

# Rejoice

A study of Philippians



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# Rejoice in your Security

Philippians 1:1-11 (KJV)

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

<sup>2</sup> *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

<sup>3</sup> *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,*

<sup>4</sup> *Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,*

<sup>5</sup> *For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;*

<sup>6</sup> *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:*

<sup>7</sup> *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.*

<sup>8</sup> *For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*

<sup>9</sup> *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*

<sup>10</sup> *That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;*

<sup>11</sup> *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.*

Paul starts his letter to the Philippians by dealing with the issue of security.

**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. ([Philippians 1:6](#))** Humanly speaking things did not look so good for Paul. However, his outlook did not stem from his circumstances, but from Christ who had saved him and promised to see him through. **For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. [2 Timothy 1:12](#)**

## Paul's Character

Godly character is an important part of the Christian life. Character is defined as "qualities or features that distinguishes one person from another." Bob Jones Sr. said, "The test of a man's character is what it takes to stop him." That being the case, Paul was a man of immeasurable character. Nothing short of death was going to stop him from serving and rejoicing in Christ. Christians must realize that the conditions they are under do not lessen their responsibility to serve God. Someone had said that Heaven's stars shine the brightest against the darkest sky. How true! These were dark days in Paul's life, but his chains were not going to hinder his joy and love for Christ. Notice several things about Paul.

## Paul's Predicament

Consider Paul's Predicament as he sits in a Roman prison, possibly facing the death penalty for preaching Christ. Yet he still had a concern for his dear friends at Philippi. Although Paul was in a dreadful predicament he did not allow his dilemma to cut him off from those to whom God had called him to minister. Paul's situation did not alleviate his call to service. We must keep our eyes on Christ rather than our circumstances.

## Paul's Position

Paul identifies himself and Timothy as **servants of Jesus Christ**. ([Philippians 1:1](#)) There is no doubt that Paul was the prince of preachers; a pioneer preacher amidst pagan darkness taking the gospel where it had never been. Under the inspiration of God Paul wrote two thirds of the New Testament. He won souls everywhere he went; he planted churches; he trained preachers, and served God with unequalled success. How did he identify himself to the Philippians? He did so as a servant. The meaning of this word differs from our ordinary use of the term. The word servant carries the idea of being devoted to another, to the disregard of one's own interests. Paul was not bound by force to obey his master, He did so as a voluntary act of complete surrender, on the grounds of love.

## Paul's Peace

Paul's peace is evident. **Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.** ([Philippians 1:2](#)) Here are two of the sweetest words in the English language—grace and peace. Paul knew real peace and the origin of it. Paul could wish them peace but he could not give them peace. That must come from **God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ**. It is only after one has by God's grace been forgiven of his sins and made a new creature in Christ that he can experience true peace.

Paul had the peace of God that only a believer can experience. He could have had quite a pity party sitting there in jail. He chose rather to focus on peace. Paul never preached a 'woe is me' sermon. He never charged Jesus with not doing right by him. He just continued to rejoice and serve others. The world knows nothing of this kind of peace and joy. **There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.** ([Isaiah 48:22](#)) To the believer Jesus said, **These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.** ([John 16:33](#)) Paul's peace came from an unwavering trust in the Saviour that had overcome the world.

True and lasting peace is the fruit of a right relationship with God. There is no real or lasting peace without God's grace. There is a false peace that this world

searches for, but to no avail. **For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. (1 Thessalonians 5:3)** Where God has not worked and divine grace transformed the heart there is no real peace. **Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5:1-2)**

## Paul's Praise

Paul thanks and praises God for the precious memories of his days at Philippi. **I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. (Philippians 1:3)** What a heart for people! Even in prison Paul's heart was consumed with a passion and love for God's people. This world can rob you of your freedom, but no matter what the circumstances are you still have your heart. No wonder the Bible commands us, **Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. (Proverbs 4:23)**

## Paul's Prayer

We see that Paul's Prayer life was not hindered by his hardship. **Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy. (Philippians 1:4)** Paul would later exhort the Thessalonians to **Pray without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)** Like Samuel of old Paul knew the responsibility of prayer. **Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way. (1 Samuel 12:23)**

## Paul's Partnership

Paul treasured their ... **fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. (Philippians 1:5)** What a picture of the family of God! Paul's partnership with the Philippians was not broken even though he was imprisoned and unable to be with them. They were still family. The word **fellowship** simply means to have in common. Merrill Unger said:

"Fellowship means companionship, a relation in which parties hold something in common, familiar interaction."

You cannot have real Bible fellowship with someone unless you have something in common. For Christian fellowship, this means to be cleansed by the precious blood and be saved.

## Paul's Confidence

Paul had full confidence in Christ and His ability to accomplish the work of salvation which He had started. **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. (Philippians 1:6)** Assurance is absolutely necessary in order to overcome this world and live the victorious Christian life. Biblical confidence comes from knowing and trusting Christ. **Being confident of this very thing.** Paul started this verse by affirming his confidence in Christ's character and ability to bring his salvation to fruition. There were four things that led to Paul's confidence.

## Confidence In The Saviour's Activity

Paul's confidence was in the Saviour Who **hath begun a good work. (Philippians 1:6)** in every believer. Notice that the work has only begun! It is not yet finished. He is in the process of making trophies of grace out of His children. Let us not forget that it is God who is doing the work. As we study the Scripture we find three phases to the work of God in a Christian's life. They are:

1. **Salvation**—The work God does **for us**.
2. **Sanctification**—The work God does **in us**.
3. **Service**—The work God does **through us**.

Every believer can have confidence in the fact that God is at work in his life. This is a promise that he can take to the bank. **Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:24)**

## Confidence In The Saviour's Aim

Paul states that the work of Jesus has only **begun**. There is something else. The phrase **He will perform it**, speaks of His continuance in our lives. Praise God He is not finished with us. His way is not to start something and not finish it. No! Jesus Christ is the **author and finisher of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2)** He is the author and finisher—that which He starts, He will complete. He didn't salvage us just to keep us out of hell. He saved us for a purpose! God is going to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ. **For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:29)** So many stumble over the word **predestination** and miss the word **conformed**, losing sight of the fact that God's purpose is to bring about Christ-likeness in the believer. **Predestination** means to foreordain to a destiny. Our destiny is to be like Christ.

## Confidence In The Saviour's Ability

Our Lord, who begins the work of salvation in us, will continue to **perform** that work. The word **perform** means **to**, "*bring to an end, accomplish, perfect, execute, or complete.*" There was no doubt in Paul's mind concerning his eternal security in Christ. The Bible teaches that those who are truly saved **shall never perish**. How sad that there are those who go about in fear of losing their salvation. As believers we have the word of our Saviour that we are safe and secure. **And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. (John 10:28-29)** By believing on Christ, the Christian receives a salvation that cannot be lost, forfeited or taken away. Nothing can separate the believer from the love of Christ. Once an individual has put his faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Lord saves him, then he is saved forever. There will never be a time from that day forward in which he is not saved. He cannot lose his salvation. It cannot be taken from him. He cannot sin it away. He is secure for eternity.

Those who hold to the Bible doctrine of eternal security are simply exercising faith in the words and promises of God. When Jesus said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (Hebrews 13:5)**, we believe Him. When He said, **All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (John 6:37)**, we believe Him. When Jesus says, **And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (John 10:28)**, we simply take God at His word. Paul's confidence concerning the security of the Philippian believer's was not based on their ability to hold out or do good works and perform, but on the power of God to perform in them a good work unto completion. Praise God! We do not have to hold on to Christ—He is holding onto us. **Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:24)**

## Confidence In The Saviour's Appearance

Time and time again we see Paul looking for and pointing others towards the Lord's return. Without a vision the people perish and the Christian needs to keep his heart focused on the return of Christ. The expression **the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6)** refers to the coming of Christ. This is the day of the believer's glorification to which John referred. **Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (1 John 3:2)** Having already saved us, God will complete His Divine work of grace in our lives with His return, by glorifying the saints. What a day that will be! The return of our Lord is indeed our hope. **Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:13)**

## Paul's Compassion

Paul reminds the Church of Philippi of his care for them. **I have you in my heart.** Compassion is one of the great characteristics of God's people. **A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John 13:34-35)** A Christian is known by his compassion for others—especially the brethren. We see here that Paul's compassion manifested itself in other traits in his life.

## Paul's Affection

As Paul continues to write, we can easily pick up on his love for the Philippian believers. **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. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:7-8)** The Philippian believers were dear to the heart of Paul. This is the ministry! Not buildings, not bank accounts, not denominations, but people. We live a materialistic society. Depraved man is driven by greed and covetousness—sadly the same worldly desires have infiltrated the Church. Christians are no longer pilgrims passing through this world. They have become settlers content with its pleasures and possessions. Paul had no love for this world. Paul's love for both his Saviour and his people is what drove him.

## Paul's Action

**And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment. (Philippians 1:9)** Paul's compassion led him to action on the part of the Philippians. Paul's action boiled down to two words—**pray**. Paul wasn't a **be ye warmed and filled** Christian. He invested in the lives of others. There is no doubt about it! Prayer is the most neglected privilege of the Church. Probably one of the Christian's greatest failures is the failure to pray. Oh the seriousness of praying for one another! Samuel said, **Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way. (1 Samuel 12:23)** It is sin to be a prayerless Christian. A prayerless Christian is a powerless Christian. The Bible commands us to **pray without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)** E. M. Bounds said, "*Men are to pray—to pray for the advance of God's cause. Prayer puts God in full force in the world. To a prayerful man God is present in realised force; to a prayerful Church God is present in glorious power.*"

The Bible teaches us to pray, **always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. (Ephesians 6:18)** The attitude of the Christian is to be one of continual prayer. John R. Rice used to say, "*Every failure is a prayer failure.*" God

challenges every believer to pray and to prove Him. **Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. (Jeremiah 33:3)** The great Christians of old accomplished amazing things with the power of God because they walked with God in prayer. Uncle Bud Robinson prayed daily:

"O Lord, give me a backbone as big as a saw log, And ribs like the sleepers under the church floor. Put iron shoes on me and galvanized breeches, And give me a rhinoceros hide for a skin; And hang a wagon load of determination up in the gable end of my soul. Help me to sign the contract to fight the devil as long as I have got a fist, and bite him as long as I've got a tooth, and then gum him till I die. All this I ask for Christ's sake."

That is the kind of prayer we need today. Apart from prayer, we will have no power for Christian service. Sam P. Jones said, "**No man was ever conquered on his knees in prayer to God.**" Prayer moves the hand of God. Robert Hall, a great preacher of the last century has well said, "*The prayer of faith is the only power in the universe to which the Great Jehovah yields. Prayer is the sovereign remedy.*"

Without continual prayer, the soldier of Christ will be defeated and will fail in His work. No wonder the Bible says, **Men ought always to pray, and not to faint. (Luke 18:1)** and **Pray without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)** Continual prayer is prevailing prayer. We must be persistent in our prayer life. **The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)**

## Paul's Asking

Not only do we see that Paul prayed, but look at what he prayed for. He prayed that their **love may abound. (Philippians 1:9)** Paul's prayer was that the Philippian believers would experience an increase in their love. The love that Paul prayed for was a sacrificial love that would result in service for the Saviour. Of course, many of the Philippians were sold out to Christ and were serving Him with all their hearts. Christian love is a key ingredient for serving Christ. We cannot operate without love. **Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. (1 Corinthians 13:1)**

## Paul's Conviction

Compassion leads to conviction. Love is not an excuse to ignore doctrine and to side-step God's standard of holiness. You will notice that the fruit of their love was not to be liberal or worldly. Not at all—it was just the opposite. Paul expected their love to grow and abound, **yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.**



## Clarity In Discernment

Paul's prayer was that their love would not just abound—but abound **more in knowledge and in all judgment.** ([Philippians 1:9](#)) Notice, Paul's prayer was not just that their love would abound. Paul knew that true love calls for **knowledge and judgment.**

*First*, there is the **Acquiring of Truth.** The Christian life is a call to study. Every believer ought to be a serious student of God's word. Peter exhorted us to **grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...** ([2 Peter 3:18](#)) As we read and study the Bible, we gather information about how God wants us to live. Many lose heart and fail Christ because they do not know God's word. **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.** ([Hosea 4:6](#)) Jesus said, **Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures...** ([Matthew 22:29](#)) That is why the Psalmist said, **Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.** ([Psalm 119:11](#))

*Second*, there is the **Application Of Truth.** Judgment speaks of discernment and understanding. Judgment is the discernment to apply knowledge correctly. Spiritual discernment is the need of the hour. We live in strange times The Church has become so worldly and the world has become so churchy that you can hardly tell them apart. Discernment is something that God's people cannot do without. You will remember when the men of war gathered at Hebron to support of David in establishing his rule over all of Israel. Over 350,000 of the greatest soldiers of the day gathered with David. Among them the Bible says were, **the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do...** [1 Chronicles 12:32](#) That is discernment! To have the understanding to know what to do! David said, **Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.** [Psalm 119:34](#) Discernment not only enables you to know the difference between right and wrong and good and best, but it enables you to choose the right and the best.

## Calls For A Decision

Notice that their discernment called for decision. Paul prayed for their discernment so that they could **approve things that are excellent.** ([Philippians 1:10](#)) The word **approve** comes from a word used for testing metal to determine whether or not it is genuine. Once you discern whether something is right or wrong you have to make a decision. **But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.** ([James 1:22](#)) Getting mad at the preacher and running off to some ear tickling Church does not alleviate your responsibility. **Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.** ([James 4:17](#))

## Clear In Demonstration

Not only are we to be sincere, but we are to be **sincere and without offence**. ([Philippians 1:10](#)) before the world. The word **sincere** carries the idea of being "**tested by sunlight**" and "**without wax.**" These are terms taken from the Potter's world. Pottery often developed cracks while being fired. Crooked merchants would fill the cracks with wax and paint over them. As soon as something hot was put in the piece of pottery, the wax would melt. In order to determine if a piece of pottery had been filled with wax the buyer would hold it up to the sunlight to examine it. If the piece had been cracked and filled, the sunlight would show it. Some dealers would stamp their products *sine cera* (without wax) as a pledge of quality. The Christian ought to be **sincere** when tested by the light.

Our new direction requires that we be **without offence**. ([Philippians 1:10](#)) in this dark world. Our life must demonstrate to a lost world that Christianity is real. The Greek word used here is "skandalon." It refers to the part of a trap to which the bait was attached. When the bait was placed in that trap, it drew the unsuspecting animal into its jaws of death. The thought here is, when a Christian is an offence, he becomes the bait that Satan uses to draw others into his trap. Believers must live a life that is above reproach. Paul's desire was that these believers would live so that no one would ever stumble because of their behavior.

## Constant In Duration

Their conviction was to be permanent. It was not to be a temporary conviction, but one that would last **till the day of Christ**. ([Philippians 1:10](#)) Paul always reminded folks of the return of Christ. Man is so busy today with his own agenda that he has little or no time for God's plan, and the return of Christ. However, the Christian is both warned and admonished to be ready for that day. **Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.** ([Luke 12:40](#)) This world will be taken by surprise at the rapture and it is a shame that so many Christians are so caught up with this world that they will be overtaken by the Lord's appearing as well.

The imminent return of Christ promotes purity among His people. **Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.** ([1 John 3:2-3](#)) Every man that hath this hope! What hope? The rapture! The Christian who is expecting the any moment return of Christ will be a committed Christian. We should live at all times the way we would want our Saviour to find us when He returns. Jesus Christ asked the question, **when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?** ([Luke 18:8](#))

The faithful Christian is ever watching for the return of his Saviour. There is a crown for the Christian who loves and watches for Christ's return. **I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:7-8)** Man is so busy today with his own agenda that he has little or no time for God's plan for the return of Christ. However, the Christian is both warned and admonished to be ready for that day. For those who are faithful there will be a great reward for them.

# Rejoice in your Situation

Philippians 1:12-30 (KJV)

<sup>12</sup> *But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;*

<sup>13</sup> *So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;*

<sup>14</sup> *And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*

<sup>15</sup> *Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:*

<sup>16</sup> *The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:*

<sup>17</sup> *But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.*

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

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

<sup>20</sup> *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.*

<sup>21</sup> *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

<sup>22</sup> *But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.*

<sup>23</sup> *For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:*

<sup>24</sup> *Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*

<sup>25</sup> *And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;*

<sup>26</sup> *That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.*

<sup>27</sup> *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;*

<sup>28</sup> *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.*

<sup>29</sup> *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

<sup>30</sup> *Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.*

The old saying, "Your trials will either make you better or they will make you bitter," is certainly a true statement. Paul is a good example of a man who became a BETTER servant through his trials.

## Spread Of The Scriptures

Though in a Roman prison, Paul's situation did not bring him to despair and defeat. Because he kept his eyes on Christ and His work, Paul was able to rejoice in his situation.

## Through The Furtherance Of The Gospel

Here we see the ultimate end of Paul's situation. **But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;. (Philippians 1:12-13)** So often it is hard to see any good in tough situation. However, one thing is for certain, God is certainly able to use our circumstances for our good and His glory. The word of God was spread as a result of Paul's imprisonment. Although Paul's freedom to preach the Gospel in the cities had been hindered by his imprisonment, he now had a greater opportunity to preach the Gospel to the palace guards in Rome. Paul rejoiced in the fact that his imprisonment was advancing, not hindering, the gospel.

The word **furtherance** is an interesting word. It carries the idea of "*pioneering*." It was a word used of cutting a path through a brush thicket so others could follow. Paul's imprisonment was an opportunity to advance the kingdom of God because it was clearing the way for the gospel to infiltrate the ranks of the Roman military, **so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places. (Philippians 1:13), and even the royal palace, All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household. (Philippians 4:22)** These were two areas that would have been closed to the Gospel under normal circumstances. Once Paul cleared the way, it would be easier for others to follow. Paul's incarceration gave him the opportunity to preach to the soldiers and the servants of the palace as they went about their daily duties. Paul, through his trial, was able to reach people with the Gospel who otherwise would never have heard of the saving grace of God.

## Through The Fruit Of The Brethren

**And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. (Philippians 1:14)** Paul rejoiced not only because of the opportunity to preach to the royal guard, but also because of the effect that his imprisonment had on the brethren. The way Paul responded to his trials greatly stirred and strengthened the other believers at Philippi. Because of Roman persecution, many of the Christians had succumbed to fear and were not the witnesses that they should have been. **The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe. (Proverbs 29:25)** However, because of Paul's courage and consistency they were encouraged and exhorted to speak out for Christ.

The word **bold** carries the idea of being "**courageous.**" Because of Paul's example the brethren had become much more courageous in the work of God. This is the kind of courage that comes from God. God told Joshua, **Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. (Joshua 1:9)**

God has placed upon every blood-bought child of God the responsibility to witness and win souls. Nothing will hinder the outreach effort more than fear in the heart of God's people. We can learn from Peter and John concerning this matter of standing for Christ.

And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was showed. And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word. ([Acts 4:18-29](#))

God had performed a miracle by healing a lame man in Acts chapter three. This, of course, angered the religious crowd. Instead of accepting what God had done, the Sanhedrin, who were more concerned with protecting their little empire, attempted to intimidate John and Peter by threatening to do them harm. They commanded the Apostles **not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. (Acts 4:18)** However, the Apostles made it clear that they would obey God instead (19-20) John and Peter's trust was still in God. They simply turned the matter over to Him asking that He would grant them boldness and courage to preach the word (29) We can still have such courage today, **For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)**

## Through The Foolishness Of The Enemy

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. ([Philippians 1:15-18](#)) God often uses the foolishness of man to His glory as He did here in this situation. What a blessing! These foolish persecutors of Paul were actually getting the gospel out. The furtherance of the gospel was the very heartbeat of the Apostle Paul. Paul rejoiced that Christ was being preached, even though. With some it was for the wrong motive.

## Supply Of The Spirit

Paul trusted God for his supply. David said, **I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.** ([Psalm 37:25](#)) God takes care of His children. In that Paul rested.

## The Deliverance

**For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.** ([Philippians 1:9](#)) It is important to understand that the salvation Paul is speaking of here does not refer to Paul's spiritual condition, but rather to his physical condition. Paul was already saved. What Paul was referring to here was not deliverance from his sin, but deliverance from prison. Paul based his assurance of deliverance on two things.

*First*, Paul relied upon the *Prayer Of The Saints*. He said, **For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer.** (9a) Here we see how Paul depended on the prayer of God's people. Paul knew that God's people would be praying and he knew that his God would answer prayer. Who is depending on your prayer? Your spouse? Your children? Your parents? Your neighbors? Your pastor? Your missionaries? Who needs your prayer? Are they being prayed for? If only Christians realized the necessity of faithful prayer we could once again see a mighty revival.

*Second*, Paul relied on the *Power Of The Spirit*. Paul not only banked on prayer, but also **the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.** (9b) Such a power and supply of the Spirit is the result of prayer. Without out the Spirit there will be little or nothing accomplished for Christ. There is too much being done today by man's power, but what we need is old-time Holy Spirit power. **Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.** ([Zechariah 4:6](#))

## The Dedication

Here Paul's heart is clearly seen in his dedication and desire to bring glory to Christ. **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.**

**(Philippians 1:20)** The word translated **expectation** has the idea of "*watching with outstretched hands, to wait for in suspense, anxious anticipation, and intense desire.*" It pictures one with his head upright with his attention turned from all other objects about him as he unwaveringly fixes his eyes on one particular object. **Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)** The one upon whom Paul's eyes were fixed was Jesus Christ!

Paul's expectation here is the exaltation of Jesus Christ! Paul's desire was, **that in nothing I shall be ashamed.** Paul wasn't going to quit just because things got tough. Notice the phrase, **but that with all boldness, as always.** Paul would press on, he would not give up in shame as others. **And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. (1 John 2:28)** Paul was ready for whatever the Lord had for him. It made no difference to him, **whether it be by life, or by death** as long as that life or death magnified and exalted Jesus Christ before others. Think about the commitment of Paul to his Saviour. Even under such extreme circumstances, no matter what happened to him, his great desire was to exalt Jesus Christ! Paul was dedicated to Christ.

## The Desire

Paul realized that as a Christian he was to be what and where Christ wanted him to be. **For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (Philippians 1:21)** Paul's desire was first and foremost to please the Saviour and see His work accomplished. **But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour. (Philippians 1:22)** If Paul continued to live, he would preach the gospel to others resulting in spiritual victory in their lives.

Paul so lived for Christ that he didn't even have a choice. Notice his words, **yet what I shall choose I wot not. (Philippians 1:22)** Paul was in a dilemma because he clearly saw the advantages of both life and death for the Christian. Living would be an opportunity to continue his ministry, while death meant being with his Saviour. What a dilemma! Paul continues, **I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. (Philippians 1:23)** The word **strait** means "narrow and confining or to



**compress.**"It is an expression that carries the idea of being "hard-pressed." It is like the old saying of being between a rock and a hard place. Paul was in such a place and there was no way out. He was hemmed in on both sides and prevented from moving either way because of the pressing in upon him from the two ends. There was a desire to depart; there was a duty to abide. Paul was being pulled in both directions.

Paul had a **desire to depart**. This word **depart** means "to loose up." This word pictures the loosing of the tent stakes. It was a word used in Bible days of the pilgrims pulling up the stakes of their tents, breaking up camp and moving on. Christians are strangers and pilgrims in this world ([1 Peter 2:11](#)) Our real citizenship is in Heaven ([Philippians 3:20](#)) **For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ([2 Corinthians 5:1](#))** Praise God, one of these days we will lose the stakes and head off to glory. Paul saw death not as the end of life, but as a time of moving from one home to another. **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. ([1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#))**

Paul concludes that death is **far better**. The Bible speaks of death as: (1) sleep, [John 11:11](#) and [1 Corinthians 15:18](#); (2) blessed, [Revelation 14:13](#); (3) rest, [Job 3:17](#) and [2 Thessalonians 1:7](#); (4) comfort, [Luke 16:25](#); (5) fearless, [1 Corinthians 15:55](#); (6) present with God, [Philippians 1:23](#). Doesn't that sound **far better** to you too?

## The Duty

We do not hear too much about duty today, but Paul realized his responsibility and duty—not only to God, but to his fellow man. **Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again. ([Philippians 1:24-26](#))** Not many Pastors love their people as Paul did! Paul knew that his remaining on earth would benefit the Philippians. He was willing to trade Heaven for the sake of those believers at Philippi. Paul was a Biblical example of selflessness. Think about it! Paul was willing to postpone a trip to Heaven in order to stay and minister to his people. Paul was not thinking of himself, but of others.

## Stand Of The Saints

God saves us, equips us, and then leaves us here on earth to be witnesses for Him. Too many are at ease in this world instead of being involved in the work of

Christ. We are left here to stand—not sleep. We will notice several things about our stand.

## The Conduct

**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. (Philippians 1:27)** The word **conversation** is a political term that means *to behave as a citizen*. Paul identifies the believer as a citizen of Heaven. **For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 3:20)** We are to live in this world as citizens of another world; Heaven. The Christian's conduct is to testify of his heavenly citizenship.

The word **becometh. (27b)** is a very graphic word meaning a **balance** or *having the weight of another thing*. The same was used when Paul commanded the Ephesian believers to **walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. (Ephesians 4:1)** The word **worthy** in Ephesians is the same word as **becometh** here in Philippians. It comes from the business system of the ancient world where a system of balances was used to determine the value of an item. The idea is to make sure your walk matches your talk. The bottom line is that the Christian's walk must match his talk. He whose lips profess Christianity is to have a life that professes the same. We are supposed to be different from the world. **Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. (1 John 2:15-17)**

## The Consistency

Paul didn't believe in being a part-time Christian. Paul expected to see consistency in the Christian's life, ... **that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast... (27)** We need Christians today who would profess Christ in their life and circumstances on Monday thru Saturday the same way that they do in Church on Sunday.

## The Cooperation

Paul stressed the importance of unity when he exhorted the Philippians to **stand fast in one spirit. (27d)** The words **one spirit**, convey the idea of "*one soul*." What the Church needs today is unity—people who are of one spirit. The early Christians in the book of Acts were of one accord. No wonder there was such a mighty moving of God.

Certainly there can be no unity between those who hold to the Word of God, and modernistic liberals who deny the precious truths of God's Word. Alliances with them will only weaken the believer. Our instructions concerning that crowd are clear.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. ([2 Corinthians 6:14-17](#))

We are commanded to **have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.** ([Ephesians 5:11](#)) However, while there will never be a Biblical unity between Bible believers and liberals there can and should be a precious unity among those of **like precious faith.** ([2 Peter 1:1](#)) This will be a unity like that in the early Church. **And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.** ([Acts 4:32](#)) Without such cooperation and unity among believers the work of God suffers. **Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!** ([Psalm 133:1](#))

Paul goes on to drive the ball home by exhorting believers that they are to be **striving together for the faith of the gospel.** (27e) The word striving carries the idea of contending in an athletic event. It speaks of teamwork whereby a group of athletes pull together and give it their all to defeat a common foe and win the game. Paul compares the church to a team of athletes, and admonishes them that it is teamwork that wins the victory.

## The Courage

The life and ministry of the Christian is one of fearless perseverance. **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.** ([Philippians 1:28](#)) The word **terrified** is a term that is used of the terror and frenzy of a horse that is frightened in battle. Paul told the Philippians to stand fearless in the face of their enemies. Their courage to stand would be proof of their salvation and lead to the failure of their enemies, **which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.**

## The Cause

**For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. (Philippians 1:29)** What a lesson this verse gives us! The word given comes from the same root as the English word grace. Suffering is many times a gift from God, whereby we learn to live by grace. Even in the worst of situations, God has promised us that His grace is sufficient to meet the need. Paul is teaching us a lesson that he had learned well himself.

For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ([2 Corinthians 12:6-9](#))

Suffering is a tool that God uses to accomplish His purpose in His children. The Bible teaches that there is always sufficient grace to endure and come out on top, ... **when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. (Job 23:10)**

## The Conflict

Paul had been maliciously persecuted for preaching the Gospel at Philippi, and he warned his followers that they would possibly suffer the same. **Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me. (Philippians 1:30)** The word **conflict**. (agonia) is the word from which **agony** is derived and it carries the idea of **struggling and wrestling**. It speaks of struggling to the point of exhaustion. It is the same word used of our Lord's agony and suffering in the garden of Gethsemane. **And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Luke 22:44)** Paul, like his Saviour would persevere in the will of God till his dying day. Paul well knew of the agony and conflict involved in standing for the truth. We learn from [Acts 16:19-40](#), that he had been stripped, scourged, contained in stocks and chains, and cast into prison. Paul's life was an example of service in spite of conflict. Dear Lord, help us to follow such an example.

# Rejoice in your Singleness

Philippians 2:1-4 (KJV)

<sup>1</sup> *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,*

<sup>2</sup> *Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

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

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

The successful and surviving Church must dwell together as a single body. A Church where division exists will be a powerless and failing Church. Paul begins to deal here with the need for such unity. Epaphroditus had brought word that there was trouble between certain members of the Church. Paul would later exhort Euodias and Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. This passage describes the condition of many Churches today. Paul encourages them to work together with a unity that would enable them to move ahead with singleness of heart rather than doing their own thing. Believers should unite in the local church with such unity. In Nehemiah's day the Bible says they **gathered themselves together as one man.** ([Nehemiah 8:1](#))

## There Is Hope

Paul was a straight shooter. He dealt with sin, but he always offered hope.

## Our Confidence

**If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies.** ([Philippians 2:1](#)) The word **if** used in verse one does not imply that there may be no consolation in Christ. It is not a statement of doubt, but of surety. Paul is not doubting whether we have any consolation in Christ. The **if** is simply a rhetorical way of forcefully saying **since** you have consolation in Christ, since you have comfort of love, since you have fellowship of the Spirit, etc.

The word **therefore** in verse one refers back to what Paul said in chapter [1:27-30](#). Paul appeals to them out of his suffering and standing for the advancement of the gospel. Since he is doing this, they ought to stand firm and remain united in their purpose to do the work of Christ.

## Our Comfort

**If there be therefore any consolation in Christ.** The word translated **consolation** comes from "paraklesis" and carries the idea of "*one called alongside of.*" It is the word used to describe the Holy Spirit as the **Comforter** in ([John 14:16, 26](#); [15:26](#); [16:7](#)) Noah Webster defines **consolation** as:

Comfort; alleviation of misery, or distress of mind; refreshment of mind or spirits; a comparative degree of happiness in distress or misfortune, springing from any circumstance that abates the evil, or supports and strengthens the mind, as hope, joy, courage and the like.

The consolation needed here is not that for mourning and misfortune. The comfort here is the kind needed for warriors and workers. This is comfort in the sense of encouragement needed when battling in difficult circumstances. The Christian who lives for God operates in the midst of a battle zone. The faithful Christian's life is a campaign against the forces of Hell. It is because of the kind of comfort which Paul speaks of here that the believer is able to stand up and fight for Christ, and find comfort in Christ. This consolation has been the strength of hundreds of thousands down through the ages like Jacob, Joseph, Ruth, Naomi, David, Job, Isaiah, Paul, the Martyrs and countless others. Praise the Lord—we serve a God of comfort.

## Our Constraint

Paul says **if any comfort of love.** Paul said earlier that **the love of Christ constraineth us.** ([2 Corinthians 5:14](#)) To constrain means "*to urge with irresistible or powerful force.*" The love spoken of here is Christ's love for His own. This divine love is the kind of love that sacrifices for the person who is loved. Jesus loved a lost world with a sacrificing love. **Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.** ([John 15:13](#)) As a result of His love and our salvation, **the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.** ([Romans 5:5](#)) Through Paul, Christ is exhorting the Philippians to unity. He did so through the appeal of His love for them.

## Our Companion

Paul reminds the Philippians of **their fellowship of the Spirit.** The word **fellowship** comes from "koinonia" and speaks of that which we share in common. Paul speaks especially of the **fellowship of the Spirit.** This is one of many things that believers have in common. Every child of God is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. **But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.** ([Romans 8:9](#))

## Our Compassion

Paul brought the matter down to where we live when he said, **if any bowels and mercies**. The Greeks regarded the bowels as the seat of emotions. Webster defines **bowels** in the sense that is used here as, "*The seat of pity or kindness; hence, tenderness, and compassion.*" Having already reminded the Philippians of the Saviour's love for them, Paul now reminds them of their love for one another. This is the result of Jesus Christ's work in us. A person who professes to know Christ and yet has no love for God's people certainly does not love God. **If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. (1 John 4:20-21)**

Christ loved us and gave Himself for us. **But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)** Salvation begins with a work of love, **the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:5)** The fact that He loves me should cause me to love others. It is our love for each other that testifies to a lost world that Christianity is real. **By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John 13:35)**

## There is Harmony

In this one verse Paul makes a three-fold appeal for unity. **Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. (Philippians 2:2)** Paul continues to urge the Philippian believers toward unity. The word **likeminded** carries the idea of "*thinking the same thing.*" Paul was not trying to produce a Church full of carbon copy Christians who held to the exact same opinion on every issue. Such a command would be ridiculous and result in nothing more than forming a man-made cult. This speaks of a like-mindedness that allows for differences in personality and minor doctrines without destroying the work of Christ.

Even in the local body there are differences, as we do not always see things the same way. Many times there are misunderstandings among us over one thing or another. A preacher told the story about a woman that answered the knock at her door and found a needy man standing there. He asked if he could earn money by doing odd jobs, so she asked, "Can you paint?" "Yes, I'm a good painter," he said. "Well, here's a gallon of green paint and a brush. Behind the house you'll see a porch that needs repainting. Be very careful. When you're done, I'll look it over and pay you what it's worth." It wasn't more than an hour before he knocked again. All finished, he reported with a smile. "Did you do a good job?" she asked. "Yes, but lady, there's one thing I'd like to point out to you. That's not a Porsche back there. That's a Mercedes."

Paul had spoken of this unity earlier. **Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God].** ([Romans 15:5-7](#)) Keep in mind that this is not a command for unity at the expense of truth. There is no Biblical unity apart from truth. Rather, this is the unity of mind that focuses on and seeks to do the work of Christ rather than MAJORING on MINORS. Our Lord was dealing with the majoring on minors crowd when He said, **Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.** ([Matthew 23:24](#))

The expression **having the same love** speaks of continuous and unbroken love. This is not the conditional love that the world offers. This is the unselfish, sacrificing love of God. Every true believer has this kind of biblical love. **Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.** ([1 John 4:7-8](#))

The phrase **one accord** means to be "**one-souled** or *to have a togetherness of soul.*" Paul stresses a unity of spirit between Christians. Paul urged the Philippian believers to be so closely united together in love and fellowship that the church of Philippi would move ahead as one body, having their souls joined together by one spirit.

Paul continues his instruction by exhorting them to be of **one mind**. The phrase **one mind** that Paul uses here is practically identical to the word **likeminded** used earlier in this verse. The term **one mind** means "**to think the same way.**" Paul's repetition places the utmost of urgency and importance on the unity that is expected by Christ. Paul was not simply talking about uniformity here, but unity. There is a difference. Uniformity is what we do on the outside while true spiritual unity comes from within the heart. We are to be one in heart and purpose.

## **There is Humility**

Paul's appeal for unity brings him to deal with pride and humility. **Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.** ([Philippians 2:3](#)) Paul makes it plain that **strife or vainglory** has no place in the Christian life.

The word **strife** speaks of the selfish ambition that is born out of a heart of pride. **Let nothing be done through strife** is a command to act out of the best interests of others rather than our own selfish ambitions.

The word **vainglory** means empty pride or vain opinion about self. Daniel Webster defines **vainglory** as:



**Exclusive vanity excited by one's own performances; empty pride; undue elation of mind.**

Albert Barnes says:

The idea seems to be that of mere self-esteem; a mere desire to honor ourselves, to attract attention, to win praise, to make ourselves uppermost, or foremost, or the main object. The command here solemnly forbids our doing anything with such an aim—no matter whether it be in intellectual attainments, in physical strength, in skill in music, in eloquence or song, in dress, furniture, or religion.

Diotrephes is an example of a man consumed by vainglory. **Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. (3 John 1:9)** Diotrephes was motivated by pride. He was like some of these big shots that we see around today. Instead of giving the preeminence to Jesus Christ ([Colossians 1:18](#)), he claimed it for himself. Diotrephes was more concerned with his own promotion than that of Christ. What a contrast to John the Baptist who said, **He must increase, but I must decrease. (John 3:30)**

The Bible promises, **A man's pride shall bring him low... (Proverbs 29:23)** These sins come as a result of man thinking more highly of himself than he ought to. Strife and pride will always leads to divisions among God's people. Solomon said, **Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18)** This is the fruit of the prideful man who wants to win followers to himself rather than to build up the body of Christ. A. W. Tozer said:

True humility is a healthy thing. The humble man accepts the truth about himself. He believes that in his fallen nature dwells no good thing. He acknowledges that apart from God he is nothing, has nothing, knows nothing and can do nothing. But this knowledge does not discourage him, for he knows also that in Christ he is somebody. He knows that he is dearer to God than the apple of His eye and that he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him; that is, he can do all that lies within the will of God for him to do.

We must remember that pride was born in the heart of Satan. In [Isaiah 14:12-18](#) we read of Satan's seven "I wills". Many stand in awe at the pride and audacity of Satan's attempt to dethrone God and rule in His place. Yet, there is no difference between Satan and the Christian who refuses to surrender, and allow God His sovereign right to rule his life. Christians have their "I wills" just the same as Satan does. Pride was the sin that destroyed God's creation and it remains the sin that destroys men's lives. Pride is the sin that turned Lucifer into the Devil.

Matthew Henry has well said, **Neither inward nor outward peace can be enjoyed, without lowliness of mind.** The exclusion of pride is the first step toward peace and harmony. Paul's remedy for selfishness and division is simple.

He instructs, **but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.** Paul's command to the Ephesian saints is to serve, **With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** ([Ephesians 4:2-3](#))

## **There Is Hospitality**

**Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.** ([Philippians 2:4](#)) James tells us that hospitality and helping others are evidences of saving faith. **What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.** ([James 2:14-17](#)) You will always find someone who could use some help. No matter how bad off you are there is always someone else who is worse off. The best way in the world to end a pity party is to help someone else. A spirit of selflessness will promote unity. The message is simple—faith in Christ will demonstrate itself in love for others. **But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?.** ([1 John 3:17](#))

# Rejoice in your Saviour

Philippians 2:5-11 (KJV)

<sup>5</sup> *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

<sup>6</sup> *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*

<sup>7</sup> *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

<sup>8</sup> *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

<sup>9</sup> *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:*

<sup>10</sup> *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

<sup>11</sup> *And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Here we will learn about the sacrifice and suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ for our sin. The Christian ought to be able to rejoice in his Saviour! What a price He paid that we might be saved. Jesus is the Christian's example of sacrifice and service. Here are seven powerful verses.

## The Imitation

Christians must learn to imitate Christ in their actions and attitudes. He is our supreme example and His attitude of mind is to govern the Christian life. **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.** ([Philippians 2:5](#)) This is a command, **Let this mind be in you.** We are commanded to let the mind and attitude of Christ govern our lives. Man does not naturally think this way. Even after being saved the new man must reject his own desires and pride and learn to think right. The Bible refers to this process as the renewing of our mind. **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.** ([Romans 12:1-2](#)) Notice several things about this passage.

## The Plea

**I beseech you therefore.** The **therefore** refers to the believer reckoning himself dead to sin and alive unto God as established in the previous chapters. Paul begged these believers to die to self, forsake their sin, and follow Christ.

## The Possibility

Note that Paul makes his appeal based upon the **mercies of God**. We were lost and hell-bound sinners, but God's mercy brought us to the place of forgiveness and salvation. It was His immeasurable mercy that called us into His family, forgave us of our sins, and made us new creatures in Christ Jesus. Paul argues that if God's mercy was sufficient to do all of that, certainly His mercy is sufficient for us to give ourselves to Him in consecrated service.

## The Presentation

Paul's exhortation **that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice** is a plea for every Christian to give himself wholly to God. This is to be a willing, voluntary, and submissive act. It is important to realize that the Christian belongs to Christ anyway. **What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)** Presenting ourselves to the Lord for service is the least that we can do. The term **present your bodies a living sacrifice** contrasts the New Testament Christian to the Old Testament sacrifice. The picture that Paul had in mind here was that of an altar and a sacrifice. He is exhorting Christians to offer their bodies to God, as a sacrifice is offered on an altar—to present their bodies to the Lord as the Old Testament worshiper offered his offering. When a sacrifice was put on the altar it was once and for all God's—it was consumed. The Christian is to be a living sacrifice, in comparison to the sacrifice of a dead beast under the law. Just as a sacrifice on an altar is devoted to a sacred use, the Christian is to devote himself once and for all to God for His purpose

## The Purity

In the word **holy** we see God's desire for His children. Being holy speaks of being set apart and separated. We are not only to separate from the world, but we must also separate unto God. Our lives are to be totally dedicated to God and separated totally from the sin of this world. **But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. (1 Peter 1:15-16)**

## The Pleasing

All that Paul asks here is **acceptable unto God**. The passion of God's heart is that we walk with him. The word **acceptable** carries the idea of "**well-pleasing.**" We ought to set it as a priority of our life to be well-pleasing to God. The idea presented here is that of being separated from the world and separated unto God. Such a consecrated life pleases God. **Thou therefore endure hardness,**

as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. ([2 Timothy 2:3-4](#)) If we are going to be well-pleasing unto God, we must separate ourselves from this world and its wickedness and draw nigh unto Him.

## The Priority

All of this, Paul says to the Christian, **is your reasonable service**. This is our priority; it is what we ought to do. The only **reasonable** thing the Christian can do is to give himself wholly to his Creator and Saviour. Adam Clarke said:

"Nothing can be more consistent with reason than that the work of God should glorify its Author. We are not our own, we are the property of the Lord, by the right of creation and redemption; and it would be as unreasonable as it would be wicked not to live to his glory, in strict obedience to his will."

My friend you mark it down! God will never ask you to do something that is unreasonable. **For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.** ([1 John 5:3](#)) God's commands only become unreasonable when His children are selfish and fail to surrender to His will.

## The Parting

We as Christians have nothing in common with this wicked worldly system. Our command is to come out and be separate. Separation is an important part of the Christian life. **And be not conformed to this world.** Paul warned the Ephesians, **For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.** ([Ephesians 5:8-11](#)) The Christian is no longer a creature of darkness, but of light. The admonition here is that believers align their walk to match their position in Christ. We can't play in the world and walk with Christ at the same time. **If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.** ([1 John 1:6-7](#))

A Christian will prove to be a true follower of Christ when he is no longer conformed to the world. **Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.** ([James 4:4](#)) God uses strong symbolic language to describe those who claim with their lips to love Him, but with their life serve the world. The terms **adulterers and adulteresses** are used

to describe unfaithful people. My friend, you will do nothing for God until you forsake this world and sell out to the Saviour.

## The Process

Paul goes on and describes this process as a transformation. He says, **be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.** The Christian's mind is renewed and his life transformed as he takes in the Word of God and surrenders to the Holy Spirit's leadership in his life. This is the process whereby the Christian puts off the old and puts on the new. **If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.** ([Ephesians 4:21-24](#)) Paul compares the spiritual growth of a Christian to stripping off the dirty clothes of a sinful past and putting on the white robes of Christ's righteousness.

## The Purpose

The word **prove** carries the idea of **discernment**. The unsaved man has no discernment. **But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.** ([1 Corinthians 2:14](#)) The natural man is void of spiritual discernment, but it is a different matter with the Christian. We now have the Holy Spirit to enlighten us. The purpose of having a transformed mind is so that we can discern and do the will of God. The renewing of the Christian's mind enables him to **prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.** The world says I will do what suits me. The Christian learns to say, I will do what pleases my Saviour. Such was the testimony of the Thessalonians, **For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.** ([1 Thessalonians 1:9](#))

No wonder Paul commanded **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.** ([Philippians 2:5](#)) Right thinking produces right actions. Our actions are the fruit of our thoughts. **For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.** ([Proverbs 23:7](#)) Are you living your Christian life with the attitude and thinking, **which was also in Christ Jesus?**

## The Repudiation

**Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.** ([Philippians 2:6](#)) Notice the wording here. It speaks of Christ **being in the form of God.** The word **being** here means "be ready, be at hand or to exist." He did

not come into existence as a babe in Bethlehem's manger—He is Eternal God. The eternal existence of Christ is taught throughout the Word of God. John said, **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3)** The Word, Jesus Christ, which later became flesh, was the Creator of all things. Paul, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was writing about Christ when he said, **Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Colossians 1:15-17)** Jesus is said to be the image of God and the Creator of the world. It is clearly stated that **He is before all things**. Not only is Jesus Christ the Saviour sent from God to save a lost people from their sins, but He is God Himself.

Jesus has always existed as God—He is God! Jesus Christ existed as the Great **I AM** before He came into this world as a babe in Bethlehem. He said to the Pharisees, **...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. (John 8:58)** Certainly the Pharisees understood that He was making a claim to Deity, for they tried to stone Him. **Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. (John 8:59)** When Jesus Christ came to earth, He was God clothed in human flesh.

Jesus Christ renounced what was properly His. It was not robbery for Him to be equal with God. **Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. (Philippians 2:6)** Jesus Christ was a perfect example of someone who was faithful to demonstrate the attitude of a servant. He is the supreme example of self denial and selflessness. He laid aside the benefits of glory, stepped down from the throne of Heaven, and submitted Himself to a body of flesh and the death of the cross. What was price that was paid by the Son of God for man's salvation? He humbled Himself and took the role of servant so that we could be elevated from sinner to saint.

## The Incarnation

**But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2:7)** This is where Almighty God clothed Himself in human flesh. Yes, He became man, but not man only—He was the God-man. Christ did not change His nature, but His **form**. The words **made himself of no reputation** carry the idea of "emptying." But of what did He empty Himself? Did He empty Himself of His deity, as many suppose? Absolutely not! While He was here upon this earth, He was still God manifest in the flesh. Did He empty Himself of His power and authority? One only needs to read the gospel records of His mighty miracles to see that He maintained the

power of God when He came to earth. Jesus Christ never laid aside His Deity. He was God in eternity past, He was God when He walked among men, He is God seated in Heaven now at the right hand of God the Father, and He will be God throughout all eternity. Deity cannot cease to be Deity. He took upon Himself a body of flesh, but His deity was still present. Oliver B. Greene wrote:

The Eternal Word did not empty Himself of either His divine nature or His divine attributes. He only took a body of flesh and made God visible through the manifestation of flesh. Thus He brought God down to man in a body. Jesus was man just as we are men insofar as His flesh was concerned; but He exercised all of His divine attributes when the occasion called for it, and did what no ordinary man could have done... Jesus lived as truly man. He did not pretend, He was not masquerading. He did not imitate man—He WAS man; yet He was GOD.

It is important for us to understand that the Deity of Jesus Christ was not destabilized, diminished, or damaged one iota while He was on earth. Deity laid aside is no longer Deity. Jesus Christ was as much God when He walked among men as He is today—seated at the right hand of God the Father in glory. Then what did He empty Himself of? The whole context deals with Christ being our example in sacrifice and putting others first. **Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. (Philippians 2:3-4)** It was self that He emptied Himself of. Christ is Lord of all, but yet, He humbled Himself by taking the role of servant. As Christians, we are to follow our Saviour's example and empty ourselves of the self-life. What we want, that which we think we deserve, must take second place to the service of God. So many today are set on magnifying and building themselves up, but our Saviour demonstrated with His own life that the way to exaltation is through humble service.

## The Humiliation

**And, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:8)** This was no ordinary death; this was the death **of the cross**. Christ died by the cruelest and most painful form of capital punishment known to man—crucifixion. We must never forget that it was God who died on that cross—not some wicked criminal who deserved it.

Here we see the depths of Christ's humiliation. The Romans reserved the agonizing death of crucifixion for criminals. No Roman citizen could be put to death by crucifixion; it was limited to those who were the worst of criminals or slaves. It was a death prescribed for a cursed man. **Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. (Galatians 3:13)** Of course, Christ was not cursed because of sin, but He became that curse for a sinful



world. The Jews considered death on a cross as a curse from God. **And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. ([Deuteronomy 21:22-23](#))**

James Stalker described the awful death of the cross in his book, "*The Trial and Death of Jesus Christ.*" He wrote:

The most revolting feature about death by crucifixion was that the torture was deliberately prolonged. The victim usually lingered a whole day, sometimes two or three days, still retaining consciousness; while the burning wounds in the hands and feet, the uneasiness of the unnatural position, the oppression of overcharged veins and above all the intolerable thirst constantly increasing.

Really, we cannot even begin to comprehend the humiliation and physical pain that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered in going to the cross in our place. The Jews **spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands. ([Matthew 26:67](#))**

The soldiers mocked and ridiculed Him, **They stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him upon the head. ([Matthew 27:28-30](#))** Jesus suffered as intensely as any human possibly could. The cruel Roman soldiers mocked Him, spit on Him, beat Him, and crowned him with a crown of thorns. No human tongue can describe what took place in those last hours as our Lord suffered at the hands of sinful man.

Not only did Jesus suffer at the hands of sinful man, He also suffered at the hands of a Sovereign God. **It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin... ([Isaiah 53:10](#))** The Bible makes it clear that Jesus Christ was a Lamb, **Smitten of God. ([Isaiah 53:4](#))** It was God the Father who offered His only begotten as a sacrifice, and put Him to death on Calvary's cruel cross for our sins ([John 3:16](#), [Romans 5:8](#))

## **The Exaltation**

**Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ([Philippians 2:9-11](#))** Jesus is our supreme example and He demonstrated the important truth of exaltation through humility. If we humble ourselves now to serve others, we will be exalted in due time; but if we exalt ourselves now, we will be humbled eventually! **And whosoever shall exalt**

**himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.** ([Matthew 23:12](#)) Remember, this whole idea of service and humility starts with the command to, **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.** ([Philippians 2:5](#)) This is where it all must begin. George B. Duncan in his book on Philippians, *The Life of Continual Rejoicing*, has wonderfully commented on what the mind of Christ means. Consider carefully his timely words:

What is the mind of Christ? What is the way of Christ that you and I can follow if we are going to discover the secret of maintaining unity? He was the One who was truly God and yet truly man. He followed the path of utter selflessness, holding on to nothing as His right but instead accepting the uttermost depths of degradation in the purpose of God and in His love for the world. Being in the form of God, He became obedient in an ever descending scale of humiliation, in the will of God and in His love for humanity, until He became obedient unto death. And this death was not even an ordinary death; it was the death of the cross.

The thought which comes to me with a note of tremendous challenge is that which Paul is getting at here, that the mind which was in Christ was a mind which set no limit as to the amount of injury it was prepared to receive. Christ set no limit to His sufferings. Christ never said to the Father, 'I will go so far and no further. He couldn't have gone further than He went; He couldn't have suffered more than He did; He couldn't have been more insulted and degraded than He was. He, being in the form of God, had the right to all the adoration and all the worship and all the praise and all the obedience of the whole human race; yet He took the sum total of their disobedience and their hatred—and He took it all.

Let that mind be in you. When your injuries and insults and wrongs exceed the injuries and insults and wrongs of your Master, then maybe you have the right to call a halt, but not until then. What causes a break in fellowship between Christians? An unforgiving spirit. The setting of a limit as to how much injury I am prepared to take from somebody, how much criticism I am prepared to bear, how much comment and how much gossip and how much talk I am going to allow to go on. The moment I set a limit, and the moment I nurture an unforgiving spirit, at that very moment—the song dies.

My friend, as Christians we are supposed to be dead to ourselves. Paul said, **I die daily.** ([1 Corinthians 15:31](#)) We are dead with Christ. Jesus Christ, our example, died for us and we are dead in Him. The need and desire for exaltation comes from a prideful heart. Certainly if the Lord of Glory, who deserves to be exalted, could step down to earth and die for me, I can die to self and live for Him.

# Rejoice in your Stand

Philippians 2:12-16 (KJV)

<sup>12</sup> *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.*

<sup>13</sup> *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

<sup>14</sup> *Do all things without murmurings and disputings:*

<sup>15</sup> *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;*

<sup>16</sup> *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.*

Our stand says a lot about our conviction. The reason we see so many wishy-washy Christians today is that they have no conviction. Paul called for his followers to stand strong, be consistent, and live holy lives. The Bible makes it clear that consistency in holiness and service is not a option, but an expectation.

## The Connection

The **wherefore**. ([Philippians 2:12](#)) connects what Paul is about to say to what he has just said. We have just learned in the previous verses of Christ's great work in leaving the glories of heaven and dying on Calvary's cross for lost man with the emphasis being on our Lord's humiliation, service, and sacrifice. The point of his **wherefore** is this: now that you've seen the example, put it into practice and live it. Learning lays upon the student of God's Word a great responsibility. Paul is commanding that the same **mind of Christ** be lived out in the Christian's life. This is the responsibility of every believer—to follow his Saviour in humble and obedient service.

## The Conduct

Paul being concerned with the Phillipians' conduct writes, **..my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence.** ([Philippians 2:12](#)) They had always obeyed when Paul was with them, but now that he has left he gets word that there are problems and divisions among them. Paul instructs them to obey the same in his absence as in his presence. What a change there would be if Christians obeyed and served as if Christ was still living on earth. We ought to!

It is easy to obey when you're being watched, but what about when you're alone? It seems easier to perform in the presence of an audience than in private. There are a lot of Church folks who live like an Angel in the presence of the Pastor, but

live like the devil when they get around the corner. The measure of a man's character is what he would do if he knew he could get away with it.

## The Command

Paul adds, ... **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

**(Philippians 2:12)** Many because of their failure to study and rightly divide the Word of Truth have stumbled at this verse. Instead of destroying the context and making it say "work for your salvation," we will simply take it as it is written. You will notice it does not say, "work for your own salvation," but rather, "work **out** your own salvation."

The truth that salvation is totally free apart from works is clearly taught in Scripture. **For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)** However, the same Bible teaches a salvation unto works. We are not saved by service—we are saved to serve! In the following verses you will notice both, the *Freeness of Salvation* and the *Function of Service*.

**Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost... That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. (Titus 3:5, 7-8)** Salvation is a free gift to man from God. It is based entirely upon God's grace and is independent of anything man can do. This is an undeniable fact of Holy Scripture. There is nothing that sinful man can do to earn his salvation. He is hopelessly lost, all he can do is to cast himself on the mercy of Jesus Christ.

The phrase **work out** conveys the idea of working something through to its ultimate conclusion. A good example would be working out a math problem. The phrase was used in Paul's day of digging silver out of the mines. The silver was already in the mine, God put it there, they simply had to work it out. For something to be worked OUT, it must already be IN.

The believer's salvation is already in; he is already saved. Salvation is a present possession. John said, **Beloved, now are we the sons of God... (1 John 3:2)** We are God's **workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:10)** The believer's salvation is the work of God; He has already put that in us. However, we have a responsibility to do our part. The believer's ultimate conclusion is to be like Christ. **For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among**

**many brethren. (Romans 8:29)** God desires and has predestined that every believer be conformed to the image of Christ. The word **predestinate** means to "*determine before, or to establish one's boundaries.*" It comes from the word (horizo) It is the word from which our English word *horizon* is derived. Perfection is the believer's horizon. The Christian's ultimate destiny has been predetermined by God—we will be like Christ.

As believer's, our part in this process of sanctification is to **work out** what God has already worked in. Like a miner digs the precious metals out of the ground that God has put there for him, believers are to dig out of their salvation the precious nuggets of His grace. Just as there are no cheap ways and shortcuts to mining, the Christian life that is what it's supposed to be will involve some investment and work. Paul goes on to point out that we are not only to work out our salvation, but we are to work it out with **with fear and trembling**. This, of course, is not that we are to be fearful of losing our salvation, but rather, that we would not fail our Lord by wasting our Christian life.

## The Companion

Paul explains that it is God who strengthens us for service. **For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13)** Before we were saved He worked on us. Now He works in us.

The word **worketh** carries the idea of "*energizing or producing an effect.*" Our strength and energy for working out our salvation comes from God Himself. It is not a work accomplished in the strength of the flesh. Jesus said, **It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. (John 6:63)** Our work is a spiritual work performed by the power of God. Living the Christian life and serving the Lord can only be done in His power. God's power enables the Christian to work out his salvation.

## The Compliance

Paul contends that we are to act in a Christ-like manner. **Do all things without murmurings and disputings. (Philippians 2:14)** As Christians we don't complain—we comply. Jesus Christ is a personification of these words. He did **all things without murmurings and disputings**. When He left the throne of God and stooped to the form of a servant, He did not complain. He came set upon doing God's will and He saw it through.

The word **murmuring** is defined as *a secret displeasure not openly avowed*. It carries the idea of an *undertone* or *secret whispering*. This is the mumbling and grumbling that so many practice. Matthew Henry wrote:

"Do all things, do your duty in every branch of it, without murmurings. Do it, and do not find fault with it. Mind your work, and do not quarrel with it. God's commands were given to be obeyed, not to be disputed."

We can learn a valuable lesson about murmuring from the Israelites in the wilderness. **Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. (1 Corinthians 10:9-10)** Murmuring and complaining will not bring God's blessing. It will, however, bring His judgment.

The word **disputing** is defined as an **open discussion or debate** These little whisperings always lead to bigger problems. The deadly explosions of debate often start with small or secret whisperings. The murmuring starts as the secret of one's heart, but it soon becomes public as it manifests itself in disputings and debates. J. Dwight Pentecost describes murmuring as:

"When the apostle writes to the Philippians and says, Do all things without murmurings, he has in mind that outward expression of an inner lawlessness and rebellion that shakes the fist in the face of God and repudiates His right to rule, that questions His love and His wisdom. When Paul says, Do all things without disputings, he has in view an inward intellectual rebellion where the mind weighs the truth of God, sits in judgment upon it, and condemns it. So, whether there is an inner seething of spirit or an outward manifestation of rebellion in words, such rebellion is condemned as being out of harmony with the command of God."

There is no place for **murmurings and disputings** in the Christian life. If we are to follow and serve our Lord in humility and sacrifice there will be no place for murmuring and disputing. Christ never complained about, murmured about, nor disputed His mission to save us. **He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)** With all He has done for us, can't we serve Him with out the murmuring and disputings? Whining and complaining are the workings of the fallen flesh. Paul spoke of those whom God had given up because of their wickedness as, **Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers. (Romans 1:29)** How sad that so many who profess the name of Christ are no different from the crowd from whom they claim to be saved.

## The Character

Paul further commands **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. (Philippians 2:15)** Herein lies the great responsibility of having a shining testimony in a dark world. The world can always

conger up some kind of an accusation against God's people. God have mercy on the Christian who lives in such a way as to give them ammunition. As pilgrims passing through this world, we must live **blameless** lives for the cause of Christ. Our testimony must be such as to leave the lost with no just reason for criticism.

We are not only to be blameless, but **harmless** as well. The word **harmless** means unmixed. It refers to the absence of any foreign substance. The things of this world are foreign to the Christian who has received a new nature. We, as Christians, are commanded to be unmixed and pure from foreign substances. The Christian is to live a separated life. When our Proclamation of Christ becomes mixed and tainted with the Pollution of this world, our light dims and our testimony becomes one of hypocrisy before this **crooked and perverse** world.

Paul said, **among whom ye shine as lights in the world.** Light breaks up darkness. Total darkness cannot exist where there is light. Jesus said, **Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)** Lights are made to shine and penetrate darkness. **And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. (Daniel 12:3)**

## The Concern

Once we are successful in living the Word, we can be more successful in laboring with the Word. Paul adds, **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. (Philippians 1:16)** Here we see the balance between lifestyle and labour. In [verse 15](#) we see lifestyle as we are to shine **as lights in the world.** But here we are reminded of our labour **in holding forth the word of life.** One will not be successful without the other. Not only must we practice the Christian life, we must proclaim it also.

# Rejoice in your Selflessness

Philippians 2:17-30 (KJV)

<sup>17</sup> *Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.*

<sup>18</sup> *For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.*

<sup>19</sup> *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.*

<sup>20</sup> *For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.*

<sup>21</sup> *For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.*

<sup>22</sup> *But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.*

<sup>23</sup> *Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.*

<sup>24</sup> *But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.*

<sup>25</sup> *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.*

<sup>26</sup> *For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.*

<sup>27</sup> *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.*

<sup>28</sup> *I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.*

<sup>29</sup> *Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:*

<sup>30</sup> *Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.*

A Christian can rejoice in all things regardless of the severity or the outcome.

**And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. ([Romans 8:28](#))** In this section we have the account of three selfless men who Sacrificed, Served, and Suffered for the cause of Christ.

## Joy In Sacrifice

Paul's circumstances had not changed his heart—he was sold out to God. Even as Paul contemplated his own death he rejoiced knowing that God had a purpose. Robert Ketchum said, "*Never doubt in the dark that which you know to be truth in the light.*" Even when it came to his martyrdom Paul didn't doubt. Instead he saw his death as a small sacrifice compared to that of the Philippians.



## Paul's Death

Sacrifice was no strange thing to Paul. His ministry was one of continual sacrifice and he looked on it with joy. **Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. (Philippians 2:17)** Paul is speaking of the possibility of martyrdom. The word **offered** refers to the drink offering of the Levitical sacrifices. Paul used the same word when writing to Timothy. **For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. (2 Timothy 4:6)** In Genesis, we see that Jacob poured a drink offering upon his sacrifice to the Lord. **And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. (Genesis 35:14)** In the books of Leviticus and Numbers where the sacrifices are described, we learned that the drink offering was to be added to the burnt offering and the meal offering ([Leviticus 23:12-13](#), [Numbers 15:1-10](#)) Sacrifice reveals the true state of a man's heart like no other test. A true soldier wears many battle scars. Paul was a man who knew what it meant to suffer for the cause of Christ.

Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. ([2 Corinthians 11:22-28](#))

Paul knew firsthand that faithfulness to Christ often results in persecution. When he said, **Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all**, he was using this figure of speech to describe his own martyrdom for the cause of Christ. Paul found great joy in being poured out like a drink offering for the cause of Christ. His whole life as a Christian had been sacrificed to God for the purpose of reaching others with the gospel. Now, even in death, he would die sacrificially to the glory of Christ. Paul considered the Philippians' faith as a sacrifice upon which his own life's blood as the drink offering would be poured.

## Paul's Desire

**For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me. (Philippians 2:18)** Even when death seemed imminent, Paul's concern was more for the Philippians than for himself. Paul was a true under-shepherd who loved his sheep till the

end. To Paul, his death was an occasion for joy in sacrifice rather than gloom. Paul said **I joy and rejoice. (17)** Paul wanted the Philippians to see the real picture and rejoice with him. Earlier Paul had instructed the Philippian believers to **Do all things without murmurings and disputings. (Philippians 2:14)** Here Paul is the very example of his teaching.

## Joy in Service

There are to be no idle Christians so far as God is concerned. Every Christian is saved to serve! God has a purpose for every one of His born again children. Paul gives two thoughts about Joy in Service.

## Sincere In Service

**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. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. (Philippians 2:19-20)** The believers of Philippi were very dear to the heart of Paul. He would not trust their welfare to just anyone. Timothy had proven himself as a man who would care for God's people. He was the man Paul would send to Philippi. The word **likeminded** carries the idea of "**having a similar spirit.**" Paul and Timothy had a kindred spirit. They were likeminded, and they had the same heart for God's people. Paul, who was Timothy's spiritual father, was much older and more experienced in the ministry. Now, Timothy was beginning to practice the principles of ministry that he had learned from Paul. No one was closer to Paul than Timothy, and he shared the same deep love for the believers at Philippi as Paul did. What a blessing it was to Paul now to see this young man in whom he had invested, invest himself in others. That is the ministry!

The word **naturally** here has the idea of being "*genuine or sincere.*" Timothy's care of God's people came naturally out of a genuine and sincere concern for them. He truly loved the Philippians. He was not in it for the paycheck or the recognition of man. He served out of love for both the Philippian Christians and God.

## Selfless in Service

**For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly. (Philippians 2:21-24)** Timothy was a young man of character. He was the very opposite of most people. He looked upon the needs of others rather than being self-centered and self-serving. Paul had commanded the Philippians earlier, **Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the**

things of others. ([Philippians 2:4](#)) Now he was sending them a man who lived up to Paul's teaching. Too many Christians today are not willing to sacrifice, that others may be receive help and encouragement in the hour of need.

## Joy In Suffering

Every Christian who lives for God will suffer to some degree—there is no doubt about it. One of the first things Jesus said of Paul after his conversion is, **I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.** ([Acts 9:16](#)) The Christian may suffer a bit, but one day his Lord will bring him home and wipe the tears from his eyes. **And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.** ([Revelation 21:4](#)) Imagine! The end of all suffering and sorrow. **But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.** ([1 Peter 5:10](#)) What a day that will be! Suffering is one thing, but to rejoice in suffering quite another. Suffering will try a Christian like nothing else. During times of suffering the Devil seems to work overtime to try to get us to quit on God. Here in this passage we see several things that keep us going in trying times.

## Commitment

**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.** ([Philippians 2:25](#)) Commitment is a requirement of the disciple of Christ. Epaphroditus was Paul's brother in the Lord. Their relationship to one another was not as earthly relatives, but because they were both Christians. They were born again into God's family. They were brothers in Christ.

Epaphroditus was Paul's **companion in labour**. He was committed! Epaphroditus was a worker, not a shirker. One of our greatest hindrances in the work today is a lack of labourers. **The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.** ([Matthew 9:37-38](#))

Paul's presents Epaphroditus to the Philippians as their **messenger**. Epaphroditus is also described by Paul as **he that ministered to my wants**. Epaphroditus was Paul's **fellowsoldier**. Epaphroditus was a soldier of Jesus Christ who stood strong in spiritual warfare. The Christian who serves Christ serves in a battle zone. It is not always easy. However, if we are committed we can keep going.

## Concern

**For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 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. ([Philippians 2:26-27](#))** Epaphroditus was sick himself, but his concern for others helped keep him going. He had labored unselfishly in the work of Christ. As a result, he had almost died. But the Lord had mercy on both Epaphroditus and Paul and raised Epaphroditus up.

## Consistency

Even in the face of death Epaphroditus forged ahead—he was consistent. **Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me. ([Philippians 2:30](#))** It is easy to stand and serve when others are doing right. But Epaphroditus seemed to stand alone in caring for Paul. The Philippians had not cared for Paul like they should have. However, Epaphroditus had disregarded his own health and life to make up for their slack. He did right by Paul. Where others failed Epaphroditus remained consistent even in and through his suffering.

Even in his suffering Epaphroditus experienced the joy of staying true to his commitment, remaining consistent, and being a blessing to Paul. We may not always understand our suffering and sorrow, but if we remain true, God will use it to our good.