



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

ARE YOU A SAINT? - PHILIPPIANS 4:20-23

WYOMING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2013

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For the past seven years we have diligently studied Paul's short letter to the Philippians. It is my sincere hope that our lives have not only been challenged by God's Word, but also changed. Paul had a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus Christ that remained constant and consistent, regardless of the circumstances God asked him to live through. Paul could stand firm because his purpose and focus was found in serving Jesus Christ. If the cause of Christ was furthered, if the Gospel was shared, then his purpose was being fulfilled no matter what happened. Therefore Paul could rejoice and encourage others to the same. Now that's an eternal perspective! As Paul brings his letter to a close may we be mutually encouraged by God's grace extended to all the saints!

I. SAINTLY SERVICE- PHILIPPIANS 4:20-23

"Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." Philippians 4:20-23

Paul concludes his letter by using the word "saint" to describe the Philippian believers, referring also to believers who were with Paul in Rome at the time. It is clear the Philippians had a deep love for Paul and Paul for them. What did Paul mean by the word "saint"?

A. WHAT IS A SAINT. PHILIPPIANS 4:21

%saint+Greek word **%hagios**,+means to be set apart, completely devoted to God, holy and pure, abstaining from earthly defilements, holy one separated from sin, a most holy thing.

Paul called these believers saints! They were devoted to God and their lives were set apart for Him. They were a living and holy sacrifice which was their only reasonable service to the Lord for all He had done for them! Because they were set apart for God, they lived to please the Lord Jesus Christ and were devoted to living a holy and godly life! They were saints, called, set apart for God and His work! Does this describe us as believers?

Paul is free to use this word for the everyday believers in Philippi. Yet our culture has made a saint as someone who has long been dead and maybe there's a statue made of them. They are even worshipped and considered to be one who has exhibited unsurpassable devotion to Christ. A saint in our world today may even be prayed to and become some focal point of worship. They may have candles burned to them, but this is not the "saint" Paul refers to in his writings. Scripture refers to all believers as saints, the set

apart ones, the called ones for God and His work! One who has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior desiring to serve Christ with the rest of their lives is a true Biblical "saint"! Saints are people who let the light of Jesus Christ shine through them, who are separated from sin and set apart for His holy purposes. The important question in this concluding study is this: Are we living a life, is the practice of our life worthy to be called saintly?

B. WORSHIP OF GOD OR WORSHIP OF SAINTS.

PHILIPPIANS 4:20-21

"Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Greet every saint in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:20-21

%glory+Greek word **%doxo**,+meaning magnificence, excellence, splendor, majesty, brilliance, attracting the gaze, perfection of the nature of God, comprises all that God will appear to be on His final revelation to us.

It is clear from Philippians 4:20, Who we are to worship! The word "glory" refers to the attribute of God Himself and no one else! It is the first half of the word "doxology" which really means an outburst of praise and adoration that honors and ascribes glory to God. It is a response to the truth about God and Who He is. God is worshipped and His attributes are honored and exalted by the one who is worshipping Him! No man or woman can ever be in that place of worship. Worship, honor and glory given to God results from the depth of our heart in response to hearing the truth of God through His Word! True worship is a life set apart for God! It is giving continual honor and glory to God by living that life for His purpose and His service! It's not singing a song to get emotionally worked up but rather an outburst of our lives responding from our love for God and the truth of His Word.

True worship touches every area of our lives and is our ultimate priority as saints! David wrote in Psalm 45:1, "My heart overflows with a good theme." In the Hebrew, the word for "overflow" means to actually boil over! And that's what worship really is. It is one so transformed by the grace, love and mercy of God that he or she "boils over" with the truest expression of worship; a life lived to honor and glorify God! It becomes our highest priority and our way of life. Now that's a true saint!

Idolatry then would be ascribing glory to anyone or anything else. Because worship and giving glory to God are a response to the truth about God

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR, STAFF & SPOUSES: WEDNESDAY, 6:30AM, BREAKFAST SERVED

WYOMING STATE CAPITOL, HERSCHLER BUILDING COMMONS AREA

Capitol Commission, Wyoming

Are You a Saint? Philippians 4:20-23

found in His Word, then idolatry would also be to think untrue thoughts about God, believing thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him.

What is your view of God? Is it the result of the truth of God found in His Word? And is that truth lived out in our words, actions and lives? Is your perception of God based on the truth about God rather than on what someone says? Remember, even if it is from the pulpit that doesn't make it true unless it's from Scripture! God is God and His truth is truth no matter where our culture goes or what our culture thinks. God's truth stands! Therefore, give glory to God and worship Him alone as a way of life.

C. GREETINGS FROM CAESAR'S HOUSEHOLD.

PHILIPPIANS 4:22

"All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household." Philippians 4:22

Paul gives the Philippians a special greeting before he closes from "Caesar's household". It refers to the government of the Roman Empire in Rome itself. J.B. Lightfoot has done extensive research on Nero's government. Many excavations in Rome have provided evidence which identifies the people and names who were in Nero's hierarchy. Paul mentions these people by name in Romans 16 and they match the findings that have been made through archeological discoveries. Dr. Lightfoot's research sheds light on the extent of Paul's ministry as referred to in Philippians 1:13, "Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else." This greeting to the Philippians believers was a source of much encouragement for they were being persecuted for their faith, and standing with them were believers in Nero's government willing to live a life set apart for God and His service regardless of the sacrifice it may cost! What a greeting of encouragement to stand firm in the midst of hard and difficult times!

D. THE GRACE OF CHRIST BE WITH YOU.

PHILIPPIANS 4:23

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." Philippians 4:23

%grace+Greek word **%charis,**+means absolute freeness of the kindness of God to men, unearned and unmerited favor given.

Paul concludes his letter by reminding all believers that we desperately need God's grace, His unmerited and undeserved favor! We need grace because we do not deserve to be saved and we do not deserve to be kept saved.

Because of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross and through His resurrection, we are saved and kept saved by Christ! Every Epistle Paul wrote ends with this concluding phrase. Paul understood the tremendous necessity of God's grace, of His unmerited favor towards us who believe! The work of Christ on the cross and His resurrection provided salvation for all who would believe, and none of us deserve to be saved.

Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 3:23-24 makes clear that our justification is by grace through Christ's redemptive work alone, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justifies as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." As a result of God's favor to us, salvation is provided for us through the work of Christ alone, believing in Him alone for our salvation. We were sinners, enemies of God and could never accomplish our own salvation. Only by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone is there salvation. (Ephesians 2:1-9, Acts 4:12)

In Philippians 4:23, Paul clearly identifies this grace given not just as any grace, but the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ which provides for our salvation and enables believers through each and every day to stand firm in the faith! Hebrews 4:16 exhorts us, "Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need." Paul wrote in his second letter to the Corinthians, "And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Cor. 12:9-10)

In Philippians, Paul simply presents us with the Christians life and instructs us to follow his example. Most supremely, Paul offers the life and death of Jesus Christ as our highest example wherein we find that true humility is living for the pleasure, honor and glory of our sovereign God. In serving Him, nothing surprises Him and everything serves to clarify our devotion, our purpose and our love for Him. In that purpose we find contentment and security because of the providence of God and more than that...a joy that endures and a peace that remains through the hardest of times because it is found in God alone! May we as believers in Jesus Christ, saints-set apart, live by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ! And may this be our continual prayer and pursuit, "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God." (Philippians 1:9-11)