



Paul's Letter to the

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice

Philippians 1:1 *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:*

Paul is the author of this letter and he introduces himself as a bondservant of Jesus Christ. A servant is someone who willingly submits themselves under another. Anyone who wants to go up in the kingdom it must start with servanthood. Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve (Mt 28:20).

The Greek word for servant is *doulos* and means to be devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests. This letter highlights just how much the apostle Paul disregarded his own interest by being in prison and writing a letter to those in Philippi to encourage them even at the face of possible execution. He counted his life worth nothing to him and rejoiced even at the expense of his own life (Acts 20:24).

One of the major keys to experiencing victory is to not esteem our own life. The moment we believed on Jesus our life is no longer our own (1 Cor 6:19).

Philippi was a city in Macedonia that Paul visited on his second missionary journey.

Philippians 1:2 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Grace is to us; it is a gift from God. Grace and peace are twins and the immediate result of receiving God's grace and relating to Him based off of grace is peace. There is no peace outside of God's grace. Grace is what God does for man through Jesus independent of a person's performance.

The Greek word for peace is *eirēnē* and means peace between individuals and security and safety. Since we are now justified (just as if we never sinned) with God, there is peace and the relationship with God becomes stable and secure (Rom 5:1).

One of the enemies' greatest tactics is to get a believer into relating to God based off their own goodness but a revelation of God communing with us based off Jesus' obedience and not our own will keep us safe from falling into condemnation.

Philippians 1:3 *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,*

Paul lived a life of constant thankfulness. He thanked the Philippians for their generosity and intercession for him. The Philippians were the only church that supported Paul at the start of his ministry (Phil 4:15).

Philippians 1:4 *always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy,*

To truly understand how much Paul's focus was not on himself one would have to see the condition he was in. At the time of this letter, Paul was imprisoned facing possible execution in Rome (Acts 16). For Paul to be praying for others under his current circumstances reveals that it truly was Christ living through him (Gal 2:20).

It is said that we should live for Jesus but that is work. Since Jesus now dwells in us (2 Cor 13:5) we simply need to rest in who He is in us and allow Him to live through us. When is the last time you were in a crisis situation and decided to pray for someone else? Have you ever been in the hospital and decided to pray for the person in the room next to you? Paul adopted this mindset from Jesus. At Jesus' worst hours during His high priestly prayer, He was praying for us (Jn 17: 2-26).

Paul says he makes request with joy. The word joy and rejoice is written in this letter at least sixteen times. This letter could also be titled "Rejoice".

Philippians 1:5 *for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,*

The word fellowship in Greek is koinonia and means partnership referring to financial contribution. This was the only church that supported Paul at the beginning of his ministry and continued to support him. The partners are just as important as the preacher and the senders are just as vital as the ones sent.

If we are being fed by a minister we should be sowing into them financially. When we eat and get full but do not supply financial support to the minister, we are mocking God (Gal 6:7). Many people today have an issue with ministers being wealthy. Some ministers even attempt to hide their prosperity in order to justify someone else's inability to believe the Father's word as it pertains to finances. That's not humility that's stupidity.

Philippians 1:6 *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

The Greek word for confident is peithō and means to trust. Paul was writing to the church of Philippi and encouraging them that the same grace he was living by, they too would be sustained by.

This verse says He who began a good work **in** you. The moment we make Jesus our Lord, we become brand new on the inside (2 Cor 5:17) and all that we would ever need for life and

godliness is placed on the inside of us (Eph 3:20). Believers live from the inside out, not that outside in.

Will God's good work that He began in us work for everyone? While the Father wants the best for everyone, not everyone will respond and cooperate.

Philippians 1:7 *just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.*

Paul was in the center of God's will yet he ended up in prison. There are times we attempt to gage if God told us to do something or if we are in the center of His will based off circumstances but this is not an accurate way to determine if we are in God's will. Majority of times, there is much opposition when we are following God because we are pressing against the worlds system and the kingdom of darkness. If we are walking with the devil we will never collide. The moment we begin to go opposite directions that's when the opposition comes but this is when God's grace kicks in!

When God asks us to do something we cannot navigate if it is Him based off outside pressure. Moses, Paul, and even Jesus were doing what God told them too and it looked like all hell had broken loose. When we are in the center of God's will we will either cause a revival or a ruckus; either way we need to do what God told us to do.

The word partakers in Greek is sugkoinonos and means co-participant. Paul was living by grace (God's ability in him) and anyone else who has put faith in Christ too has God's ability in them. We are co laborers with Christ and whatever is true of Him is true of us. We are now joint heirs with Jesus and He shares all He has with us (Rom 8:16).

Philippians 1:8 *For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.*

The scriptures say when Jesus was healing the sick that He was moved with compassion (Mark 1:41). The affection Paul had for the believers in Philippi was God's love flowing through him (Rom 5:5). Human love fails but God's love does not.

The Greek word for affections is splagchnon and is also referred to as bowels. This word means intense or violent passions. A bowel movement is an intense process where a person cannot help themselves. Even if He tried, God could not help Himself with His love extended towards us.

Philippians 1:9 *And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,*

What does this word abound mean? It is the Greek word perisseuō and means to come in an abundance or overflow. This verse says that our love can come in abundance or overflow but how? It is through knowledge. The more we know or gain a revelation of all God has done for us

through Jesus, our love will increase. The flip side of this is if someone has done us harm or we do not know all the benefits they have provided for us, our love can decrease.

This is why preaching the gospel is vital. The true gospel of the goodness of God leading us to repentance is what draws people to the Father. Increasing in knowledge will also impact our love towards others. A revelation of God's love poured out to us vertically, will increase our love for others horizontally.

Philippians 1:10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

The Greek word for approve is dokimazō and means to recognize as genuine after examination. Many believers today are viewing the Father through only the lenses of the law and the Old Testament. We need to get a full picture of who God is not only through the heart behind the law but also through grace. The full and final revelation of who God is, is Jesus (Heb 1:1). After examining God through the person of Jesus, the only view of Him we should have is genuine and love.

The results of having love abound is being able to detect right from wrong and disconnected from offense. God's love gives us a clear picture and discernment of what is good. Is it possible that offense won't come? Jesus said it is impossible that offense won't come but it should not come through us (Lk 17:1). Increasing in love will keep us from becoming offended at a person and respond to them in forgiveness the way the Father responds to us.

Philippians 1:11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

The Greek word for filled is plēroō and means to make complete or supply liberally. A believer is not lacking in any area of their life as God has already freely given us all we need and there is no shortage of supply.

Anytime we go to a restaurant we are not wanting our cup to be barely filled. When we place our cup under the drink dispenser, we hold the button down until it is almost at an overflow. God did not barely hold the button down as it pertains to filling us. He was not cautious in giving us all that we need and there is no deficient.

Righteousness has fruit and it is love, joy, peace, and all of God's other attributes. Righteousness gives God legal access to bless us (Rom 5:21).

God gets glory when we bare much fruit (Jn 15:8).

Philippians 1:12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel,

Paul was in prison because he was preaching the gospel not because he was out living in sin. This was not God's will that Paul landed in prison but because Paul was there it actually

furthered or advanced the gospel because now the entire prison guard was hearing about Jesus' finished works. Soldiers were now being exposed to the gospel who may have not heard otherwise.

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher (Rom 10:14)? The commission for a believer did not change with the passing away of Paul. Jesus has commanded us all to preach the gospel independent of the circumstance (Matthew 28:17).

The word furtherance in Greek is *prokope* and means to progress or advancement. How can we advance the kingdom if we are silent?

Philippians 1:13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;

The entire palace guard was being exposed to the gospel. Paul could have been selfish and mad that he was in prison but the gospel was being spread and that was Paul's commission and heart. This is amazing that Paul stated his chains were in Christ not Rome. Paul was not bound to Rome; he was bound to Jesus. Our life is going the way it is going based off our perspective not our circumstances.

Philippians 1:14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

People were hearing about Paul's imprisonment and his boldness to continue preaching the gospel. When we see others being bold it sparks something in us.

The Greek word for bold is *tolmaō* and means not to dread or shun through fear.

Before the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Peter was timid. After we see him face to face with the very people who he previously ran from, he then told them he wouldn't stop preaching the name of Jesus regardless of what they threatened to do to him (Acts 4). Proverbs 28:1 says the righteous are as bold as a lion.

Philippians 1:15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill:

Paul is expressing two motives by which people preach Christ. One is selfish ambition and the other out of a pure heart. The two motives are mentioned in verse sixteen and seventeen. This is still true in the church today.

The sorcerer found in the book of acts that was operating in pride and wanting the Holy spirit for selfish gain. "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God (Act 8:18-21)". This raises

the question on what our motives are. Are we wanting the gifts to flow through us and draw large crowds so that we can gain a following or are do we desire the gifts so that we can be used by God and see other people set free?

Philippians 1:16 *The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains;*

Some were speaking of the gospel and simply mocking it thinking that it would make Paul's situation worse however, all publicity is good publicity because the Word was getting out. News was traveling that a man name Jesus came and died for the sin of the entire world and He was just crucified by the chief priest. The people were making a mockery out of it but as others were hearing this is sparked interest.

This mockery became a launching pad for the gospel to advance.

Philippians 1:17 *but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.*

One side was preaching out of selfish motives but the other side was truly speaking of Christ atonement out of love for others to receive salvation. Paul was set in place or appointed to preach the gospel. This was his purpose and calling in life (Acts 26:18).

Philippians 1:18 *What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.*

This is the only question asked in this letter. Does it matter the motive why Christ is preached?

Paul is saying it does not matter the motive as long as the message or Christ is being preached. Paul was in prison yet rejoicing that Jesus was being proclaimed. Paul was so dead to himself that he did not care what personally was going on with him. This is another key to victory. Being dead to self so no matter what happens, you cannot hurt a dead man.

Are you alive or dead? The moment a person puts faith in Jesus they become dead to themselves and now our life is in Christ. It is Him living not us.

Philippians 1:19 *For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,*

The word deliverance in Greek is *sōtēria* and means deliverance, preservation, safety, and salvation. In context, Paul is in prison but he is more than likely speaking of his eternal salvation and not deliverance from prison. This can be concluded by the next verse where Paul states he is not aware if he will come out of prison.

The law demands holiness but grace supplies holiness through the spirit.

Philippians 1:20 *according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.*

This was not Paul's first rodeo with opposition. Paul had a demonic angel assigned to buffet him and cause persecution wherever he went (2 Cor 12:7). Boldness takes place when we receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). We should not wait until big trails come our way to exercising our faith and trust God. We need to consider Him faithful in the small things so when the enemy throws something larger we are unimpressed.

Our workout partner can throw a medicine ball at us to catch but we need to begin with five pounds not fifty. As we begin to catch the lighter weight, we can progressively begin to catch larger loads.

Jesus prepared Himself before He began His ministry. Before His ministry began, He grew in wisdom and stature and was sitting in the temple listening and asking the teachers questions (Luke 2:46).

Boldness comes from having prior experience that gives you momentum. When someone has momentum, it is hard to stop them suddenly. A child on a swing may start off slow but as they continue to push and build momentum if someone tries to stop them abruptly, the person attempting to stop them will hurt themselves.

Philippians 1:21 *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

Again, Paul was dead to himself. His identity was in Christ and it was no longer him that live but Christ through him. A believer who does not have the right perspective on what death truly is will be depressed and in grief at the thought of it.

A believer should shout at the thought of death because it is a doorway to eternity with Jesus. Death has no more sting for a believer and we should not sorrow as others who have no hope (1 Cor 15:56, 1 Thes 4:13). Paul knew death was nothing more than a promotion not the end.

When Lazarus died the scriptures say, "Jesus wept." This is the shortest verse in the Bible (John 11:35). Jesus did not take time off from ministry to move into depression. He did not have a breakdown but a break through and raised Lazarus from the dead.

Philippians 1:22 *But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.*

Paul was torn between two decisions here. Should he stay for the benefit of others and advance the gospel or go to be with the Lord?

This is a radical way of thinking but we have a choice to live or die. Many Christian's think God has their end date circled on their calendar and He picks the day they die. God said that He has set before us life and death, we choose (Deu 30:19).

Philippians 1:23 *For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.*

Paul had such a strong relationship with the Lord that he saw death as the greatest opportunity.

The Greek word for hard-pressed is *sunechō* and means to be pressed on every side. What we lost in the garden of Eden we regained in the garden of Gethsemane. The word Gethsemane means oil press. Jesus was pressed in the garden of Gethsemane so that we could be released from the impacts that Adam unleashed.

Philippians 1:24 *Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.*

Paul makes his decision here and says he would stay and advance the gospel. This was selfless on Paul's part. It would have been pride for Paul to only care about himself but here we see him putting others needs or wants above his own.

This is another key to Paul's success in that his purpose was greater than himself. A person who's life is revolved around themselves will ultimately end up in grief.

Philippians 1:25 *And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,*

Paul was released from prison after two years (Acts 28:30). Paul was assured that if he remained in the flesh it would be for the benefit of the gospel and the Philippians.

Philippians 1:26 *that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.*

Living would be a gain to Christ and dying would be a gain to Paul. The rejoicing that Paul was admonishing the Philippians to have was magnified towards Jesus.

Philippians 1:27 *Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,*

Paul is now moving into speaking on one of his greatest themes which is unity and oneness. Unity comes as a byproduct of our vibrant relationship with Jesus. Unity is not something we strive towards but if the vertical relationship with God is thriving, our horizontal relationship with others will thrive as well.

Philippians 1:28 *and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.*

The word adversaries in Greek is *antikeimai* and means to oppose. The ones opposing Paul is speaking of the non-Christians that were coming against the gospel. He says here that the people

that oppose them, it is a sign they are doomed and not born again. The Greek word for perdition is apōleia and means destruction. To the Philippians it was a sign to them that they were born again because they were being persecuted (2 Tim 3:12).

Salvation is always something from God offered to us independent of our performance.

Philippians 1:29 *For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,*

This is a scripture that the enemy has been able to pervert and cause the body of Christ to promote submission to sickness. To suffer for Him is not referring to sickness. The word suffer in context is speaking about persecution and conflict.

All good things are upstream. When we begin to advance the kingdom there will be opposition but God's favor is on us.

Philippians 1:30 *having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.*

Paul experienced an abundance of persecution and trials during his ministry (2 Cor 11) and now the church at Philippi was experiencing this same persecution but as Paul mentioned earlier in this chapter, God's grace was available to both.

The word conflict in Greek is agōn and means battle, conflict, or race. The apostle Paul refers to running a race and an athlete throughout many of his letters. Paul and the Philippians were both on the same track and had the same supply of grace.