

Text: Philippians

“The Life of Christ & Your Life In Christ!”

Introduction: Let’s start out with a question: What turns you on? What do you look forward to? Who or what are you serving? What do you get the most excited about? What is your bottom line? If someone else was asked the question: “What makes Bob Somerville tick?” or “What is his greatest desire?” “What would he say?”

- Hold that question and let’s get some background on the book of Philippians.

- Thank you notes are always fun to receive and Philippians is basically a thank you note with additional purpose!
 - Paul was the church planting pastor of the church at Philippi! He and Silas came to town and from three converts and a controversy a church was planted. The three converts were Lydia – the seller of purple from Thyatira, - the slave girl with the spirit of divination, and the Philippian jailor and his family. See Acts 28:30-31 for details. This occurred about 61-65 A.D.
 - The Church began out of a jail experience and now (probably about 10 years later) Paul is back in jail due to his stand for the Gospel and the Philippian Church is ministering to his needs in sending Epaphroditus to minister to him.
 - Paul is probably in his own lodgings but chained to a Roman guard, a member of the Praetorian guard, possibly one guard to each side.
 - Now Paul writes a letter from a prison cell.
 - Think of other letters written from prison!
 - Pilgrim’s Progress – by John Bunyan
 - The Cost of Discipleship – by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
 - Certainly a major purpose is that of a thank you note – You see it in 1:5; 3:25, 30; 4:14, 16.
 - The major theme of the letter could be noted as thanksgiving or rejoicing. The word *thanks* occurs once, *thanksgiving* once, *joy* 7 times, and *rejoice*, nine times. In a brief 104 verses we have these terms occurring 18 times.
 - But we could also say the major theme is Jesus Christ our Lord as in those same 104 verses there are 51 references to Jesus, The Christ and our Lord.
 - The book could be outlined:
 - Chapter 1 – Rejoicing in Affliction
 - Chapter 2 – Rejoicing in Ministry
 - Chapter 3 – Rejoicing in Christ
 - Chapter 4 – Rejoicing in Blessings

- The city of Philippi itself is strategically located 10 miles from the coast guarding the Agnation Way which passes through Macedonia. It is a Roman Colony. Its leaders have taken the exalted title of Praetors and their policemen are called lictors. They are proud of being Roman citizens and are especially proud of being designated a Roman Colony. Therefore when the accusation “these men teach doctrines not legitimate for us as Roman citizens”. That accusation would have been particularly inflammatory in this city.
- But let’s go back to the question, ‘What do you look forward to the most?’
 - Monday night football? Thursday night softball games or Saturday golf?
 - Old movies on T.V. or your favorite program?
 - What do you most look forward to in any given week? What do you plan for most carefully?
- Paul has settled that question: Paul what is your life really all about? He answered the question this way, “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.” 1:21 So let’s look at how Paul fleshed that out in the entire book of Philippians. When its all down to sitting in your quarters chained to two Roman guards. What really matters.
- Jensen in his *New Testament Survey* gives a brief acrostic for remembering the theme of the book of Philippians. Philippians is about *Your Life In Christ: Christ is Your:*
 - *Life*
 - *Example*
 - *Goal*
 - *Sufficiency*

1. **Jesus Christ Is Your Life.**

1.1. Your holiness is in Christ. 1:1 “To all the *saints* in Christ Jesus”

1.1.1. You are a Saint in Christ. 1 Cor 1:1-3 Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those *who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:* Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1.1.2. 2 Cor 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, *so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

1.1.3. 1:10-11 “So that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled *with the*

fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

1.1.4. 3:8-9 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

1.2. Your grace and peace is in Christ. 1:2

1.2.1. Grace – unmerited favor rests on you

1.2.2. Peace –

1.2.2.1. with God

1.2.2.2. of God – 4:4 & 9

1.3. Your completeness is in Christ. 1:6

1.3.1. God has no unfinished projects in his garage.

1.3.2. 1:11 the fruit of righteousness which is a result of your union with Christ.

1.3.3. Col 1:27 “To whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

1.3.4. You must remember that your victory in Christ is sure. 3:21 Christ will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

1.4. Your purpose is in Christ. 1:21

1.4.1. Gal 2:20-21 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

1.4.2. Matt 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

1.4.3. T. Jeffcoach. West Point Cadet. H.S. Class of 2006. "Dad of all the 28 mission trips we have been on this one is the greatest."

1.5. Your future is in Christ. 1:21 "to die is gain."

1.5.1. 1:25-26 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.

Jesus Christ is Your Life & He is your example

2. **Jesus Christ Is Your Example.** 2:5-11

2.1. You are never to act out of selfish motives. Never! 2:3-4 Never! Never!! NEVER!!!

2.1.1. How does that fit in with:

2.1.1.1. You deserve a break today! Have it your way!

2.1.1.2. Stand up for your rights!! The squeaky wheel gets the grease!

2.2. You look to Christ as the selfless example. 2:5-11

2.2.1. He gave up His home. 2:5-6

2.2.2. He gave up His rights. 2:6

2.2.3. He took the lowest position. 2:7

2.2.4. He was obedient unto death. 2:8

2.3. Therefore God the Father exalted Him and He promises to exalt us if we humble ourselves. 2:9-11

2.3.1. 1 Peter 5:6-7 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

3. **Jesus Christ Is Your Goal.**

3.1. You rely on nothing but Christ. 3:3-7

3.1.1. Put no reliance – absolutely no reliance on the flesh.

3.1.2. Paul could have trusted in the flesh but he did not.

3.2. You give up all to know Christ. 3:8-9

3.2.1. The only righteousness Paul wanted to know was in Christ.

3.2.2. Paul counted everything else as loss in comparison to knowing Christ.

3.2.2.1. zemia – Acts 27:21 loss of ship and cargo – that which is forfeited, lost

3.2.3. Paul counted everything else as rubbish – skybalon

3.2.3.1. skybalon – this depressing word means rubbish and muck of many kinds, excrement, rotten food, bits of food left at a meal – not worth eating, a rotting corpse.

3.2.3.2. Colin Brown Vol 1 p 480 – Says that, nastiness & decay are constant elements of its meaning. It is a coarse, ugly, violent word implying worthlessness, uselessness and repulsiveness.

3.2.3.3. Gnostics applied the word to the human body to express their low view of it, as the tomb of the soul. This coarse & violent word shows how completely Paul had ceased to value the religious privileges he had once counted sweet and precious and all things he has lost since becoming a Christian.

3.2.3.4. Picture in your mind the worst neighborhood you have ever driven through. Picture a front yard full of rotten garbage, cat & dog feces, rotten mattress & all kinds of junk. Paul says everything else is a pile of rubbish in comparison to knowing Christ.

3.2.4. What have you given up to know Christ?

3.2.4.1. David Bleakely sold his business and moved his family to southern CA. and lived off of the proceeds in order to know Christ. Then they moved to S.A. to teach at Christ's Seminary.

3.2.4.2. Desmond Ventor a prospering engineer. Sold everything he had and moved from S.A. to S. CA to attend Seminary.

3.2.4.3. Roger Ng & leaving all to know Christ in seminary.

3.2.4.4. How many T.V. shows, newspaper articles, sports sections, magazines, conversations with friends, football games or tennis matches, exercise sessions, or novels have you given up to get to know Christ better.

3.3. You know Him in the power of His resurrection. 3:10-11

3.3.1. In the power of His resurrection – in the healing of the demon possessed slave girl, in an earthquake power deliverance from prison.

3.3.2. In his feet in stocks in a Philippian prison and chained to two Roman guards at present.

3.3.2.1. Yet in the prison he says it is a privilege to suffer for Christ. 1:29
For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

3.4. You know Him in the fellowship of His suffering. 3:10-11

3.5. You press on to know Him better. 3:12-14

3.5.1. Paul did not assume he had arrived. He was a church planter and author of scripture. He had suffered great things for Christ. Yet he had not arrived.

3.5.2. He was pressing on for the upward call in Christ Jesus. To be like Christ. (ILL) Gettysburg – Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain – Defending Little Round Top.

3.6. You Must remember that your citizenship is in heaven. 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

3.6.1. This would have struck the Philippians in particular since they were so proud of their Roman Citizenship.

4. **Jesus Christ Is Your Sufficiency.** 4:6-19 esp. 4:6, 13 & 19

4.1. Your sufficiency for peace comes through Christ. 4:4-9

4.1.1. Imprisoned in Iran. Traveling there looking for opportunities to share his faith. Setting his mind on Phil 4:8 and keeping his mind on whatever is true.

4.2. Your sufficiency for all circumstances comes through Christ. 4:10-12

4.3. Your sufficiency for strength comes through Christ. 4:13

4.4. Your sufficiency for every need is met out of His rich supply. 4:19

Conclusion:

➤ God highly honored the Lord Jesus. Phil 2:9

➤ Paul expected to be honored. 2 Tim 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the

crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

- John 12:26 "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.
 - Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain
 - Was honored by the men he served with and elected to the rank of Col.
 - Was awarded the Congregational Medal of Honor for bravery in battle.
 - Was 4 times elected Governor of Maine.
 - Was appointed to be President of Bowden College.