



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## PHILIPPIANS REVIEW CHAPTERS 1-2

WYOMING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2013

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*Real joy is found in Jesus Christ alone. No matter what the circumstances are, or what hardship you might be struggling through, a believer in Jesus Christ can have true, deep abiding joy through life. That's the message of Philippians. Paul had a joy that wouldn't be diminished no matter what happened. That's 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. That's why Paul could rejoice and encourage others to do the same. It's an important message for our day as well. Before we continue our study in Philippians 4, the next few weeks we will review what we have covered the last several years in chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4. Hang On!*

### I. PHILIPPIANS 1

#### A. WILLING SERVANTS OF CHRIST - PHILIPPIANS 1:1-2

Paul and Timothy willingly submitted their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ as servants. To the Greeks this thought was ludicrous. To the Romans, a slave was lowest in society. But in *Matthew 20:20-28*, Jesus said that He came not to be served, but to serve. The way to the world's greatness is by pleasing and being served by men. But the way to God's greatness is by pleasing God and serving others.

#### B. GOD BEGINS A NOBLE WORK - PHILIPPIANS 1:3-8

Even though Paul was chained to a Praetorian guard, he had the Philippians in his thoughts and prayers. He thanked God for them and remembers them with joy! Paul counted his sufferings for Christ a privilege and was thankful for *everything* that happened, knowing each difficult circumstance was used to spread the gospel. Paul knew that God begins a noble, sanctifying work in every believer and will bring that work to completion at the day of Christ.

#### C. PAUL'S PRAYER. PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11

The Philippian believers were suffering persecution and hardship for their faith in Jesus Christ as Paul was. And yet, Paul doesn't focus on their physical needs (even though that was important), rather his deep concern was for their spiritual needs. Paul's desire was for their growth in godliness.

#### D. JOY IN SPITE OF HARDSHIP - PHILIPPIANS 1:12-26

Paul's focus in life was Jesus Christ and sharing the gospel. He viewed life from those lenses and because of that, if the cause of Christ was furthered by his circumstances, if the gospel was preached, then there was joy! His life was Christ's. Oh that we might have this perspective that if God is glorified, it is worth it but often, circumstances, hardships, people, death, our flesh and loss can rob us of our joy. Paul counted it a joy to suffer even physical affliction for the sake of Christ. Whether he lived or died it was of no consequence to Paul as long as Jesus Christ was glorified. May that be our

pursuit! We must remember as we "progress" the cause of Jesus Christ, there will be great opposition and great cost to be made on our part. Paul saw this cost not as loss, but great gain for Christ. It will be no different representing Christ in the Capitol. Are you willing to see the gospel furthered knowing there will be a cost, suffering opposition as Paul did *with joy*?

#### E. JOY IN DUTY. PHILIPPIANS 1:27-30

Paul emphasizes the importance of a steadfast walk. He challenges to hold fast to belief, conviction, and principles without compromise regardless of personal cost, being immovable in the matters of biblical truth and holy living. This is how Paul lived and exhorts us to live as well. And Paul desired believers to be unified, but not just for unity sake. Here in Philippians 1:27, the purpose is clear, "*for the faith of the gospel.*" We are steadfast and unified in the Word of God by the Spirit of God through the mind of God. Our unity isn't based on feelings or opinions but founded solidly on the truths in Scripture and living out those truths daily. We are on one team, struggling together as believers for the purpose of advancing the truth of God and His saving message. May we fight the good fight, unified because we seek Christ and His glory and not ourselves.

### II. PHILIPPIANS 2

#### A. JOY IN UNITY AS BELIEVERS – PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4

*Paul begins with a plea for unity and mutual consideration for one another. Paul desired the church to be strong and withstand hardships and suffering from the outside and remain intact on the inside, not crumbling from disunity. In fact, Paul's joy was tied to the unity of believers. Because we have first received from Christ; His help and exhortation, His tender advice and counsel, partnership with the Holy Spirit Who now indwells my life to help me become like Christ and the deep, abiding affection and compassion of Jesus Christ then I am called to be likeminded, having the same love, in one accord and one mind. What Christ asks us to give, He first gives to us and then became an example for us as to how to live. As believers, we are called to the same common goal of proclaiming the gospel and glorifying God, intent on that sole purpose alone. There is no room for selfish intent or selfish pursuits. Because of Christ's great and sufficient provision for us, we should be able to get along in harmony with one another. We are called to think and live Biblically with an unconditional love that seeks the welfare of all. The reality is that we cannot live like this on our own strength but only as we submit ourselves to Christ as Lord and through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Paul's appeal to unity continues as he examines the perfect example of humility, our Lord.*

#### B. JOY IN UNITY: HUMILITY LIKE CHRIST– PHIL. 2:5-11

Paul holds up the ultimate example of selfless humility that we are called to follow and pattern our lives after. Here in these verses of Philippians, Paul examines the life of total humility that Jesus Christ exemplified and now calls us to. We are to be humble

## BIBLE STUDIES

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

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## Philippians Review, Chapters 1-2

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like Christ. Christ loved us so much that He was willing to relinquish His positional equality with God, the comforts and joys of heaven and humble Himself in His humanity yet never losing His personal equality with God. He did not cling to His position or privileges, but gave them up for us. And guess what Christ's attitude was in His obedience? *Hebrews 12:2* says it was for the "joy set before Him!" This is the mind we are to have, the humble, sacrificial life we are to live. Do we? *For there to be unity, it takes Christ-like humility.* Contrary to what the world thinks, the path to exaltation is through humility. God exalted Jesus Christ through His resurrection, His ascension and placed Him at the right hand of God the Father where He lives to intercede for us now. Along with raising Christ up to the highest rank in supreme majesty, God gave Jesus a name which is *above every name.* Jesus Christ is our example and we are called to follow Him. *We must have the mind of Christ: obeying God and serving others in humility.*

### C. SET APART FOR CHRIST— PHILIPPIANS 2:12-13

*From the moment of salvation, we were set apart for Jesus Christ and this cannot be taken lightly. It is a lifelong commitment of faithful perseverance in cooperation with the work of the Holy Spirit to mold us into the character of Christ. We submit to His will and control in our lives. And yet, we know that to be obedient demands our effort and require God's work in us. We cannot live an obedient life merely on our own efforts. While submitting my life to God's will and work must take maximum effort on my part, I am completely dependent on God's power to do so. God is at work to produce in me not only the deep desire to please Him, but also the fruit that results from my life which glorifies Him and brings Him great pleasure! How much God is at work in us? He is mightily at work in us. (Colossians 1:29)*

### D. LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE— PHILIPPIANS 2:14-15

Paul's consuming desire was that believers would grow up in their faith and live worthy of the honorable name they bear. *Philippians 2:12-16*, clearly teaches the responsibility of the believer and the role of God in pursuing the character of Christ. God calls us to obey and then empowers us to be obedient, especially with our attitudes and actions. The world we live in is "crooked and perverse". People have turned away from God's standards, truth and love. They have turned to darkness rather than light. (*John 3:19*) It is from this darkness that people need to be saved. People are not attracted to sinful, grumbling and complaining people. Paul exhorts the believer to have the right attitude towards the events in our lives, remembering we are to shine as lights in a dark and watching world. The world will see no difference in us if we complain and grumble about life. We are to shine "as lights" referring to the stars that shine in the darkness to an unbelieving world, reflecting the "Light of the world" Who is Jesus Christ. It was our Lord Who said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (*Matthew 5:16*) Let your light so shine!

### E. HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE— PHIL. 2:16

As we live this blameless life, we are to hold out to the world the Word which brings life. Paul chooses his words carefully and it would be good for us to take note as well. In other epistles when he talks and encourages us to "hold fast", he uses the Greek word "echo" or "katecho". (*1 Corinthians 15:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 1 Timothy 3:9*) These two words translated "hold fast" refer to "holding on to, hold firmly". But here in *Philippians 2:16*, Paul is referring rather to heeding and holding something out to others. It is our obligation as believers to live by the word of life first and then offer the word of life to the world. What is the word of life? Clearly, Paul is referring to the gospel and His Word which when believed, gives life both now and eternally. Therefore we must be diligent to study and know Scripture as *2 Timothy 2:15* commands. This will require a lifelong commitment to the Word of God. Is this the motivation we have for our life as a believer? Are we so committed and submitted to Jesus Christ that our total reason for living is focused on honoring Him and offering the word of life to a world who desperately needs to know Him? Is it our greatest joy? Or, do we instead shrink back from what may be viewed as foolish? Do you shine as a light in the Capitol with all you meet and work with not just by words but also by example?

### F. EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW— PHILIPPIANS 2:17-30

Pursing Christlikeness is the major theme of Philippians and embodies Paul's passion for life. His ministry was characterized by a deep love for the Lord, His work and God's people. Paul's life was one of sacrificial service to Jesus Christ and selfless affection for others. In spite of the hardships endured by Paul and the Philippian believers, Timothy and Epaphroditus; the dominant tone of this book remains one of joy! These are lives we can imitate and follow for they sought after the interests of Christ. We live in a world that values personal comfort and promotes self-interest as a definition for happiness and often believers are not much different. *Could it be true that the greater the sacrifice...the greater the joy when our lives are poured out for Christ's sake??*

Often believers experience "joy" like the world does. If the circumstances are favorable in life then that brings joy. If their interests are promoted then life is great! But that's not what Paul is talking about here at all. In fact, the circumstances were horrific yet Paul rejoiced!! How could that be? *The joy was found in the sacrifice...the selfless service to Christ.* Maybe we know so little of this joy because we know so little of this kind of true sacrifice. The lives of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus represent lives worth imitating. All three were characterized by their love for the Lord and faithful commitment of selfless service to Christ. May we follow their examples and may God be glorified in our service as well.