dependence upon the Spirit
- The Holy Spirit is as faithful in our lives today, as He was to the early church in the book of Acts.
- Introduction of the church and her role

Phase 4: Practical Sanctification–Identification with Christ; Conformed to the image of Christ (“Romans to Revelation/Building Foundations”), “Principles of Spiritual Growth,” God’s Masterpiece the Cross of Christ,” and “Looking Unto Jesus” lessons)

The Holy Spirit is teaching us to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit, with Christ becoming more and more the object of our hearts.

In Phase 4, we will study through the epistles with the purpose of learning to rest in our identification with Christ and His finished work. As we, by faith, begin to appropriate identification truths, our co-crucifixion with Christ, our lives will become more and more conformed to the image of Christ, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit.

Some of the important truths that will be emphasized in Phase 4 includes the following:

- The believer's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (crucified with Him and raised to newness of life)
- Sanctification is the process of walking less and less in the flesh and more and more in the Spirit.
- Our part in the process is faith in the finished work of Christ and our identification with it.
- What it means to truly walk in the Spirit
- Putting off the old and putting on the new
- Manifesting the life of Christ/fruit of the Spirit

Conclusion: Recommended Order of Study

Because there truly is a progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is taking all believers through, our Bible lessons have been developed and arranged to line up with that work of the Spirit in our lives. Each set of lessons contains the foundational truths that must be in place in a person's heart in order to facilitate their growth onto the next stage of spiritual growth. Therefore, we believe that it is important to teach the lessons in the following order:

- ***God's Eternal Plan***
- ***Building Foundations Order of Study:***

Acts	2 Corinthians
Romans	Philippians
Ephesians	Philemon
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy
1 Timothy	1 and 2 Peter
Titus	1, 2 and 3 John
1 and 2 Thessalonians	Hebrews
Revelation	James
Galatians	Jude
Colossians	
- ***Knowing God*** before the ***Digging Deeper*** studies
- ***Digging Deeper*** studies in any order

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON 1

A. Introduction



- Paul founded the church of Philippi while on his second missionary journey. Sometime later while in a Roman prison, Paul wrote this epistle to the Philippian church.

Read Philippians 1:1.

- Paul was imprisoned in Rome and apparently Timothy was visiting during the time he was writing this letter.
- Paul refers to both himself and Timothy as bondservants of Jesus Christ—willing servants of Jesus.
- Paul had a wonderful understanding and faith in God's love which produced grace and mercy toward sinful man and caused him a great desire to serve God.
- In **2 Corinthians 5:14** we read, "*The love of Christ compels [controls, motivates] us.*"

- In a similar way, as we grow in the grace and knowledge of God, it will progressively result in a deeper relationship with Christ and desire to do His will.
- Paul also clearly states to whom he is writing—the believers in Philippi, or the Philippian church.
- Please keep in mind that although this epistle was written to the Philippian church, it is also meant for us today, as we, too, are a part of the body of Christ.
- Notice that Paul specifically mentioned the elders and leaders of the Philippian church.
- It is very important that the leaders of a church be men who are grounded in truth and walk in the Spirit; therefore, Paul wanted to make certain they knew that they were included in the instruction he would give in this letter.
- As church leaders, we will never reach a point in our lives where we no longer need instruction.

B. Grace and Peace Come From God

Read Philippians 1:2.

- Every epistle Paul wrote begins with this statement. He wanted to keep before the church the importance of grace and peace as well as the fact that grace and peace come from God, through the finished work of Christ and not from anything that we may do.
- If we are to experience peace from God, it will only come as we grow in our knowledge of Christ and what He has done on our behalf.

Read Philippians 1:3-5.

- It was Paul who God used to evangelize and then establish the Philippian church. Paul was their spiritual father and loved them very much.

- He thanked God in every remembrance of them. Paul went on to say that it was a joy to pray for the believers in Philippi.
- This reveals two things: First, it shows the obvious love Paul had for the Philippian believers; second, it reveals the relationship Paul had with God. It was a joy for him to beseech God on the behalf of those whom he loved.
- If we walk in the flesh, we will do something much different. We'll be so self-centered that it will be impossible to love others more than ourselves, and we'll often fail to pray for others. Our joy will not be found in God or in others but in pleasing ourselves.
- The Philippian church was one that was co-laboring with Paul to see the gospel go forth.
- At times they collected money for more needy churches; at other times, they helped to meet some of the physical needs Paul and his companions had.

C. Three Important Truths

Read Philippians 1:6.

- There are two very important truths to see in this passage, which if grasped, will save years of toil and struggle.
- First, Paul comments that it was God who began this work in the Philippian believers.
- So it is with us. It was God who chose us (**Ephesians 1:4**), who sought after, and brought us to Himself (**John 6:44**). Our salvation did not originate with us.
- Second, Paul writes that as it was God who has begun this work of saving and sanctifying, so it is He who will complete it (**Psalms 138:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:24**).

D. No Greater Affection

Read Philippians 1:7-8.

- Paul said he couldn't help feeling great love for the Philippian believers, as not only were they his spiritual children, but they also had become his partners in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.
- The Philippians believed and rested in the finished work of Christ not only for salvation, but also for sanctification, and they co-labored together with Paul to see that others also received this message.
- As Paul was often criticized for the message of grace, it must have been a joy for him to know this church was standing firm with him in the defense of the message of grace.
- Therefore, Paul went on to say that he longed for their fellowship with the affection of Christ, for there can be no greater affection than that of Christ for His church.

Read Philippians 1:9-11.

- Paul mentions to the Philippians that he is praying for the believers to walk more and more in the Spirit and become more and more filled with the life of Christ, thereby causing them to become more and more sincere and blameless until Christ returns.
- This is the great need of every believer—to continue walking less in the flesh and more in the Spirit, thereby becoming more and more conformed to the image of Christ.
- Those who do not know what theirs in Christ is seek joy and happiness by praying for better circumstances.
- But Paul's prayer for the Philippians was not for their physical circumstances, but that they become more and more established in the finished work of Christ.

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON 2

A. Walking in the Spirit Despite Circumstances

- It's interesting to consider that the following scriptures are a great example of the effect that walking in the Spirit will have on a life in spite of difficult circumstances.

Read Philippians 1:12-14.

- Paul was writing to the Philippian believers from prison. His focus was not on himself; he was not looking for pity or asking prayer for his release.
- He commented that the things which had happened were actually being used by the Lord to spread the gospel.
- How could Paul endure such injustice in his own life and still have a great concern for the salvation of others?
- The answer is Paul was walking in the Spirit. In the Spirit, Christ becomes the object of our heart and not ourselves. In the Spirit, it is possible to count the furtherance of the gospel as being worth any injustice we must endure.
- However, in the flesh, we will not be willing to endure hardship or injustice for the furtherance of the gospel.
- It pleased Paul that his imprisonment had become a source of encouragement to others, causing them to grow bolder in their proclaiming of the gospel.
- It was not just the fact that Paul was imprisoned that encouraged them, but it was more the way in which he was responding to his imprisonment.
- By example, Paul was revealing the importance he placed on the gospel; it is worth going to prison.

- Paul's comment in verse 13 is rather interesting: ***"...it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ."***
- Paul was imprisoned in Rome for two years. During that time, he had a guard chained to him, but each guard was also chained to Paul and probably heard the gospel shared over and over.
- During this two-year period, Paul may have had the opportunity to witness to many of the king's guards; thus, the gospel was made known throughout the king's palace.
- Remember God's promise in **Romans 8:28**? Many times, we see in scripture and in life God working all things together for good.
- The life of Joseph was an example of God turning a bad situation into something good.

B. Two Types of Bible Teachers

Read Philippians 1:15-18.

- There will always be two types of Bible teachers: those who are teaching the Word in the Spirit and those who are teaching the Word in the flesh.
- Apparently, there were those who, through the flesh, were in competition with Paul, desiring they be recognized among the churches as great teachers of God's Word.
- Paul said they were preaching and teaching so as to ***"add affliction to my chains."***
- They were taking advantage of Paul being in prison to exalt themselves.
- This is an example of the deceitfulness of the flesh. Instead of desiring Paul's freedom so there would be more preaching of the Word, they were happy he was in prison so they could promote themselves.

- The flesh has little or no concern for the salvation of others. Fleshly motives for preaching the gospel is merely to be noticed and exalted, not to show forth a genuine love and concern for others.
- Paul also said there were those who were preaching the gospel out of love. This would be those who were walking in the Spirit, for love is the fruit of the Spirit.
- There may have been some who, before Paul was imprisoned, loved him and accepted his teaching but weren't actually involved in the preaching of the gospel to any great extent.
- But once Paul was placed into prison, because of their love and acceptance of him, they decided to pick up the "torch" of the gospel in Paul's stead.
- Paul went on to say that regardless of the motivation, he rejoiced in one thing—Christ was being preached.
- Remember, in the Spirit, He will always point us to an occupation with Christ. However, the flesh will occupy us with anything other than Christ.
- Though Paul was unjustly judged and badly mistreated, his focus remained on Christ and not himself.

C. Being Encouraged and Rejoicing

Read Philippians 1:19.

- When Paul wrote, "*this will turn out for my deliverance [salvation]*," what did he mean?
- Some say he was referring to being released from prison and that as the believers continued to pray, it would result in his release.
- It's important to look at the context of the passage in which this is found. Paul had just spoken of being encouraged and rejoicing in the fact that God had used his bonds to further the gospel.

- Therefore, the word “*salvation*” that Paul speaks of is not a deliverance from prison, but a “preservation” of soul.
- Even though Paul was mistreated and experiencing great hardship, he continued to receive the Spirit’s ministry in his life. Paul also knew the Philippians were praying for him, which encouraged him in the midst of the trials.
- Instead of leading to discouragement and disappointment, his hardship was leading to deeper faith, continued thankfulness, and joy in the Spirit.

D. The Spirit’s Ministry in Our Lives

Read Philippians 1:20-21.

- Paul knew that God’s working in his life, as well as the prayers of the Philippians and the Spirit’s ministry, would result in the preservation and encouragement of his soul because he knew God’s greatest desire for his life was that Christ would be magnified in him.
- Therefore, regardless of the circumstances, Paul’s desire was to walk in the Spirit so he would not become ashamed by the reactions and responses that come from walking in the flesh.
- Paul went on to say that it was unimportant whether he lived on or whether he died; he only desired that his life would glorify Christ.
- If God gave him more time on earth, his desire was to manifest the life of Christ; however, to die physically would be gain as he would enter into the presence of God.
- The Spirit’s ministry is to point us to Christ; therefore, if we are walking in the Spirit, we, too, will point others to Christ (**2 Corinthians 4:5**).

E. Continued Fruitful Labor

Read Philippians 1:22-26.

- Paul writes that if God chose for him to remain here on earth, it would result in fruitful service, which was needful and important for the Philippians; however, to physically die would be to leave this fallen world of sin and death and enter into the Father's presence which would be far greater for Paul's benefit.
- Because Paul desired both, he could not choose which he would prefer but trusted God with His will for Paul's life.
- Notice the confidence Paul had in God and the expectation that Paul has: **"If I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor."**
- Paul had such a confident view of God and His grace that he could not imagine his life being lived any other way.
- Sometimes Christians are so unsure of themselves regarding their actions and walk with the Lord: "Lord willing, I'll continue to obey," or "I hope I never commit sins like that."
- The Spirit is working to occupy our hearts with Christ so that the life of Christ is reproduced in us.
- We should have such a grasp of who we are in Christ that for us to live does not mean to struggle through life, in and out of sin and discouragement, but "to live is Christ!"
- In verse 25, it appears the Lord may have given Paul confidence that he would be released. From what we read in other passages, Paul was released, later to be imprisoned again and eventually put to death.

F. An Admonition

Read Philippians 1:27-30.

- Paul gives some rather interesting admonitions here for believers: “***Let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ.***” In the flesh, self is our focus and we will seek to exalt ourselves rather than Christ.
- But in the Spirit, Christ is our object, and our goal will be to point others to Him. Therefore, our conduct and speech will be that which is fitting for the gospel.
- “***Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.***” Again, in the flesh, we are the focus and will compete with others to be exalted. But in the Spirit, we maintain unity with Christ as our object; we will have one purpose.
- “***[Don’t be] terrified by your adversaries.***” As we walk in the Spirit, whatever unbelievers do to us, we will not fear or be intimidated because we are entrusting our lives to God.
- This is a testimony to others that we are trusting in a power that is higher than theirs and will ultimately determine what they can do to us.
- We must accept that we will suffer for Christ (**1 Peter 2:21**). In the flesh, we will seek to avoid suffering for Christ’s sake; but in the Spirit, Christ is our object and if following Him means suffering, then it will be worth it. “***For me to live is Christ***” (**Philippians 1:21**).

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON 3

A. Unity With One Another

Read Philippians 2:1-2.

- In Chapter 1, verse 27, Paul encouraged the Philippians to “*stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.*” Now in Chapter 2, he tells them how.
- These believers had tasted the encouragement of being in Christ; they had been comforted by His love, and they knew what it meant to walk in the Spirit, manifesting His love and compassion.
- Therefore, Paul wrote that since these truths rule in your hearts regarding your relationship with Christ, then the same should be true in your relationships with one another, bringing about unity, love, compassion, and fellowship with one another.
- How often we Christians live as if we have received nothing from Christ—as if we have not been comforted by His love? How often do we walk in the flesh, as if there is no Spirit to commune with, and as if Christ never came to die for us.

Read Philippians 2:3-4.

- In the flesh, we are self-centered and self-serving and just naturally inflated with self-importance, with no desire to walk in humility, esteeming others as more important than ourselves.
- But as we walk in the Spirit, resting in our co-crucifixion with Christ, we are progressively set free from the desires of the flesh, and in its place the fruit of the Spirit becomes that which characterizes our lives.

- Paul encourages the Philippian believers to continue walking in and appropriating all that they have received from Christ which will translate into godly living and love toward one another.

B. Become Like Jesus

Read Philippians 2:5-8.

- There are many Christians who read Paul's words here and because they are unaware of God's enabling power, set out to be like Jesus.
- Along the way, they fail, so they pray harder, asking God to make them more like Christ.
- But even though this has the appearance of spirituality, it is really walking in unbelief because only through what Christ has done will we find provision for overcoming the flesh which enables us to walk in the Spirit, resulting in becoming more conformed to the image of Christ.
- If we are trying to become Christ-like in any way other than appropriating by faith what He has already completed, then we are walking in unbelief.
- We are not believing what God has already done (**Romans 6:6, 11; 2 Peter 1:3**).
- To have the mind of Christ means to have Christ-like attitudes and thoughts, to become like Christ.
- The more we know, believe, and appropriate our identification with Christ, the more we will walk in the Spirit and less in the flesh; and the more we walk in the Spirit, the more the Spirit will fill us with the life of Christ, thereby giving us those Christ-like thoughts and attitudes and making us more like Him.
- Notice what characterized the life of Christ here: selflessness, humility, and obedience unto death.
- He was the omnipotent and perfectly holy Son of God who was crucified as if He were a sinful man.

- We, on the other hand, are totally sinful and unworthy of anything good; however, in the flesh, we judge and treat others as if we are God.
- But the more we walk in the Spirit, the more Christ-like our lives will become, giving us the power and desire to die to self for the purpose of meeting the needs of others.

C. All Men Acknowledge Christ

Read Philippians 2:9-11.

- It is very important that we grasp the contrast Paul is explaining here.
- Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is God from eternity past, became a man. Though He was God, He was rejected by men and humiliated far beyond what any man has ever been humiliated—even to death on a cross.
- Having fulfilled His Father’s will, God then raised Him from the dead and has given Him a name which is above every name: Savior, God, King of kings, and Lord of lords.
- Even though He was originally rejected, the day is coming when all created beings in heaven, earth and under the earth will bow before Him and confess that He truly is Lord.
- Man may refuse to accept Him as Savior, but in the end, all men will confess that He truly is Lord (**Revelation 19:11-16**).
- Here we see the principle of death and resurrection. Jesus went from glory, down, down, down, into death, and up to greater glory (**John 12:24**).
- As we see from this scripture, the principle of death and resurrection is true for seeds, it also applied to Jesus’ life, and it applies to our lives as well.

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON 4

A. Ultimate Obedience

Read Philippians 2:12-13.

- In the last lesson, we saw the example of Jesus. Because He was confident in His relationship with the Father and trusted Him, He became obedient unto death.
- We also read that God exalted Him and has given Him a name which is above every name.
- Even though He was initially rejected by man, ultimately all men will bow before Him and confess that He is Lord.
- Therefore, Paul now goes on to say that just as Christ's relationship with the Father produced obedience, we as God's children and joint heirs with Christ can expect the same in our lives. "***Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.***" Paul appears to be saying, "Live out your salvation" or "Let it out." The next verse tells us how and why: "***...for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.***"
- At salvation we were taken out of Adam and placed into Christ; at the same time, we received the indwelling Holy Spirit who began the process of reproducing the life of Christ within us (*no longer I, but Christ*). Therefore, Paul tells the Philippians to live out their salvation, for it is Christ who is effectively working through all their daily circumstances to produce the power and desire to please and live for Him.

B. Walking in the Spirit in a Fallen World

Read Philippians 2:14-16.

- Paul had just told the Philippians that God is working in their lives to bring about the power and desire to do His will.
- We know that in order for God to work His will in our lives, not only is He using truth but also the daily circumstances of life—relationship struggles, being falsely accused and mistreated, daily living in a fallen world.
- Therefore, Paul continued by saying do all things without murmuring and disputing.
- The Philippians had a flesh, as we all do, and if they were walking in the flesh, Paul knew their response would be “*complaining and disputing*,” rather than humility and love.
- We are living in the midst of a lost world in which the more we walk in the Spirit, the more we will shine forth the life of Christ as a light in the world.
- If we walk in the flesh, our responses to the daily circumstances of life will be fleshly and sinful; rather than shining forth the life of Christ, we will be casting forth more darkness into this already darkened world (**1 John 2:8-11**).
- Paul said we live in the midst of a world that is crooked and perverse.
- What is wrong and sinful the world considers being right and good; what is right and pure, it considers to be foolish and wrong.
- In **Romans 2:15**, we read that deep down in the heart of all men is the understanding of what is right and wrong.

- As God does His work of conforming us more into the image of Christ, we will become more and more people who shine forth the truth that the world continues to reject (**2 Corinthians 2:14-15**).

Read Philippians 2:17-18.

- It's good for us to remember why Paul was imprisoned, and why they were seeking his execution.
- Was it because he had done something wrong? No. It was for publicly proclaiming God's Word.
- As we have seen in almost every epistle Paul wrote, his greatest desire was to see the children of God walking in truth, manifesting the life of Christ (**Galatians 4:19**).
- It was so much his desire that he said even if he was put to death for preaching the gospel, he would gladly give his life for it.
- We should all look forward to the day when our hearts are so occupied with Christ that the gospel becomes that important to us.

Read Philippians 2:19-23.

- Paul was in prison in Rome, and even though there was a church there in Rome, he mentions that Timothy was the only one who was walking in the Spirit and was free from living for himself and his own self-centered desires and could genuinely care and minister to the needs of others.
- In a similar way, as the Holy Spirit conforms us to the image of Christ, we will also walk in the Spirit, seeking the things that are Christ's rather than the things that are our own.

C. Love For God's Children

Read Philippians 2:24-30.

- Since Paul had been in prison, the Philippian church sent Epaphroditus to Rome as their representative with a gift for Paul and to minister to him during that time.
- But while Epaphroditus was in Rome, he became very ill and was close to death.
- When the Philippian church heard he was sick, they became worried and concerned for his life.
- Therefore, after Epaphroditus recovered, he in turn became concerned for his brothers and sisters in Philippi that they were grieving for him.
- Paul decided it would be best to send both Timothy and Epaphroditus back to the Philippian church.
- Timothy would minister to the spiritual needs, and the Philippians would be encouraged by the presence of Epaphroditus, knowing that he had recovered.
- So, Paul sent them back to Philippi.
- This is a wonderful example of how the body of Christ functions in the Spirit, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit.
- We see the love and concern that the Philippian church had for Paul and how that love was manifested in action.
- The love and concern they also had for Epaphroditus once he fell ill is also very evident.
- Then there is the love and concern that Epaphroditus had for the Philippian church, as well as Paul's love and concern for them. He was willing to send his two companions to minister to them.
- Had they all been walking in the flesh, self would have been the focus and there would have been no ministry in one another's lives.
- In a similar way, if our churches are not manifesting that same love and concern for the needs of God's children, it shows that we're carnal and self-centered and seeking to meet our own needs.

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON 5

A. Rejoice in the Lord

Read Philippians 3:1.

- It's rather interesting to consider that these words were written by a man who was enduring terrible circumstances.
- Paul had a tremendous knowledge of God, His grace, and all that was his in Christ; this is what influenced, controlled, and brought stability to his heart.
- Instead of his circumstances rushing in like a flood and washing away his composure and calmness of heart, we see the truths of his identification with Christ acting like an anchor in the midst of a raging sea, stabilizing and keeping his heart/soul (mind, will, emotions) under control.
- We all find ourselves in difficult circumstances from time to time.
- We have sickness in our families, accidents, financial difficulties, as well as relationship struggles.
- On any given day, we may have a number of unpleasant circumstances pressing in on us at the same time.
- However, if we, like Paul, walk in the Spirit, our hearts will be set on Christ, and the worries and the burdens of this life will not move us (**Romans 8:35-39; Ephesians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18**).
- On the other hand, if we walk in the flesh, we will lose sight of Christ and will be occupied with our circumstances and become emotionally shaken (**Ephesians 4:17-19**).

B. Beware of Evil Workers

Read Philippians 3:1-2.

- Paul was deeply concerned about the possibility of the Philippian believers being led astray from truth.
- He reminded them that the work Christ had done in saving and sanctifying them was a finished work and their joy should be solely on Him and what He had done on their behalf.
- Paul warned them to beware because there were those who would attempt to lead them away from depending on Christ and would encourage them to trust in their own works for gaining blessing and acceptance with God (**Galatians 1:6-9**).
- It is significant that Paul referred to the false teachers, the Judaizers, as “dogs.” In Paul’s day, the Judaizers referred the Gentiles as “Gentile Dogs.”
- Paul goes on to say, “***Beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation (the religious ones)***” (Acts 20:28-31; 2 Peter 2:1-3).

C. In Christ We Have No Confidence in the Flesh

Read Philippians 3:3.

- In the Old Testament, the Israelites practiced circumcision as a sign that they were God’s people.
- Here Paul states that we believers are the circumcision, or those who have been spiritually circumcised (**Colossians 2:11**).
- The moment we trust Christ, **Romans 6** tells us the “old man” is crucified with Christ; the power that sin once had to control our lives through our flesh has been circumcised or cut off and thereby rendered powerless.
- Paul wrote we are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit (**Philippians 3:3**).

- In the Old Testament, the Israelites' relationship with God was based on law-keeping; today our relationship is based on the grace of God—the finished work of Christ.
- Unlike those in the Old Testament, we have a permanent indwelling Holy Spirit who has placed us into Christ and is in the process of conforming us more to His image. Therefore, our worship of God originates from within—from the life of Christ that we have received.
- The Israelites' worship of God was based on law-keeping and was outward.
- Paul also wrote that we have “*no confidence in the flesh.*”
- Under the law, man had to depend upon his own strength and desire to keep the law. The law could not help him.
- Therefore, when a man kept parts of the law, it produced self-righteousness, but when he broke it, it produced condemnation. Either way, man's dependence was in himself, for the law provided no help in making a man righteous.
- But in Christ, our salvation and acceptance with God is based on the finished work of Christ. Keep in mind that we are helpless and incapable of pleasing God or bringing about salvation for ourselves.
- Therefore, in Christ we have no confidence in the flesh.

Read Philippians 3:4-6.

- Everything Paul mentions here about himself would have made him to be a person highly respected and revered as a Jew.
- Paul is stating that he had obtained all the things in this world that makes one great in the eyes of man.

- If there was ever a Jew who could have confidence in himself, it was Paul. It's interesting to note what Paul now says about all that he had attained.

Read Philippians 3:7-8.

- Once the Spirit of God opened Paul's eyes to truth, he realized that none of these things helped him gain acceptance or approval with God, but in fact, they were a hindrance to him.
- Paul had once considered them to be gain but now counted all to be a detriment in coming to a deeper relationship with Christ.
- Paul went on to say anything that is not of Christ or directly related to knowing Him is to be considered rubbish.
- As God's children, it is important that we consider our own lives.
- What is the passion of our hearts? Is it the things of this world—money, possessions, education, power, prestige? Or is the passion of our hearts, simply, Christ?
- If it is not Christ, then we are carnal, seeking to fulfill our own desires.

D. Depending On Christ's Finished Work

Read Philippians 3:9-11.

- The false teachers were encouraging people to depend upon their ability to keep the law in order to be considered righteous before God.
- However, Paul said he wanted to be found in Christ, having been clothed with the righteousness which is of God and is received by faith in Christ, not by the works of man.

- The more we know Christ and become conformed to His death through faith and the appropriation of our co-crucifixion with Him (**Romans 6:4-6, 11**), the more we will experience the power of His resurrection, and be freed from the control and reign of our flesh while becoming more conformed to His image in our daily lives.
- But to trust in or depend upon anything other than His finished work will hinder the process and actually prevent us from becoming Christ-like.
- In verse 11, Paul makes the comment that he desired to have a deeper relationship with Christ and become conformed unto His death (to self) so that he might experience the power of His resurrection and while still on this earth, live as though he had already been taken to heaven and given a resurrected body.

Read Philippians 3:12-14.

- Paul writes that although he desired nothing but Christ and becoming more conformed to His image, he was not claiming to have already attained that goal.
- He had cast off and no longer was depending upon all that he had valued before; now he was resting solely on the finished work of Christ.
- He continued, by faith, to press toward the goal of becoming more Christ-like, which is ultimately the highest calling of God.

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON 6

A. Pressing Toward the Goal

Read Philippians 3:13-16.

- Paul said he didn't claim to be living a life of sinless perfection.
- He was no longer focusing on his former life in the flesh but was pressing toward the goal of becoming more Christ-like.
- We, too, have that same liberty. The Spirit is working to teach us to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit. As we progress along the path toward maturity, our focus will also be moved from focusing on what we were to who He is.
- Paul went on to say all of us that are "perfect," or spiritually mature, should have the same attitude and focus as we appropriate our identification with Christ.
- Not all people are at the same place in their understanding of truth. Therefore, Paul said if we are not at a place spiritually where we can understand these things, God will reveal them.
- Only God can open the heart to understand the truths of our identification with Christ.
- Paul went on to say that whatever amount of truth has been revealed to us, our part is to merely walk in that truth.
- We can trust the Spirit to lead us into the truth for which our hearts have been prepared and not be disappointed that we're not like someone else.
- Also, as disciples and teachers of God's Word, it is important that we not force our hearers into walking in truth for which they have not been prepared. We must trust the Spirit to do that same work in their lives according to His timing and will. William Kelley once

wrote, *“May we hold fast trust in subjection to His Spirit desiring the good of all believers, let them be where they may, and not anxious to take them out, or bring them in one moment sooner than God gives them to know his mind.”*

B. Focusing on the Cross

Read Philippians 3:17-19.

- It was the finished work of the cross and his identification with Christ upon which Paul trusted and rested.
- Therefore, Paul encouraged the Philippians to walk with that same attitude and focus.
- He said there were many teaching the Word who were enemies of the cross of Christ because they did not depend upon the finished work of the cross.
- He said their end would be destruction (**2 Peter 2:1**).
- Walking in heresy and false teaching will always lead to destruction. It destroys faith.
- Biblical faith must be anchored in truth. To not walk in truth is to walk in unbelief and to walk in unbelief is to despise the finished work of Christ.
- Paul also said there are those whose god is their appetite. They walk in the flesh, totally controlled by the desires of the flesh.
- Their god, or that which they seek to please, is their own fleshly, self-centered desires.
- Paul went on to say their glory is in their shame.
- This reveals the deceitfulness of the flesh. In the flesh, that which is shameful is called glorious, and that which is truly glorious is considered shameful.
- Finally, Paul wrote their minds were set on those things that man seeks to obtain in this world such as the praises of men and not on Christ.

C. A Heavenly Citizenship

Read Philippians 3:20-21.

- Paul gives more reasons why we should be of the same attitude as he and resting solely on the finished work of Christ.
- It was Christ who saved and sanctified us, and it is also He who will bring about our glorification.
- Our salvation came not from any will or work of our own; our sanctification will come in a similar manner (**Colossians 2:6**). The transformation and glorification of our bodies into heavenly bodies will again be the will and work of God by the power that He has to subject all things to Himself.
- As children of God who have been placed into Christ, our eternal citizenship is in heaven, seated with Christ at the right hand of God (**John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Philippians 3:20**).

Read Philippians 4:1.

- Paul is encouraging the Philippian believers to rest in their position in Christ and to continue on in the truth of their identification with Christ.
- Since it is only the finished work of Christ that saves, sanctifies, and glorifies, our part is to stand firm in it by faith, not being deceived into following that which casts aside the work of Christ.

Read Philippians 4:2-3.

- Based on the finished work of Christ and the hope we have in Him, Paul urges these two women to live in harmony and asks others in the church to help them.

- Paul said they had helped him in the ministering of the gospel, but now they were apparently struggling in their relationship.
- Apparently, they had lost sight of all they had in Christ and the privilege they had to be His co-workers and focused on very minor and petty issues that arose between them (**Ephesians 4:17-19**).
- As these kinds of issues arise in our churches, we must point people to the cross and the truth of their co-crucifixion with Christ in order to see them restored to walking in the Spirit (**Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 2:12-13; Galatians 6:1**).

D. Rejoice

Read Philippians 4:4-5.

- Paul urges the believers in Philippi to always rejoice in the Lord. Joy is part of the fruit of the Spirit, and as we walk in the Spirit, joy will be manifested in our lives regardless of the circumstances.
- In the flesh, our focus will be on circumstances rather than what we have in Christ; therefore, if our circumstances are good, we'll feel happy, but if they are bad, then we will become discouraged.
- Paul also said to let our gentle spirit be known to all men for the Lord is near.
- A gentle spirit is part of the fruit of the Spirit and will not be manifested if walking in the flesh.
- Paul is reminding the Philippians that it won't be long and the Lord will return and totally remove all sin and corruption.
- Therefore, we must not become distracted by the flesh, focusing on petty "earthly" issues that arise in our lives. Rather, walk in the Spirit and remain focused on our hope in Christ and be found blameless in Him for His return is imminent.

E. Be Anxious For Nothing

Read Philippians 4:6-7.

- In the flesh we become anxious about many things. We fail to rest in the love and grace of God; therefore, we are not confident of His provision for our lives. So we become anxious, striving and scheming in order to bring about what we desire to do or to obtain.
- But as we walk in the Spirit, our hearts will be confident in God's love and mercy, and we will be able to rest in His will for our lives rather than striving for our own will.
- Only in the Spirit will we walk in true dependence upon God. Here Paul is making it clear that true dependence will be manifested in two ways: first, it will result in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to God; secondly, the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds and we won't worry or become anxious about our circumstances.

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON 7

A. Our Minds and Our Walk

Read Philippians 4:8-9.

- In the last lesson, Paul told the Philippians that the finished work of the cross and their identification with Christ would result in the fruit of the Spirit.
- Paul now tells them to think and dwell upon those things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, good, excellent, and worthy of praise.
- Basically, Paul is describing the characteristics of Jesus Christ. The more we walk in the Spirit, the more Jesus becomes the object of our hearts, and as He is our focus, we will be like Him.
- Paul goes on to encourage the Philippians to walk in and practice the things they had heard and from Paul and seen in him.
- As Christians by faith appropriate our identification with Christ, our new position begins to become experiential in our lives, affecting what we think, say, and do. The more we walk in the Spirit, the more the Christ-life will be manifested in our thoughts, words, and actions.

B. Giving To Those In Need

Read Philippians 4:10-19.

- In approaching the conclusion of Paul's letter to the Philippians, he thanks them for their loving concern for him.
- Paul also mentions he had learned to be content in whatever circumstance he found himself in; he knew

how to live in prosperity as well as how to live while in need.

- These verses tie into what Paul had already written in verses 6-7; as we rest in the finished work of the cross and Christ becomes the object of our heart, it will result in a peaceful restful mind, for our confidence will be in God and His love, mercy, and grace.
- Therefore, Paul clearly stated that regardless of his circumstance, whether he had plenty or little, he remained in the Spirit, thereby enabling him to be sure and steadfast rather than tossed to and fro by circumstantial change.
- Paul went on to say that it was a great blessing to him for the Philippians to share with him in his need; at times, the Philippian church was the only church that helped him and ministered to him in this way.
- He also said it was not the gifts that encouraged him, but rather what this communicated regarding the Philippian believers.
- People who are in the flesh don't care about the needs of others; they only care about themselves.
- However, the care and generosity the Philippians showed toward Paul by their willingness to give revealed they were walking more in the Spirit and less in the flesh. As that growth continued in their lives, the Philippians would be blessed by the obvious benefit that such growth brings.
- It's interesting to note Paul's comment in verse 19: ***"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory."***
- This isn't a promise that as you give, then God will give back to you. It's a statement of the faithfulness of God. Because He is our heavenly Father and we are His children, He will faithfully supply all of our needs.
- Therefore, we can freely give to those to whom the Spirit reveals are in need, trusting in the fact that God is faithful and will always provide for our needs.

C. Conclusion

Read Philippians 4:20-23.

- Paul ends this letter just like he began—by pointing the Philippians to God.
- He reminds them that all things are for the glory of God. The Philippians' salvation, sanctification, and glorification were all accomplished by God through the sending of His Son. It was all His will and work, and there is absolutely nothing that man can glory in, except in receiving the undeserved grace of God.
- In verse 23, Paul ends by saying, “***The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.***”
- Paul is making it clear that our walk in Christ be such that we are always experiencing or sensing the grace we have been freely given in Christ.

