

# Bible Lessons



Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,  
we are CHANGED . . . ." II Cor. 3:18

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 36, No. 4  
Oct., Nov., Dec.  
2004

Faith Pub. House  
Guthrie, OK  
73044

**Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People**  
(USPS054-680)

---

**Volume 36**

**Oct., Nov., Dec.**

**No. 4**

---

**Table of Contents**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LESSON TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Oct. 3	The Gospel Brought to the Philippians .....	1
10	The Gospel Witness to the Philippians .....	6
17	Paul's Joy and Love for the Saints at Philippi .....	11
24	The Promotion and Defense of the Gospel .....	15
31	Righteous Fruit Amid Sufferings in the Flesh .....	20
Nov. 7	The Mind Which was in Christ Jesus .....	24
14	Shining and Holding Forth the Word of Life .....	29
21	Timothy, Paul's Son in the Gospel .....	34
28	Other Companions and Helpers of Paul .....	39
Dec. 5	Counting All Things but Loss for Christ .....	44
12	Pressing Toward the Mark .....	48
19	A Recipe for a Quiet and Peaceable Life .....	53
26	The Blessing of Faithful Support .....	57

**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of  
Jesus Christ and His Church  
Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Willie E. Murphey**

Articles contributed by: Sis. LaDawna Adams,  
Sis. Angela Gellenbeck and Bro. Bob Wilson

---

**Subscription Price-\$1.25 a copy for quarter of year, or  
\$5.00 per year, issued quarterly.**

**Periodical postage paid at Guthrie, Oklahoma.**

---

**Published Quarterly By:**

**FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE**

**4318 S. Division**

**Guthrie, Oklahoma 73044**

**Postmaster: Please send address corrections  
to above address.**

## THEME FOR FOURTH QUARTER

We feel greatly inspired of the Holy Spirit to set forth a series of lessons drawn from the epistle of the apostle Paul to the Philippians. Along with this and beginning with the first two lessons we will study from Acts 16 the account of Paul and Silas in their missionary visit to Philippi and the start of the Church there. We have had so much inspiration and spiritual edification from the apostle's writings to the Philippian brethren through the years. His expressions of love and appreciation for them, his personal testimony of leaving his standing as a Jew under the law and the encouraging words of hope and consolation are so uplifting to us today. We trust that everyone will receive much spiritual good from these lessons. —Bro. Leslie Busbee



OCTOBER 3, 2004

### THE GOSPEL BROUGHT TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Acts 15:40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

13 And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the

city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Romans 8:14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Holy Spirit is given to the ministers of the gospel to guide them to the souls who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. The Holy Spirit can and will open up a door of utterance and help us to overcome all opposition and the devices of satan against the Truth.

### **WORD DEFINITION**

(Acts 15:40), "*recommended*": commended as being fit and qualified.

(Verse 41), "*confirming*": supporting farther and adding strength to.

(Acts 16:6), "*forbidden*": restrained or forbidden.

(Verse 7), "*suffered them not*": did not allow them.

(Verse 10), "*assuredly gathering*": uniting all the evidence and the dealings of the Lord as a basis for deciding what to do; concluding.

(Verse 12), "*abiding certain days*": This means that there were several days, we know not how many, that these ministers tarried in that city, watching, waiting and praying for the Lord to open the door for them to preach the gospel of the Savior.

(Verse 13), "*wont to be made*": customary to be. "*resorted*": came together.

(Verse 14), "*purple*": purple cloth. "*worshipped God*": feared God in holy reverence. "*opened*": opened thoroughly. She so feared God and sought His will that He was able to give her understanding and assurance of the truth and she received it with joy and gladness. Thus God is able to deal with our souls today and give us a love for the truth that we might be saved. "*attended*": paid attention and adhered closely.

(Verse 15), "*constrained*": to be compelled by being earnestly entreated.

(Verse 16), "*damsel*": female servant. "*spirit of Python*": This was the name of the region where Delphi, the seat of the famous oracle of the Greek gods, was located. This oracle, or fortune teller, was supposed to be able to communicate with the gods and give messages about the future. It was the power of satan, of course. This girl was possessed with an evil spirit that enabled her to speak as a teller of fortunes.

(Verse 18), "*grieved*": distressed and vexed.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In Acts 13 and 14 we have the account of Paul and Barnabas being sent forth by the Church at Antioch and led by the Holy Spirit on their missionary journey into Asia and other places and how the Lord richly blessed them. In the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter is recorded their dealing with the problem that arose concerning requiring the newly converted Christians to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses. After Paul and Barnabas had gone up to Jerusalem to confer with the apostles about this, they returned to Antioch. And then some days later Paul suggested to Barnabas that they go again and visit the brethren where they had preached the gospel and see how they were doing. When Barnabas voiced his desire to take John Mark with them (which was Barnabas' sister's son, Colossians 4:10), Paul disapproved because John Mark had left them during their recent missionary journey to go back home. The contention between them became so sharp that they parted company. Barnabas took his nephew and went to Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas to go with him.

In Lystra they picked up a young disciple named Timotheus to go with them. Here we see a vivid manner in which the Holy

Spirit led them, restraining them from preaching the gospel in two different places. It was a time for earnest prayer and waiting on God. This happens in the work of the Lord. But it was wonderful, as our lesson shows, how the Lord directed them and opened up the door at Philippi. After being in the city and waiting on God, they found a group having prayer meeting down by the riverside. God worked on one of the women to open her house for them to stay while they were there.

And then we see the devil coming in the young girl who followed them about. But the Lord was with them and delivered the girl from the evil spirit. In our next lesson we will see what happened as a result of her deliverance —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

- 1.What caused Paul to choose Silas as his companion in the gospel?
2. Why could they not preach the Word of God in Asia or Bithynia?
- 3.What caused them to endeavour to go into Macedonia?
- 4.Where did they find an open door for the gospel in Philippi?
- 5.How was the woman Lydia a great benefit to the success of the gospel?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It is a wonderful experience to have the Holy Spirit living and abiding in one's heart and to have Him lead us in the work of the gospel. Jesus told His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, but they were first to go into Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon them. Jesus spoke much about the Holy Spirit that He would send after He had gone back up to the right hand of God. He knew that they were not able, on their own, to spread the good news of salvation to the world. We today are in the same place and have the same need of Holy Spirit leadership and anointing as did the apostles in their day. We need Holy Spirit inspiration, anointing, blessing and guidance every day. We have nothing of ourselves and our best efforts will fail without the Holy Spirit to bless and lead our labors. We should pray daily for the blessing of the Lord to be upon us and may we be diligent to obey and follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

We need the Holy Spirit to go before us. In our lesson we have the brethren waiting for the Lord's direction. They were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word of God in Asia and when they tried to go into Bithynia, again the Spirit said, "No." Oh, let us wait on the Lord. He will guide us in the right way. In Philippi they found some hungry souls seeking God in prayer. God worked on the heart of the woman, Lydia, to be open to the truth and receptive to the workers to abide in her house. The Lord will work and help us if we will be faithful to wait on Him.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There are several things that will hinder the leadership of the Holy Spirit in our life. If sin is present in the heart of an individual, that one cannot expect the Holy Spirit to dwell in them and direct their life. The sin must first be repented of and washed away by the blood of Jesus. Once they have been forgiven, then they are qualified to seek the Holy Spirit to fill their heart.

To obtain this precious experience we must consecrate ourselves completely to Him and then patiently guard our sacrifice and know that He will do His part. He will help us to know and do His will.

Self-will is probably the second greatest hinderance to being led by the Holy Spirit, closely followed by a lack of patience on our part. It is the nature of mankind to want things done in his own way and to want them done immediately. But God does things at the proper time and only He knows when that proper time is. God also has many ways of working that are beyond our comprehension and we need to give Him the freedom to work in the way He sees is best. It is important for us to bring our needs to God in prayer and then trust Him to work out the details.

Many people would like to make a daily planner for God to follow and then they lose faith and blame God for not "cooperating." But the soul that is truly blessed and led by His Holy Spirit will conform their life to His plan.

The enemy of our souls has made many compare the Holy Spirit to a super emotional feeling and has succeeded in creating those emotions to take the place of true consecration. Let us be careful that we do not become deceived with his delusion and stop short of following God's plan of purity and holiness.

The Holy Spirit has not lost His power with the passage of time and those who are letting Him work in their life today are enjoying the same victory and power over sin that dwelled in the hearts of the disciples. The Spirit's leadings are just as real, His presence is just as sweet and His blessings are just as great. Thank the Lord for the Holy Spirit! —Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**OCTOBER 10, 2004**

### **THE GOSPEL WITNESS TO THE PHILIPPIANS**

Acts 16:19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.



33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The adverse oppositions of the world against the gospel and the things that ministers of the truth often suffer will only result in the furtherance of the spread of the gospel.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Acts 16:19), "*the hope of their gains*": These wicked men who owned this slave girl had used her to do fortunetelling for people, charging them a goodly price for it. With the devil gone out, she was not able to function anymore as she had previously.

(Verse 22), "*beat*": To flog or strike with a rod.

(Verse 23), "*stripes*": wounds.

(Verse 29), "*sprang*": rushed in.

(Verse 31), "*Believe*": To have faith, confidence, assurance; to entrust one's spiritual well-being in Christ.

(Verse 34), "*rejoiced*": This means that he was exulting and rejoicing with exceeding joy. "*all his house*": his whole family.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In our previous lesson we learned of Paul and Silas and their company finding receptive hearts to the gospel in Philippi. Finding some hungry souls down by the riverside, they spoke the Word of the Lord to them. One of them, a woman named Lydia, opened up her home for them to stay as the Lord had opened up her heart to the things Paul had brought forth. And then as they went to prayer from time to time, a young girl came near who was possessed with the devil and was owned by some men who were using her evil powers to tell fortunes and were getting rich thereby. This girl began to follow Paul and the others around and

cried out that they were servants of the most High God and were showing the way of salvation. This went on for many days. Finally Paul turned and commanded the evil spirit to come out of the girl and the Lord delivered her of that devil.

In our lesson today we see the beastly reaction of the girl's masters when they saw the change that had been wrought in her through the word of Paul. The world, in that age, was dominated by the powers of darkness, ignorance and error. Satan controlled the minds and hearts of humanity. The cities were steeped in immorality and unbridled lusts. The gospel of Christ was often withstood by these brazen spirits and the ministers of the truth were met with much abuse and cruel treatment. But as the sufferings of Christ abounded, so did the consolation of Christ and the power of God accompanied the disciples of the Master. Picture now the scene in our lesson of Paul and Silas roughly dragged before the rulers and subsequently sentenced to be beaten with rods. Many blows and wounds were laid on these warriors of the cross! With their flesh broken and bleeding from the severity of their abuse, now they were violently thrown into the maximum security part of the prison and firmly locked in the wooden apertures made to hold criminals.

But at midnight they offered the sacrifice of prayer and sang a hymn of praise to God. The other prisoners could hear them and no doubt marveled. Then came the great earthquake that shook the very foundations of the prison and all the doors opened and all their bonds were loosed. How wonderful that the power of God can accompany us in our tribulations! The poor jailer sought to kill himself until Paul assured him that they were all there. Then came the blessed salvation of the jailer and all of his household.

It is evident that a congregation of saints of God were established there in Philippi. As soon as they were loosed from the prison by the authorities (who were put in great fear when they learned that these men they had imprisoned were Romans) Paul and Silas went back to the house of Lydia and met the brethren and brought them comfort and cheer before going on their way.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why were the girl's masters angry at Paul and Silas?
2. What things did these brethren suffer at the hands of the law?

3. What did Paul and Silas do in the midst of their sufferings?
4. What was the outcome of all of this persecution?
5. What effect do you think this all had upon those who were won to the truth?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The Holy Spirit had so wonderfully led Paul and Silas and those who were with them on this missionary journey. Twice the Lord had restrained them from going where they thought they should go. And they were obedient to the leadings of the precious Holy Spirit. Without the anointing and workings of the Holy Spirit all efforts and labors are in vain. Prayer and tarrying before God for His leadings and going before us is so vital even in our day and age. As one song says, "Let Thy Spirit move me, I've nothing on my own; Father, stand by me, I cannot stand alone: In Jesus' name I pray!" But how blessed it is to be endued with the indwelling Christ and experience His inspiration and workings! It helps us to meet the opposition and perils that we meet in the world to have His presence and comfort in our souls.

There are difficult times and times when we are perplexed, as Paul said in II Corinthians 4:8-9, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." But the thing that will take us through with victory in every difficult place in life will be that indwelling Spirit of love, comfort and hope. When you are heavily weighted with toil and tears and adversities of this present world, seek the Lord faithfully at the throne of grace and He will send a fresh anointing and inspiration of the Holy Spirit within you. This is the realm and power of His kingdom: "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17.) This is the conquering power of the triumphant Church down through the ages. This is the strength of the triumphant saints in their tribulation and sorrows of life.

Let us remember to offer the sacrifice of praise to God in the dark hours, even as Paul and Silas did in the Philippian jail. We have many songs that have come to us from the saints down through the years. Their times of sorrow and adversity brought forth songs that are rich with comfort and consolation. Loss, poverty, sickness, adversity, hardships, separation, abuse, mistreatment and death of loved ones so dear have come to all of

God's children through the years. But it has proven to always work for good to those who love God and who are called according to His purpose. — Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

This has been the testimony of saints of God down through the ages: God gives songs in the night—in times of suffering, grief and loss. Maybe you are familiar with some of these inspired hymns which we enjoy today.

Lina Sandell, born in 1832 in northern Sweden, was a young Christian girl who greatly loved and admired her father. While accompanying him aboard ship across Lake Vattern, the vessel suddenly lurched and as father and daughter stood on deck, Lina's father was swept overboard to his death right before her eyes. The beautiful, trusting words to the song, "Day By Day" was among some of the tender hymns that now flowed from her broken heart.

The song, "Who Will Suffer With Jesus?" was written by Bro. D. S. Warner at a time when a mob assaulted the house in which he was preaching the truths on holiness and unity. A sharp object was thrown at him, striking him with bloody force on the face.

Another fiery trial, in which his wife left him and many foes were against him, brought from his broken heart these words,

"O Jesus, bear our souls above  
Each wave of trouble that we meet!  
Then in the furnace of Thy love  
We'll sing Thy praise with joy complete."

The title of this song is, "Why Should A Mortal Man Complain."

A song we have come to know and love in recent years is "What A Privilege" by Sis. Patricia Rhodes of Owasso, Oklahoma. She testified that the Lord gave her that song when she waited many years before the Lord blessed her with a child. In this trial of her faith, the Lord inspired her to remember that "Trials come to make us strong."

These are just a few songs among thousands that have been written in the midnight prison experiences of saints of God.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

**OCTOBER 17, 2004**

**PAUL'S JOY AND LOVE FOR THE SAINTS AT PHILIPPI**

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

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

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy.

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6 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:

7 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.

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

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** ...He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The apostle Paul was fervently attached in heart and spirit with the congregation at Philippi, longing and yearning to be with them and holding them continually in prayer to God for their ultimate triumph and success in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Philippians 1:1), "*saints*": pure and holy people. "*bishop*": superintendent; overseer; one who is looking attentively about, watching, guarding and overseeing. "*deacon*": an attendant, minister or servant.

(Verse 5). "*for your fellowship*": Paul's prayers were fervent with intense joy and gladness over the sweet communion that he had with these beloved saints.

(Verse 6). "*confident*": persuaded or convinced. "*perform*": finish, complete; carry it out to perfect conclusion. "*until*": up to that time.

(Verse 7). "*meet*": right, suitable and just. "*I have you in my heart*": The Greek text seems to indicate that Paul was commenting on them having him in *their* hearts. We are confident, however, that it was mutual. He had them in his heart as well as they had him in their hearts. And whoever lives in someone's heart, that someone holds them dearly and so affectionately close in their feelings, concern and estimation.

(Verse 8). "*long*": to intensely crave and yearn. "*bowels*": tender pity and sympathy; deep inward feelings of compassion and care.

(Verse 9). "*knowledge*": full discernment and recognition. "*judgment*": full apprehension and perception.

(Verse 10). "*approve*": to test and prove to be true. "*excellent*": that which is surpassing the unusual or ordinary; the very best or top of the line. "*sincere*": The Greek meaning is: judged and examined by sunlight. Therefore it means to be tested and proven to be genuine and real. "*without offence*": faultless and not leading into sin. "*till the day of Christ*": for the purpose of being accepted and accounted worthy to stand before Christ in that day of His appearing.

(Verse 11). "*filled*": completely furnished; not lacking or falling short; satisfying every requirement. "*through*": by way and means of; because of. "*the glory and praise of God*": the honor and laudation of God, giving full credit and commendation to Him who alone is worthy of all we can render to Him.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our first two lessons we studied the missionary visit of Paul and Silas to Philippi in Macedonia. We saw how God worked so wonderfully to open up a door of utterance for the gospel there despite the awful persecution that they, as ministers of the truth, endured. In our last scripture of the lesson we learned that they, after being released from prison, went back to the house of Lydia where they had been staying. There they met the brethren

and gave comfort and words of exhortation to them before departing for other places. This gives evidence that a congregation was established in Philippi.

In our lesson today we will begin a series of studies from the epistle that Paul wrote to the Church at Philippi from Rome, probably during his imprisonment. We have found so much inspiration and spiritual blessings from the words of this epistle. In it Paul portrays the love and esteem that he had for these saints that God had called out of this present evil world to His eternal glory. What he shared with these Philippians in his tender, yet fervent, words of truth and edification is full of spiritual wealth for us today.

Paul addressed them as saints. There is no higher realm or standard of life in this world than that of saints of the most high God. Psalm 16:3 says that Christ's goodness is "to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." Excellent here means the great and powerful, and also glorious, goodly, noble, worthy, magnificent, glorious and honorable. Revelation 19:8 speaks of the finelinen, clean and white, that the wife of Christ was to be arrayed in, as being the righteousness of saints. It means so much for us to live up to the meaning of being true saints of God. "The saints shall judge the world," Paul stated in I Corinthians 6:2.

We have an account of another visit Paul made to Philippi in Philippians 1:1. It is evident that there was a goodly number of people in that congregation, as Paul addressed them as the saints at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. These people were very dear to Paul, as we see by his expressions, thanking God upon every recollection of them and the great space he had for them in his prayers. He rejoiced in their fellowship with him in the gospel from the first day on, being confident that God had begun a good work in them and would finish it for the great day of the Lord.

Let us take special notice of the prayerful desires that he had for them as portrayed in verses 9-11. These things are the will of God for us today to abound more and more in. We are grateful for the ground we have been able to possess in the Christian profession but let us not forget that there yet is much more land to be possessed. As we get older there is a tendency to become self-satisfied and complacent. But let it not be so. Let us work at our Christian experience every day, praying, seeking, humbling,

dying, yielding, submitting and reaching forth to greater things. Our goal is shining before us, to be found faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. (Jude 24.)

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. How can we know from Paul's words that there was a congregation at Philippi?
2. What did Paul say in our lesson that showed his fervent love for them?
3. Why were these saints at Philippi so precious to Paul?
4. What does it mean to have someone "in your heart"?
5. What was Paul's fervent desire and prayer to God concerning them?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

There is a close and endearing bond between holy brethren who are partakers of the Holy Spirit and the powers of the world to come. And there is a special relationship in the Spirit between a minister or pastor and the flock of saints that he or she works with. It is the love of God that is shed abroad in each heart and that flows from one to another. All who have experienced this great love and holy fellowship know what a wonderful blessing it is! Psalm 133 tells us that this holy unity is good and pleasant and is the precious anointing that God has bestowed upon Zion, His holy Church, and there the Lord has commanded the blessing, even life forevermore! This divine love of God is the crowning glory of the grace of God that we must fervently and faithfully maintain in our hearts and lives. It is only there where our hope is steadfast and unailing of eternal glory with Christ.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

I would like to share an excerpt from a book *Has Anybody Seen My Shoes?* by Danny Frasier describing a Special Olympics competition.

"At these (Special) Olympics events it is not unusual to see a runner fall. It happens all the time. But it is also not unusual to see the entire pack of runners go back to help that person to



their feet and encourage them to go on. Wouldn't it be great if life could be like that? Not to encourage failure, but rather to encourage success?"

Paul had a vision for the spiritual success of the saints of Philippi. He had a confidence in Christ's power and in this congregation's desire to serve the Lord. He was looking to the future progress of this particular congregation with joy and anticipation. His heart was for their winning the eternal prize too. He was interested in promoting them toward God's kingdom.

We should each have a desire for the other's success. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." Hebrews 10:35. Paul was a great example to us all in this. Ultimately, it is this motivation of love toward each other that is evidence to the world that "ye are my disciples" (John 13:35.)

It should never be a satisfaction or delight to see someone stumble and ultimately give up serving the Lord. "Let us help our fallen brother, lift him gently by the hand. Speaking words of cheer and comfort, point him to a better land."

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



**OCTOBER 24, 2004**

### **THE PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL**

Philippians 1:12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel:

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

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

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in presence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

20 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.

**MEMORYVERSE:** 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.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Regardless of what others may do and how much they turn and work against us, if we will truly love the Lord Jesus and be led by His Holy Spirit, He will turn all things for our salvation and will keep us steadfast in the hope of Christ.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 1:12), *"things which happened unto me"*: The Greek expression is "things concerning, or about me." *"have fallen out"*: or, have come or helped to bring about. *"furtherance"*: the advance or promotion.

(Verse 13), *"my bonds in Christ"*: Paul is speaking of his imprisonment. He was brought to Rome as a Roman citizen under prison guard for trial. Even though this was an adverse situation, it all was working for good to the cause of God and the advancement of the gospel. It was all "in Christ." that is, a part of Christ's working and plan for his life. *"palace"*: The praetorium, or, the Roman court of justice, where he was put on trial.

(Verse 14), *"waxing confident"*: becoming more assured and convinced. *"are much more bold"*: more exceedingly dare to fearlessly speak the word.

(Verse 15), *"preach Christ even of envy and strife"*: It seems incredible that anyone who professes faith in Jesus Christ would allow their heart to be infested with an envy against another Christian, let alone another minister. But, sad to say, this has happened many times throughout the history of the Church. Just think: preaching Christ with the aim of purposely working against another person. But Paul knew that such was going on. However, the attitude he took, concerning such, is a splendid example for us to follow.

(Verse 16), *"of contention, not sincerely"*: of rivalry, not purely.

(Verse 17), *"defence of the gospel"*: The Greek word here for "defence" is the word from which comes our word "apology." In other words, Paul's purpose was to plead for the progress of the gospel in an effort for it to be received and accepted by humanity. He would shield it from abuse and misinterpretation. Any reproach or factor that would dim the luster of the beauty of the gospel he would seek to thwart or turn aside. If he, himself, would have to suffer, it would be nothing, just so the gospel would not be hindered. And he believed that all that had taken place concerning him would eventually prove to be for the good and advancement of the cause of God. It is even as he said in II Timothy 2:9, "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound."

(Verse 18), *"What then"*: How am I going to handle this and what course am I to take concerning this confusion? *"notwithstanding"*: nevertheless, regardless, still yet. *"I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice"*: I rejoice now and will always rejoice that Christ is being proclaimed even if there is contention and strife mixed with it.

(Verse 19), *"shall turn to my salvation"*: will result in my eternal good, safety and well-being, not because of the envy and strife, but in spite of it. We must have and retain a clear understanding of the true gospel and seek to live by it and for it. It is the power of God unto salvation and all that anyone can do cannot prevail against its truth. *"through your prayer"*: Prayer is our mainstay and hope of success. Prayer can help us rise above all adverse and discouraging opposition. *"and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ"*: The contributing aid and overcoming strength of the indwelling Holy Spirit will turn everything which seems bent to harm and hinder us into triumphant joy and success.

(Verse 20), *"earnest expectation"*: The intense anticipation that Paul possessed in his inner man was an anchor that held him in every scene of this earthly life. We cannot expect every thing to be ideal, agreeable, pleasant and encouraging. More than likely it will be everything otherwise. But Christ within, the hope of glory, gives us courage to hold on regardless. *"magnified"*: made or declared great, extolled and ever increasing.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

When Paul wrote this epistle to the Church at Philippi he was in Rome and had to stand before the court of Caesar. He had

pled as a Roman citizen for the right to be tried before the Roman judicial system. It is very likely that this decision caused various reactions in different people. There were doubtless many adverse factors that worked much hardship and difficulty to Paul. It is mentioned in Acts 28:15 that during his passage toward Rome he was met by some of the brethren from Rome, "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." So you can tell by this that the voyage to Rome had a bearing of depression and pain. But the coming of the brethren gave him the lift of spirit that he needed.

In our lesson today we will consider Paul's disclosure of the situation that he had run into at Rome. First he made it clear that all that had happened to him was for the advancement of the gospel. And he also stated that his presence in the court of Rome with his testimony and defense had proven to be a blessing to many of the brethren there. But then there arose the problem with some of the brethren who had imbibed an antagonism against Paul for some reason. Not all was taking this kind of stand, for there were those who kept love and good will in their ways. Here we behold Paul's expression of how he handled such a problem. He committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. He rejoiced that Christ was preached anyway and that it would all work out in the end for the best. This benevolent attitude even toward those working against him is a great example for us to follow. Keeping the right attitude in the face of opposition is of most vital importance. Instead of making a big ado about the problem, he counted God faithful to make it all work out for good to him and to everyone. God is the judge and He knows how to work for our good. Get things committed to him and He will work. (Psalm 37:5.)

Through prayer and the supply of grace, by the Spirit of Christ, Paul purposed to press on and keep in mind what the real purpose of his life and ministry was. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What had the things that happened to Paul proved to work out?
2. What effect did Paul's presence in Rome have upon many of the brethren?
3. What did Paul purpose concerning those who worked seemingly against him?

4. How could he rejoice in those times of difficulty?
5. What was his earnest expectation and hope?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31. All down through the ages the saints of the Lord have faced great opposition and adversity in their lives. Holding on to faith has meant great trials and sufferings. There is the temptation to give down and cast away one's confidence. Sad to say, many have done just that. But who will be among the followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises? (Hebrews 6:12.) Is our cause just and according to what God has promised? Has He given us assurance that things will come about for our good? Despite the conditions and pressure of people and things, our God still lives and has control. The apostle Paul proved this to be so and in the awful things that he suffered as a herald of Christ, he left us an example of faith and courage that is worthy for us to always follow. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Paul was encouraging the Philippian saints that although he was in a negative circumstance there was a positive outcome. The furtherance of the gospel was being accomplished and the brethren were waxing bolder. Paul was in bonds or in confinement. Confinement is something that closes, restrains, restricts, to keep within limits, inhibit. Our natural reaction is to resist all such restraints. However, Paul was seeing a deeper purpose of God. He used phrases such as: "bonds in Christ" (v. 13); "prisoner of Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 3:1); "the prisoner of the Lord." (Ephsians 4:1.) Paul was not blaming Rome but recognized that he was a prisoner of the Lord.

Great things have come out of prisons! God, in preparing Joseph, sent him to prison for over two years. John Bunyan wrote the cherished Pilgrim's Progress in prison. Some of Paul's writings came during the time he was in bonds. There are other prisons: affliction, sorrow, suffering, temptations and failure that we all must pass through. It is beautiful that God can turn negative stimuli into positive results.

Our most effective ministry to others will come through these various prisons we experience personally. Good theories

or ideas really don't help people that much. God has promised to write His laws upon the table of our heart. Many times it takes sorrow and trouble for the truth of God to penetrate beyond the head and into the heart. Job proclaimed that he had heard of the Lord by the hearing of the ears but now his eyes had seen Him. His experience and ours will give us greater understanding, love and mercy in helping our fellow man. —Bro. Bob Wilson



**OCTOBER 31, 2004**

### **RIGHTEOUS FRUIT AMID SUFFERINGS IN THE FLESH**

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

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

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ: which is far better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

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

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

27 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;

28 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.

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

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** It would be much better for us to leave this old sinful world with all of its sorrows and temptations and go to be with our blessed Jesus. But the longer we remain in the flesh and are faithful to Him in all of its adversities, the more fruit will abound to the good of others and for our everlasting gain.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 1:21), *"to live is Christ"*: To continue with my earthly life has but one aim and purpose and that is to live it solely to the honor and glory of God and the cause of Christ. *"to die is gain"*: To cease from my earthly life is to escape from this world and its perils to go into paradise and eternal rest and safety. That is the gain and the ardent desire of every true saint of God. Our hopes and treasures are not on these fleeting earthly things. As one precious saint said, "I am willing to stay here as long as the Lord wills for me to, but just as soon as He can see fit to take me to glory I am ready and yearning to be gone."

(Verse 22), The Greek renders this verse thus: "But if to live in the flesh, this to me is the fruit of my work and what I shall choose I perceive not." He had just said that to die would be gain, but adds that to live in the flesh would mean more fruit for eternal values.

(Verse 23), *"in a strait"*: pressed and constrained. *"betwixt two"*: I am pressed by these two things: (1) my yearning to go and be with the Lord in heaven and (2) the need to remain in this mortal flesh and minister to the souls of men of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Both of these options held a drawing and attraction to the apostle Paul. It is something that we have to keep in the Lord's hands and be submissive to whatever the Lord decides is best for us. He stated emphatically, however, that to depart and to be with Christ "is far better" of the two. His hope in Christ Jesus was bright and shining indeed!

(Verse 24), The Greek says, "But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account." It was not that Paul thought he was so important and beneficial of himself, but it was the working of Christ with him that was such a blessing to others.

(Verse 25), *"having this confidence"*: Being assured of the help and strength of Christ if he did continue his ministry to them, he was very willing to brave the sufferings of the flesh for the benefit it would bring to others in advancing them and increasing their joy of the faith.

(Verse 26), The Greek says, "That your rejoicing may abound in Christ Jesus in me, through my presence again with you." Here is seen the wonderful, joyful and pleasant tie that binds the hearts of the saints in true Christian love. Those who have ministered to our souls of the bread of life are so precious and dear to our hearts and we appreciate them so much!

(Verse 27), *"let your conversation be"*: Behave as a citizen appropriately of the gospel of Christ. Although we are citizens of an earthly realm by natural birth, we are, in a much greater sense, citizens of a heavenly country. And we should conduct and behave ourselves in that proper manner that befits such a royal and heavenly citizenship. *"your affairs"*: things about you. *"striving together"*: To wrestle in company with; seeking jointly. It means so much to be brotherly and co-operative with our fellow saints in Christ. It will not always be easy and ideal. To have real successful unity we must not only have the same Spirit, but we must forbear with one another in love with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3.

(Verse 28), *"evident token"*: proof. To go against the holy saints of God and the true ministers of the gospel and what they stand for is an undeniable sign of being condemned of God. But at the same time it is a proof of just who is right and acceptable with Him.

(Verse 29), *"in the behalf"* and *"for his sake"* are both from the same Greek word, which means *over*, that is, for the benefit and welfare of.

(Verse 30), *"conflict"*: struggle, contest, contention and fight; anxious effort.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today ties right in with our previous study from Philippians 1, following what the apostle Paul expressed about his earnest expectation and hope. He had a purpose and desire that always with all boldness Christ would be magnified in his body, whether it be by life, or by death. (Verse 20.) In Christ and being a part of His great cause renders life and death on equal terms. Either one would be profitable and desirable. I remember the day in Mexico when Bro. James Huskey and I were hiking up through the village we were in to visit some folks. Passing between the rock fences that lined the path, it came to me that our lives could be in peril. We had met with opposition in that place with the priest on the loud speaker warning folks about us. But this Scripture came to me and so comforted my heart that I was not afraid, for I knew that if I died it would be well, even though I hated to think of leaving my family. But the Lord had mercy on us and let us live on these 35 more years.



Paul's loving concern for these people is such a beautiful attribute of a true minister of God. And his counsel and encouraging words are so good for us today.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the gain that Paul believed would be his if he died?
2. What were the two things that he was in a strait between?
3. What was the better of the two, but which did he really prefer?
4. What did he desire the Philippian brethren to seek for?
5. What was the evident token of perdition and of salvation?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Oh, the blessed hope and anticipation we have in following the Lord Jesus and being led by the Holy Spirit! We are able to face life with courage and confidence and we are not afraid to be taken out of this life by death. Jesus is so real to us that, as some have put it, "we have a little heaven to go to heaven in!" But we know that as long as we tarry in this world there is peril and conflict for us to meet. Satan is seeking whom he may devour and we have to resist him steadfast in the faith. We must watch diligently and be very prayerful and careful. It is a daily conflict. The outward man is perishing and the decay of nature brings new and more intense difficulties. The world is increasing in wickedness and corruption. On every hand we see the fruits of ignorance and darkness and error. So we have to press and fight and pray, "the battle never give over." We must "never think our victory won, nor once at ease sit down." "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." I Corinthians 10:12. But, on the other hand, we have so many vivid promises and bright foresight of our future bliss and happiness with Jesus and His saints in that world to come. His hope is an anchor for our souls, both sure and steadfast. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." II Corinthians 4:17. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

In this lesson we can identify the great love that the Apostle Paul had for Christ and for his brothers and sisters in the Lord. Jesus had made a wonderful change in his life. Notice the earlier ambition of Paul as recorded in Acts 9:1-2 "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

After Jesus appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus he was totally changed and was willing to devote everything to the service of the Lord. God blessed his ministry to the Gentiles and many were brought to Christ as a result of his labors.

To the Philippian saints he said, "For to me to live is Christ...." Then he presented the difficult situation he was in, a "strait." He loved Christ and he loved them also. How could he decide between the two?

In Paul's response we are seeing a likeness of Christ being manifested. Christ also loved the Philippian saints and wanted to see them established in Him and His desire was being mirrored through Paul. Paul's conclusion to abide in the flesh and fulfill the desires of Christ was the best choice even though it would require hardship and suffering on his part. To do the will of the Lord is always the best choice.

The love that Christ has for the brethren is so great and it is such an intrinsic part of a child of God that John said we could "know that we have passed from death unto life,..." by this one virtue. (1 John 3:14.)

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**NOVEMBER 7, 2004**

### **THE MIND WHICH WAS IN CHRIST JESUS**

Philippians 2:1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

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

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

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

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

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth:

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:5.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** We must discipline ourselves to have the same attitude and spirit that Jesus had, for He thought not of Himself nor of His well-being, but of others, of us who were lost in sin, and gave up His life as an atonement for our salvation.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 2:1). "*consolation, comfort*": These two words are very closely related in meaning. The soul of man, so besieged with distress and difficult pressures of the god of this present evil world, is in need of a lift in heart and mind to counterbalance the scales of his being. The Holy Spirit is sent through Jesus our High Priest to be a comfort and an uplift to our souls in the burdens of life. Paul said in II Corinthians 1:5, "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." The Lord has wisely provided consolation for His children in their sufferings. We read in Ecclesiastes 7:14, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." Here we see God going in the opposite direction. For the good of man God sends him the day of adversity to counterbalance the day of prosperity. This is to keep man more conscious of his true condition of poverty and

need before God. In the Christian life that is attended by adversity, He sends to the soul comfort and consolation to help us rise above it. "*fellowship*": partnership, participation, social intercourse and communion. This fellowship is that of the indwelling Holy Spirit that brings all of the saints of God to a commonwealth and citizenship possessed and enjoyed together. This is the source of the refreshing and consolation that Paul speaks of here. "*bowels*": compassions, pity and sympathy.

(Verse 2). The Greek text renders this verse: "Fill up my joy, that you think the same, having the same love, one in soul and minding one thing." This kind of sameness and oneness does not come altogether automatically. The Spirit is the foundation of such a unity of the followers of Christ but we have to work at it to get it working as it should, as Paul said in Ephesians 4:2-3: "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

(Verse 3). "*strife or vainglory*": rivalry or self-conceit. This is an ardent effort to outdo someone else because of pride or the seeking of self-honor.

(Verse 5). "*Let this mind*": Think, have a sentiment or opinion, be mentally disposed; exercise your mind and attitudes.

(Verse 6). The Greek text renders this verse: "Who existing in the form or nature of God, counted not equality with God to be held onto," (Note the next phrase)

(Verse 7). "*But made himself of no reputation*": But emptied himself.

(Verse 8). "*in fashion*": in condition.

(Verse 9). "*highly exalted*": elevated up above all others to the highest position. "*given*": granted freely as a favor.

(Verse 10). "*bow*": bend. To bend the knee means to surrender the standing position and assume the attitude of complete submission and servitude.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson today we are continuing to study the apostle Paul's loving instructions to his beloved brethren and saints at Philippi. We see the spirit of humility, tenderness, sympathy and desire for communion and oneness. Concern for others' welfare

and happiness is a vital disposition for us to maintain. In Acts 20:35 Paul testified to the elders from Ephesus: "I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Again in Romans 15:1 he wrote. "We then that are strong ought to bear (lift, sustain, endure and receive) the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." This was the kind of man Paul was, along with his authority and power in the gospel. He was not domineering and tyrannical. He expressed himself in II Corinthians 1:24 toward the Corinthian brethren thus: "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand." So sad that many ministers have let power and authority go to their heads and have become lifted up as if they are lords. Many husbands have become domineering and as tyrants over their wives. This is not the true Spirit of Jesus.

Let us pay particular notice of what Paul says here about the mind and attitude that was in Christ. He points out how Christ submitted to be crucified, having relinquished His position as part of the Godhead, being the Son of God. Christ could have stopped the progress of His sufferings and death at any time, as He said in Matthew 26:53 that He could pray to the Father and would be granted twelve legions of angels for His deliverance. He willingly submitted to be taken and abused, mistreated and wrongfully condemned to the death of the cross. This was humiliation and unlawful treatment. "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." Acts 8:33. He was not given a fair trial. It was arrest, mock trial, conviction, sentencing and then execution in less than one day.

But God was weighing and watching the entire proceedings. He rewarded Christ for His humiliation and abuse. He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. If we would share with Christ His eternal glory in the resurrection, we must participate in His sufferings and humiliation now.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. If there is any fellowship in Christ, what attitude should we assume?
2. Is it possible for us to have the same mind as Christ had?
3. What did this kind of mind cause Christ to do?

4. Why did Christ not hold on to equality with God?
5. What reward did the Father freely grant to Christ for what He suffered?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The spirit and attitude that we see in most of our sin-laden society today is to stand up for one's rights and fight. Lawsuits, debates and strivings against each other, with class against class and culture against culture abound in our world. Compare all of this with the spirit and mind that Christ followed. Meekness, humility and self-denial marked the course that the Son of God followed. It was by choice. He could have chosen self-preservation and a lawful defense. But He chose the way to Calvary instead. "If I should ask, dear Lord, for wealth or great fame, for selfish reasons and not others' blame; then break me, Saviour, help me to see a brand new vision of Calvary." As the lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so Christ submitted to the death of the cross on our behalf. Who dares to follow Christ in this frame of mind? It was for this cause that God rewarded Christ with the high and exalted position that He has at the right hand of God. And God will still reward all who follow the splendid example of His Son.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

What does it mean when it says that Christ "emptied Himself" and took the form of a "servant?" Consider this: when Jesus came to earth, He didn't come in the form of Almighty God. As He went about and performed miracles, He did it as a human who was dependent upon God His Father for every bit of power He had. He did nothing, said nothing, had no wisdom or strength on His own. That's what He relinquished when He was "made flesh and dwelt among us." The nights He spent in prayer—a luxury? No, a necessity. He needed to be with His Father to receive instruction, wisdom and power. Just like you and me. The word servant doesn't refer to the honorable domestic type of laborer of today, who gets paid for his service and still retains the rights and privileges of a free individual. Here it means slave. Someone who doesn't have rights. Someone who belongs to

someone else. Nobody forced this upon the Son of God. He willingly gave up His own rights for us.

In II Corinthians 8:9, we read that Jesus became "poor" for our sakes. This word doesn't mean that He just didn't make as much money as someone else and lived in a little less fancy house—no, it literally means beggar. Someone dependent upon public assistance. He willingly gave up the riches of glory to be a beggar—for us.

Jesus was also "numbered with the transgressors." (Isaiah 53:12.) He was tried and executed as a common criminal. He willingly became that, for us. A slave, a beggar, a criminal, all that for you and me. What have we done for Him?

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**NOVEMBER 14, 2004**

### **SHINING AND HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**

Philippians 2:12 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.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I Corinthians 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

II Corinthians 6:1 We then, as workers together *with him*, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Philippians 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 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;

16 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.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 10:12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Philippians 2:17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

Acts 20:26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

**MEMORYVERSE:** Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. 2:12-13.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** We must be diligent to do our part in fully obeying the will of God and give Him room to work in us His good pleasure, lest we run and labour in vain.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 2:12), "*work out*": work fully, accomplish and finish. "*salvation*": That deliverance, rescue and safety from sin and death that our Savior purchased for us by the shedding of His precious blood.

(Verse 13), "*worketh*": effective and efficient operation. "*to will and to do*": To determine, purpose and to fully carry out. The Almighty God planned this great salvation and holiness for His people before the world was created and He has fully brought it to perfection for us to have and enjoy. And there is something else so wonderful that He does. He works on our will and helps us to see the value and prospect of His grace, that helps us to come to decision and purpose in our own hearts. Then He continues to assist us with inspiration, comfort and strength to fulfill our part in having His good pleasure wrought in our own hearts and lives. So it is not of us, but rather we are His workmanship and all credit and praise is due to Him alone.

(I Corinthians 3:9), "*husbandry*": field or vineyard.

(II Corinthians 6:1), "*in vain*": without the proper and intended effect; empty, useless and of no profit.

(Philippians 2:14), "*murmurings*": grumbling, complaining, criticizing and finding fault. "*disputings*": debate, questioning and reasoning.

(Verse 15), "*harmless*": innocent, unmixed with foreign or destructive matter (from sin, self, or the world). "*without rebuke*": faultless. "*perverse*": distorted, misinterpreted and corrupt. "*lights*": bright and shining luminaries that make manifest true godliness and what is pleasing to God.



(Verse 16), "*holding forth*": holding on to, retaining and paying attention to. "*the day of Christ*": The last great day when Jesus comes to judge the world and to give reward to His saints.

(Verse 17), "*offered*": poured out as a libation or an offering; that is, to spill his blood. "*sacrifice*": This means to be a victim to suffer on the behalf of someone else. "*service*": To minister as a priest for the spiritual good of others. The Christian life is a life of sacrifice and service for the eternal welfare of our fellow man. It means much for us to pour out of our strength and talents in an effort to benefit others in the work of Christ. Paul counted it a joy and rejoicing to be able to live such a life, for he knew that the reward would be an eternal happiness with those whom he ministered to, who would rejoice and joy with him, also.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson today we continue with our study from the epistle of Paul the apostle to the congregation at Philippi. In our previous lesson Paul brought out about Jesus and His humbling Himself to the death of the cross and how as a reward for His obedience God highly exalted Him to a name above every name. This He did for our salvation and hope. In the continuation of his epistle Paul counsels each one to fully work out their own individual salvation with a godly reverence, in order that God can have full access to their hearts to work in them the fulfillment of His good pleasure. This is a very important point. Our salvation is a joint cooperative operation of God Himself and each one of us individually. The Lord has His part, which we know that He will faithfully fulfill. But we all are responsible creatures with personal matters that we ourselves must without fail attend to. We must work out as God works in. We are workers together with Him. We can all help one another but there are things that we must each one individually do that no one else can do. This is why, after Paul's wonderful declaration of Christ and what He accomplished, he charges us what we should do.

Not only are we to work out our salvation experience with fear and trembling, we are also to take heed to our conduct and manner of living. We are to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. We must do this in the face of a society that is corrupt and void of godly fear. All bitterness and wrath

and anger and clamor and evil speaking must be put away from us with all malice. We are to be kind and tenderhearted toward our fellow man, not seeking to return evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing and forgiveness. We are to work at this kind of life and character daily. We must stand out and be different in our actions, our dress, our speech and all avenues of conduct. We are in the midst of a crooked and perverse society. Jesus instructed us to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16.) We are to hold fast to the doctrine of godliness, the Word of life and exemplify it in our daily life.

We have a great shining goal to press toward. We must live no more selfishly to the lusts of our fleeting mortal flesh but rather to the sacrifice and service of one another's faith. We are called to a togetherness of spirit and in this blessed unity we must live and die. We do this with the blessed hope of being resurrected together in that great day of the Lord. Let us receive these kind and loving words of counsel from our beloved brother, Paul and be accounted worthy to appear with Christ and His saints in glory.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is it even more important to obey when no one else sees us?
2. Why must we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling?
3. Where will we be if we fail to fulfill our responsibilities before God?
4. By what means can we be blameless and harmless in this world?
5. Why are we, as the saints of God, so concerned about the "day of Christ?"

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Jesus had a salvation that He had to work out for Himself. You may say, "Jesus did not have to be saved!" But He did have a salvation that He had to attain to. Hebrews 5:7-9 tells us about Jesus "who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him

that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." This tells us that Jesus was praying for God to save Him from death. This is not referring to being kept from dying, but it means that He was praying for His Father to resurrect Him from death and the grave. So He had a salvation to work out for Himself and He accomplished it by reverence, respect and submission to the will of God. God rewarded Christ for His obedience by raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. We must follow His example and live that true and faithful life and ever seek prayerfully to be accounted worthy to share His glory.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Salvation was given as a freedom; not a hardship. Many are quite eager to "work out their own salvation" but choose to ignore the "fear and trembling" part. Thus, they use this "liberty for an occasion to the flesh." (Galatians 5:13.)

When Christ came to live on this earth He fulfilled the old law. He brought to us the "highway of holiness" mentioned in Isaiah 35:8. Each commandment given was brought a step closer to His holiness. For example: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" was given a much closer line when Christ said, "...Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matthew 5:28. Another example: "Thou shalt not kill" became a definite line when Christ said, "Whosoever is angry with his brother... shall be in danger of the judgement:..." Matthew 5:22. John reenforced this thought when he said, "whosever hateth his brother is a murderer:..." I John 3:15.

Salvation is not haphazard. It is a wonderful gift that should be treated with great care and respect. We should be diligent in searching out this "highway of holiness" with fear and trembling. Think of it as an equation: Salvation + Fear + Trembling = Successful journey to heaven. It works every time.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

**NOVEMBER 21, 2004**

**TIMOTHY, PAUL'S SON IN THE GOSPEL**

I Corinthians 4:17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

I Corinthians 16:10 ...See that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.

Philippians 2:20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

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

I Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.

II Timothy 1:3 ...I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

II Timothy 2:1 ...My son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

3 ...Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

II Timothy 3:14 Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

II Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

5 Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. I Tim. 4:12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The apostle Paul had great confidence in Timotheus and loved him as a son in the gospel of Christ. He recommended him to the saints as a faithful minister and had many encouraging and instructive words to give to him, which are all so beneficial for us today.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(I Corinthians 16:10), "*without fear*": Do not be afraid to trust him as a true minister of the gospel.

(Philippians 2:20), "*naturally care for your state*": The Greek says, "genuinely be anxious for the things about you."

(Philippians 2:21), "*seek their own*": go after the things of themselves.

(Philippians 2:22), "*proof*": test of trustworthiness.

(I Timothy 1:18), "*charge*": an authoritative order or command. "*prophecies which went before on thee*": The prophecies in the holy Scriptures concerning the saints of the New Testament and their work of service. In reality we are all fulfilling prophecy one way or another. There are prophecies that foretell the godliness and holiness of those who obtain salvation and there are prophecies that foretell the corruption that will be in others. It is up to us which of the prophecies we will fulfill. The Holy Scriptures were the basis of the doctrine of the apostles. By them they went forth preaching the Christ that the Scriptures testified of.

(I Timothy 1:19), "*holding*": having and possessing. "*good conscience*": A clear understanding and co-perception of the truth of the gospel without guilt or condemnation.

(II Timothy 1:5), "*unfeigned*": not false; sincere; without pretense.

(II Timothy 2:3), "*hardness*": hardship, adversity, strait and difficult experiences.

(II Timothy 2:15), "*study*": earnestly, promptly, speedily put

forth best effort. *"rightly dividing"*: cutting it straight and expounding it correctly.

(II Timothy 4:1), *"quick"*: Those who are still alive at His coming.

(II Timothy 4:2), *"preach"*: herald or proclaim. *"be instant"*: be present, available, always on the job, ready for service. *"in season, out of season"*: when it is convenient and fitting to circumstances and when it is not. *"reprove"*: admonish. *"re-buke"*: warn. *"exhort"*: comfort and encourage. *"longsuffering"*: forbearance and patience in suffering and injury.

(II Timothy 4:4), *"watch"*: be sober and clearminded. *"make full proof"*: carry out completely; accomplish entirely.

(I Timothy 4:12), *"Let no man despise thy youth"*: Give none occasion for your youthfulness to be short of excellence.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

For our lesson today we have another part of Paul's epistle to the church at Philippi in which he mentions a young minister by the name of Timotheus, which in some places is named as Timothy, whom he is recommending as a trustworthy minister of the same gospel that he, Paul, was preaching. This young man Paul had found at Derbe and Lystra, the son of a Jewess (woman Jew), with a Greek for a father. He was well reported of by the brethren and Paul wanted to take Timothy with him in the work. (Acts 16:1-3.) It is evident that Timothy was with Paul quite extensively after that, as he and Silas passed through the cities and delivered the decrees that were to be kept which were ordained by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. He was with him at Philippi, Athens, Corinth and Troas. In Romans 16:21 Paul called Timotheus his workfellow, that is, companion in labor. It is evident that Paul sent Timothy to other places and also sent word for him at times to come and join him.

Along with the things Paul spoke in the Philippian epistle concerning this young man, we have gathered things he said of Timothy along with several things from the two epistles written by Paul to Timothy personally. There is much spiritual good in these writings and we trust that it will be an incentive to us today for greater spiritual excellence and honor. We note very readily the tender and affectionate regard that Paul had for Timothy and the concern he expressed for this young man's success in Christ. He called him his own son in the faith. He was not negligent to

give Timothy charges and very serious commands concerning his ministry and life. He made it clear that he was in a great warfare from which some had been spiritually put out and made shipwreck.

He was very happy that Timothy had some good background in godliness, having a faithful mother and grandmother who possessed the true faith. From a child he had been taught the holy Scriptures. How needful this is for every child! How sad that so many children of today are nourished by the television and spirit of this present evil world!

We have some of Paul's final words to Timothy written from Rome not long before he suffered martyrdom. These instructions in our lesson that Paul gave to Timothy are still a great message for our spiritual good today. Thank the Lord for preserving them for our good and edification!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What things in Timothy's background were of great benefit to him?
2. Why did Paul speak so highly of Timothy?
3. What were some of the things that Paul counseled Timothy about?
4. What were the charges that Paul gave to Timothy?
5. How can a young person keep their youth from being despised?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The relationship of father and son was ordained by God for humanity and for His people. The father toward the son and the son toward the father has certain requirements and values that are of dire importance. The father has great care and concern for the welfare and happiness of his son. He employs disciplinary measures to get across his counsel and purpose. The father manifests great affection and love for his son. The son, in turn, is to return that love and affection and accompany it with reverence, submission and obedience. A wise son makes a glad father but also a wise father makes a glad son. It worked that way with Christ and His Father and it works that way in the Church with the people of God. Trouble and great destruction ensues when either part of this relationship is hindered and disturbed.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We sing a song that says, "I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God...." Being part of the family of God is important and has great significance. Paul mentioned the unfeigned faith of Timothy's mother and grandmother. We know very little of Timothy's earthly father. We know he was Greek but we don't know if he was saved or not; his faith is not mentioned. As Timothy gave his heart to the Lord he became part of the family of God and Paul became a spiritual father to Timothy. He loved Timothy, counseled with him, took him with him and prayed for him. No doubt this was a great help and had great bearing in Timothy's life.

When I first started living for God I was about as ignorant and green as they come. I wasn't raised in a Christian home and had many things that I didn't understand. God put me in a good family that cared for me, prayed for me and that was willing to take time for me. There were other young people (brothers and sisters), mothers and fathers. Bro. Clifford Wilson was my pastor then and he took a real interest in me. We spent time together, prayed together and discussed Scriptures. He was a real spiritual father to me. Although he is not with us now, his life and messages still influence me today.

There have been other brothers and sisters that God has brought into my life that have had a positive influence for good. As the older ones leave this life, we must see the responsibility of being fathers and mothers in Israel. Not to dominate or control but to love, to be vulnerable and to make ourselves available. I think of the great need of children who grow up without a good father or a good mother. They miss something very important in life. God has set His kingdom up to be as a family. Babies and children need nurture and care or they won't survive.

—Bro. Bob Wilson

**Notice:** If your subscription expired with this quarter, please send your renewal at once. It is necessary that your subscription for the first quarter of 2005 be in this office by December 1st. For your convenience there is an order blank at the back of this book.



**NOVEMBER 28, 2004**

**OTHER COMPANIONS AND HELPERS OF PAUL**

Philippians 2:24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 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.

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

27 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.

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

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:

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

II Timothy 1:16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

II Timothy 4:9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus,

Colossians 4:7 ...Who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord.

**MEMORY VERSE:** A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. Proverbs 17:17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Good and faithful friends and brethren in Christ are a great benefit that we can have in the Church

of God. Ministering to one another not only is a help but it brings a close fellowship of holy affection and unity so sweet and precious.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 2:25), "*Yet I supposed it necessary*": But I deemed or considered it needful. "*your messenger*": The Greek says, "your apostle." "*wants*": justifiable needs.

(Verse 26), "*full of heaviness*": troubled or distressed.

(Verse 29), "*in reputation*": honored.

(II Timothy 1:16), "*refreshed*": relieved.

(Verse 18), "*in that day*": In that great day of Christ's appearing in glory to judge the world and to give reward to His saints.

(II Timothy 4:9), "*Do thy diligence*": Make haste. "*shortly*": speedily.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In our previous lesson we studied about Paul's son in the gospel, Timotheus (or Timothy), and some of the good counsel that we have on record of Paul to him. Today we will consider some other of Paul's companions in the work of the Lord. Just from the few things spoken about these men we can get a pretty good picture of their faithful spirit that meant so much to Paul.

First, we have Epaphroditus with whom it seems that Paul sent this epistle to the Church at Philippi. He was Paul's faithful co-worker and also termed an apostle to the Philippian saints. Note the three things that he was to Paul:

1. He was a brother. Our Memory Verse states that a friend loveth at all times and a brother is born for adversity. In Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 we read how "two are better than one" and "if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow" and "if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him." What a blessing can a faithful and loving brother prove to be!

2. He was a companion in labor, or fellow-worker. He worked in harmony with Paul. A man with the right spirit of love, humility and faithfulness to God is not hard to work with. Many sad things have happened in the work of the Lord when brethren fail to bear and forbear, falling out with each other.

3. He was a fellowsoldier. He was fighting the same battle and with the same foe that Paul was. He stood for what Paul stood for. This man suffered a severe sickness and almost died. He was touched in heart when he learned of the Philippians' concern for him. Paul was greatly concerned for his brother too. What a blessing for us to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ! Another thing we notice was that Paul said that it was for the work of Christ that Epaphroditus was nigh unto death. In it all he did not regard nor cling to his life. That was saying a lot about him. He loved not his life unto the death. (Revelation 12:11.)

Then in II Timothy 1:16-18 Paul mentions Onesiphorus. This man searched for Paul on the occasion of his visit to Rome. It seems that he may have had some difficulty but he did not give up until he had made contact with Paul. He sought to ease his straits of imprisonment with comfort and relief to his spirit. He was not ashamed of the shame that Paul was suffering for the gospel. Paul's desire was that Onesiphorus would be richly rewarded by the Lord "in that day." No greater reward can be hoped for! The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life is worth all the sacrifice and suffering we might go through for His name's sake.

Then he mentions Luke. While Demas had forsaken Paul for the fleeting things of this present world and other brethren had departed to other fields of labour, Luke was still with him. Faithful Luke, who provided the wonderful account of all that Jesus began to do and teach and the activities and functions of the early morning Church and who had accompanied Paul on much of his travels, is with him in these final hours.

And then there was Mark. Do you remember Mark? On that first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas he had suddenly decided to go back to Jerusalem. On account of this Paul refused to give consent for Mark to accompany him and Barnabas on another journey. So Barnabas and Mark went somewhere else. No doubt this was a great weight on Mark and he wondered if Paul would ever have confidence in him again. But here we see Paul's own words: "Bring Mark with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry." Behold the love and brotherly kindness of Paul to the brothers in Christ! It is a great example of godly attitude and goodness that we need to follow even today.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What three things did Paul say Epaphroditus was to him?
2. For what cause was this man sick nigh unto death?
3. What did Onesiphorus do as a brother to Paul?
4. Why was Paul's confidence in Mark so special?
5. What did Paul say about Tychicus?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It means so much for us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, "with all lowliness, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4:1-3. It is not always easy to do this. The word "forbearing" here in the Greek literally means "putting up with one another." When you are with someone day after day and often in straits of difficulty and hardship, if you don't watch out and be very prayerful, things can begin to grind on one another.

I remember an experience I had in some evangelistic meetings with an older couple. In the course of our working together, I noticed some things about them that I did not think were very becoming. I bore with it for awhile and then it began to really grind on me. I remember going off to pray and seek the Lord for help. I was so tempted to pack my bags and head for home. But, somehow, the Lord helped me as I sought His face and I came to the place where I got victory in my soul over the hurt and disappointment that I felt about them. The Holy Spirit flooded my soul with love and tenderness for them and He helped me to bear up and put up. We continued working together in the services and the Lord blessed our labors.

On the last morning I felt the love of God prompting me to speak to the dear ones I had been laboring with about what I saw in them that troubled me. The Lord helped me so wonderfully and our hearts were melted together. They acknowledged that I was right and appreciated what I had said. We parted that day in harmony and sweet fellowship in the Holy Spirit. I learned a great lesson in that experience that I have treasured through the years. I have pondered, "What would have happened if I had followed the temptation to just pack my bags and leave for home?" Oh, no telling what kind of problem would have devel-

oped. It may have done great injury to the cause of the gospel and the influence of my own life and ministry might have been seriously affected. I am so thankful that the Lord guided me through those difficult times and that I obeyed His counsel, overcame the devil and kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Recently while conducting some business at a local establishment one of the clerks needed a book that was used to record information concerning a transaction. The clerk at the adjacent counter stored this book. The lady who was waiting on me went to his counter, picked up the book, brought it back to her counter and recorded the transaction. She then handed the book to the man at the adjacent counter and he just looked at her with a scowl. She called his name and said, "Cooperate!" He slowly and grudgingly reached up and took the book and put it away.

Too often this is the way people of the world treat one another. Sometimes it can even be worse with hateful words being exchanged. This unwillingness to help one another happens in homes and among families that may even be professing godliness. Even common courtesies which take very little effort may be lacking or given grudgingly.

The Lord would like for His people to be different. To have a warm godly love for one another and seek ways to be a blessing to each other. As members of the body of Christ we are admonished in I Corinthians 12:25-26, "That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

Our lesson today gives beautiful examples of the body of Christ sharing sorrow and joy and ministering to each other's needs. That is the way God wants His people to be and I'm happy to report that those who are born into the true Church of God today still have that same tender, selfless concern for one another.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey

**DECEMBER 5, 2004**

**COUNTING ALL THINGS BUT LOSS FOR CHRIST**

Philippians 3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Phil. 3:3.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Paul had many things to his credit in the old law system and in being a devout Israelite. But Jesus Christ, whom he persecuted, was made known to him and he became aware that all of his righteousness of the law was

nothing. He saw that it was all of the flesh. Therefore he gave up everything and sought to know and have Christ and His righteousness and to lay hold of everything that Christ had for him.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Phil. 3:1), "*not grievous*": not tiresome. "*safe*": certain, secure and unfailing.

(Verse 2), "*beware*": behold, look at and keep an eye on and watch out for. "*dogs*": The Greek meaning is "a hound." He is certainly not talking about a literal hound. It is a figure of speech referring to people who are fleshly minded without spiritual insight and yet are seeking to turn away the gospel message. The Gentiles were considered, in time past, by the Jews to be as dogs and looked on with contempt. But since they, the Jews, rejected Jesus as the Son of God, they have become the dogs. "*concision*": The Greek meaning is "a cutting off": The Jewish rite of circumcision, the cutting off of the flesh, in the face of the truth in Christ has lost its real purpose and value. It is vain and empty and yet so many of Israel clung to it and sought to press it on the Gentiles. Paul was very plain and clear in his denunciation of fleshly circumcision as having spiritual value and benefit. He is warning these brethren at Philippi to be on guard against the influence of those who sought to uphold fleshly circumcision as a requirement for being saved. In verse 3 he makes it clear that circumcision now is in the Spirit and not of the flesh.

(Verse 3), "*no confidence in the flesh*": not trusting in the flesh, referring to the rite of circumcision and the old law system.

(Verse 4), "*Though I might*": He is declaring his freedom from trust in the flesh and the law, yet he will enumerate several of the things that he could still have confidence in of the old law righteousness. "*I more*": He had as much in the law to rely on as anyone and even more. And now he will list those things that he trusted in before but are now counting them as worthless.

(Verse 5), "*stock*": race or nationality. "*Hebrew of the Hebrews*": He was a Hebrew and came from a Hebrew family. How then could Paul say as he said in Acts 16:37 and in Acts 22: 27-28 that he was a free born Roman? According to history, all citizens who were born in Tarsus (where Paul was born) were granted by Caesar to have the same rights and privileges as

Roman citizens. That was the reason that Paul declared that he was a free born Roman. But his real race was of Israel.

(Verse 6), "*concerning*" and "*touching*": Both of these words are from the same Greek expression meaning having to do with, or what about. In other words, he is saying, "What about zeal? I persecuted the church, the people who believed in Jesus. And what about law righteousness? I was blameless." He had these things to his credit as a Jew. Outwardly and in the eyes of the Jewish leaders Paul was an outstanding proponent of the cause of literal Israel. But in the eyes of God, Paul had to acknowledge that he did not keep the law but was unable to live up to its holy standard and it became sin to him. (See Romans 7:13.)

(Verse 8), "*Yea, doubtless*": The Greek says, "So then at least," or "nay, rather": He had just stated that all those things which formerly had been gain to him, he now counted as loss for Christ. In this verse he carries it even farther and states that he counts *all things* as loss for the excellency (that which is superior above all else) of Christ. "*dung*": filth and what is to be thrown out. "*win Christ*": to gain, possess, lay hold of and own Christ as his sole treasure.

(Verse 9), "*be found in Him*": To be accounted worthy and identified as being in the sight of Almighty God one of Christ's own.

(Verse 10), "*know Him*": To be aware of, to feel, to experience, to understand, (beyond all doubt and with all assurance) the Lord Jesus Christ as He really and truly is. "*being made conformable unto his death*": being rendered and ordered and to be willing to suffer like as Christ did and to die just as horribly and unjustly as Christ died. This along with experiencing Christ and the transforming power of His resurrection in spiritual life and sharing in His sufferings are the prerequisites of being accounted worthy to share Christ's glory.

(Verse 11), "*If by any means*": If somehow or some way. "*attain*": arrive at.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today starts out with Paul's warning against the influence of those who were going about contending that people must yet be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be right with God. Paul declares that the circumcision and worship we have toward God must be now in the Spirit and not



in the fleshly things of the old law system. Then he enumerates several of the things that he was into when under the dominion of the law, which things he declares that now he accounts as loss and something to be cast away. He so greatly expresses the importance of knowing and possessing Christ and His righteousness and following Him all the way. It is a recipe, we might say, that Paul is giving us of what it takes to have real hope of sharing in Christ's resurrection. It is surely something we need to understand, be persuaded of and earnestly seek to fully experience.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Who were the dogs, evil workers and the concision Paul warns of?
2. What kind of circumcision and worship are we to have in Christ?
3. Why did Paul count his profits in the Jewish religion as useless?
4. What are we to apply ourselves to lay hold of if we would be saved?
5. What are we to be willing to experience if we would attain to the resurrection?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

If we would attain unto the resurrection from the dead and stand before Christ, the eternal King of glory, in that last great day, there are specific things laid down here by the apostle that we must seek earnestly for and submit to. Read them and memorize them. They are the only means by which we can hope to come forth with Christ from the grave. We must seek to really know Him, have the righteousness of His faith, to know and experience the power of His resurrection in our lives, to share in His sufferings and be willing to die in a voluntary way as He willingly did. This is serious business, a matter that we would do well to ponder, study about and above all pray and seek the Lord about.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

How can we be made conformable unto Christ's death? Does this mean that if I don't die upon a literal cross that I cannot

participate with Jesus? Peter gives us a clue when he said that we are to arm ourselves with the same mind that Christ had when He suffered. (I Peter 4: 1.) In suffering with Christ, we cease from sin and live no longer to the desires of our flesh, but to the will of God. (Verse 2.) Jesus said we must take up the cross "daily." (Luke 9:23.)

Paul also lets us know that we are "alway bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake." (II Corinthians 4:10-11.) He also said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20.)

So how are we crucified with Him? How do we bear about in our bodies His dying? Crosses weren't meant for carrying. They were instruments of death. We too have instruments of death in our individual lives. For you it might be a person with whom you share your life. For that person, you relinquish your desires, your hopes and dreams, your individual preferences. You die on that cross. It could be a physical handicap or affliction, financial disaster, deep disappointment, betrayal or humiliation. For some of us it could just be the daily accumulation of pressing duties, menial, unexciting tasks and petty annoyances and frustrations. They could stress us, embitter us, wear us out or we could take them up, stretch ourselves willingly upon them and with Christ's same mind, die and rise again with Him in new life, quickened strength and victorious service.

The choice is ours, every moment of every day.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**DECEMBER 12, 2004**

### **PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK**

Philippians 3: 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:*

19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is *their belly*, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

**MEMORYVERSE:** I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** We must strive, press and seek to attain to the goal of being more and more pleasing and acceptable to God, not thinking that we are perfect or already attained to it, but rather reaching forth to higher heights and deeper depths, with our affections on eternal treasures in heaven, from where the Lord Jesus will one day come and receive us to Himself.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 3:12.) The Greek renders this verse: "Not that I already received, or already have been perfected. But I follow, if also I may lay hold, inasmuch as also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus." In the preceding verses Paul stated what he was seeking to attain to in Christ. He does this, not thinking that he had already received it, but he was pursuing after these things to lay hold of them, because Christ had laid hold of him. He does not count himself to have them and rest in ease. But rather he continues his pursuit of them every day and will to the end of his pilgrimage.

(Verse 13), *"reaching forth"*: stretching forward. *"before"*: that which is ahead or in front.

(Verse 14), *"press"*: The same as "follow after" in verse 12: to pursue and seek after. *"mark"*: a goal or objective. What is the goal that he is pursuing? To have and to know Christ, to have His righteousness, to experience the power of His risen life, to be a partaker of Christ's sufferings and to die with the same spirit of meekness and faith in God that Christ died with. *"prize"*: the award, or recompense promised. Hebrews 12:1-2 tells us to "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 (counting lightly) the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus had a prize before His vision that helped to carry Him through what He had to suffer. What was His prize? It was the glory that His Father would give Him in being resurrected from the dead and ascending on high. But along with that was the Bride He was to receive of the souls of humanity who would be saved and glorified along with Him. *"high calling"*: The highest and most wonderful invitation that man could ever be given, the invitation to share with Christ eternal life and happiness in that coming world without end.

(Verse 15), *"perfect"*: complete or mature. *"be thus minded"*: think this way.

(Verse 16), *"whereto we have already attained"*: to what we have arrived, as far as we have progressed. *"mind the same thing"*: have the same mind and purpose.

(Verse 17), *"mark"*: regard, consider and receive instruction. Psalm 37:37 says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." *"ensample"*: a pattern or example; a model to imitate after.

(Verse 18), *"enemies of the cross"*: Those who are hateful and contrary to the shame and reproach suffered because of being different from the world, who seek to lighten it and make it less reproachful and are not willing to deny the flesh and self to follow Him.

(Verse 19), *"God is their belly"*: The gratification of their fleshly desires is the thing that they love and follow after. *"whose glory is in their shame"*: The word of God declares that nakedness and unveiling of the body is a shame, but our society glories

in the disrobing of the body in abbreviated attire such as low-necked dresses, shorts, bathing suits and such like. "*who mind earthly things*": whose heart and affections are absorbed in the things that are seen, things of no eternal value.

(Verse 20), "*conversation*": commonwealth or citizenship.

(Verse 21), "*our vile body*": The Greek says, "the body of our humiliation," which is this mortal flesh beneath the sentence of decay and death. "*His glorious body*": the body of Christ's glory. "*the working*": the energy, power and ability. "*subdue all things unto himself*": God has given to His Son Jesus Christ the power to bring all things under His feet. This comes from Psalm 8:6 and Psalm 110:1, both scriptures being quoted different times in the New Testament. All of Christ's enemies He will subdue and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.( I Corinthians 15:26.)

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today ties right in with our previous lesson where Paul had expressed the things that he sought to attain to in Christ. Our first scripture states that he is not as though he had already attained to these things that he had mentioned. Neither did he count himself perfect. But it was a mark that he was constantly working toward. We hurt ourselves when we cease to strive for improvement and advancement in spiritual growth. As the song says, "Ne'er think the vict'ry won, nor once at ease sit down; Thine arduous work will not be done Till thou hast got the crown." We must never get self-satisfied or become over-confident. This spirit of pressing and gaining higher ground in Christ should be ours all the way. We must keep an open mind to be taught of God. We may have ideas and conceptions in our thoughts that are "otherwise." God can and will reveal any discrepancy we might have if we are humble and teachable.

The Christian life is a progressive, forward moving life. We must live above the world and the fleshly minded society we are in. We are citizens of a heavenly kingdom. This is our priority. Our earthly citizenship is secondary for it will end at death. But our citizenship with Christ will transcend far beyond this fleeting world. Let us live with this hope in view, always praying for God to count us worthy to stand before Him in that day.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Is heaven our goal or is attaining to Christ's likeness our goal?
2. Why are we not to count ourselves perfect or having already attained?
3. What is the prize that we are desiring to at last receive?
4. How is the belly a god and how can people glory in their shame?
5. What kind of citizenship do we have and what are we looking for?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The true Christian life is a race and the exertion of desire, hope, ambition and labor for excellence and spiritual success. It is not an automatic thing. Many people are deceived in supposing that they are "bound for heaven" regardless. There must be sacrifice, self-denial, self-control, effort, submission, patience, perseverance, pressing, spiritual warfare, constant growth and improvement—all this must accompany our profession of faith in Him. We must stand the pressure of the worldly and earthly-minded society we are among. We are at conflict with those who live for temporal things. We do not fit into the lustful and pleasure-mad throng. We must go forth bearing Christ's reproach, for here have we no continuing city, but we seek for one to come. (Hebrews 13:13-14. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. This statement is further proven by the scripture mentioned in our lesson today: "For our conversation is in heaven" This verse prescribes for us a method of living while here on earth.

When Jesus was teaching His disciples how to pray He said, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6: 10.) This is further proof that earthly living should parallel heavenly living.

We must be diligent to search out the boundaries of heaven. Does my life reflect here what I expect it to be in heaven? Is my conversation worthy to be examined by heaven? Am I walking in all of God's will while here on earth just as I would be in heaven?

That leaves us with this solemn thought: If our conduct/conversation while here on earth is not parallel with heaven then we are not truly prepared to go. —Sis. LaDawna Adams



**DECEMBER 19, 2004**

### **A RECIPE FOR A QUIET AND PEACEABLE LIFE**

Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I intreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Isaiah 26:3.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** By keeping love for others, rejoicing always in the Lord, keeping a mild and gentle attitude and being prayerful and thankful, we can have the peace of God ruling in our hearts and minds.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 4: 1), "*Therefore*": Because of what he has just dwelt on concerning our pursuing of the Christian race and reaching forth to attain to what Christ has provided for us, Paul lovingly entreats his beloved brethren to steadfastness in the Lord Jesus. "*beloved*": cherished, very dear, close to heart and precious. "*longed for*": yearned upon and greatly loved. "*my joy*": a source of special cheer and calm delight. "*crown*": This is more than a diadem, but rather a more conspicuous, special and outstanding wreath or badge of royalty.

(Verse 2), "*beseech*": a loving entreaty accompanied by encouragement, consolation and comfort. Paul expressed it in Philemon 8, 9 like this: "Though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin (command) thee that which is convenient (proper or fitting), Yet for love's sake I rather beseech (entreat) thee."

(Verse 3), "*yoke-fellow*": workers together.

(Verse 4), "*rejoice*": be cheerful and calmly happy.

(Verse 5), "*moderation*": being appropriate, mild, gentle, not extravagant nor extreme, but calm and well-balanced in mind and attitude. "*at hand*": not far off, but near. Moses said in Deut. 30:11-14, "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Paul quoted from this in Romans 10:8 concerning the righteousness of faith that it is "nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach."

(Verse 6), "*careful*": anxious. This is from the same Greek expression as I Peter 5:7 where he said, "Casting all your *care* upon him; for he careth for you." "*supplication*": asking, petitioning and begging.

(Verse 7), "*passeth*": surpasses, goes beyond. "*keep*": guard, protect, sustain.

(Verse 8), "*honest*": honorable, respectable and devout. "*lovely*": lovable, friendly and acceptable. "*of good report*": well spoken of, of good reputation. "*virtue*": excellence, worthy and mature manliness and valor. "*praise*": that which is commendable.



## LESSON BACKGROUND

Paul has just dwelt on the most wonderful experience and blessing that a man can have in this life, that of Christ revealed and the hope of glory we have in Him. Now in our lesson today we want to consider his loving counsel and admonition to these brethren in Philippi who were so dear to him. And what he said to them is yet fragrant and rich with spiritual treasures for us today.

Notice his tender and affectionate expressions. Oh, the love and pure affection that binds the souls who are united in the Lord Jesus, our King of love! Having the same faith and the same attachment to Him who gave His life to set us free produces a fellowship and a joyful union that words fail to describe. There is great joy in the witness of the Lord in our souls and when we see it working so sweetly in others, our hearts swell with rapture and fervent delight. Paul said in Ephesians 5:1-2 for us to be "followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us." He said in chapter 4 and verses 31 and 32, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour (crying out), and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Oh, let us cultivate this spirit of love and tenderness for one another and for all of our fellow creatures of earth.

Paul entreated the brethren to help those women who labored with him in the gospel. Clarke observes that as women in those times were more reserved and withdrawn, it took women, who were anointed by the Holy Spirit, to help those who were not in easy access as some were. Lydia, who helped the brethren at Philippi, was a more outgoing woman, but there were doubtless many more who were more reserved. He spoke of those of his fellow-labourers whose names are in the book of life. What a wonderful blessing to have this assurance of our names written in heaven! Jesus said, "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20. Job said in Job 16:19, "Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high."

We would all do well to take heed to Paul's words about moderation and not being anxious or worried about anything, but rather keep taking everything to the Lord in prayer. In this

world of turmoil and strife, mental illness and depression are everywhere. We can live above it all if we keep things committed to God and let His peace keep our hearts and minds.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Paul encourage his dearly beloved ones to do?
2. What value is there for us to always rejoice in the Lord?
3. How can we have and maintain the peace of God in our hearts?
4. What will this peace of God do for us?
5. What kind of things should we discipline our minds to think on?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Peace is a sought after state by so many, but the way of peace so few people really know. Quietness and security from disturbance and harm is a desired place to be. There is a peace that we can have that will not only safeguard us from evil but will bring a satisfaction to our inner being that all the security that man could provide cannot give. It is the privilege to come to the throne of grace that has been established in the eternal heavens where God Almighty welcomes humanity to bring their burdens, their fears, their sorrows, their pain, their distress and any other disturbance that they might encounter. We can come to this place through faith and prayer, pouring out our hearts to God in pleading and request and calling upon Him. In coming to God we must be sure to offer our expressions of thanks and gratitude to Him for His goodness and greatness and mercy. We need to count our blessings and be thankful for things as well as they are. We are privileged to bring every thing to God in prayer and then hold confidence that He hears and will work as He sees best. This kind of confidence and assurance in our hearts will do more to bring peace and quietness to our innermost being than any other thing one might try. And as we develop this attitude of trust in God, we can gauge our thoughts to better avenues. All of the depression and frustration around us can be swept away and our minds can be more at ease and calm. There would be much less mental sickness and depression in this old world today if mankind would but learn and avail themselves of this wonderful privilege.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Years ago, it was related to me, that a younger person was discussing Scripture with Bro. Ostis Wilson. As the conversation progressed, the younger person began to get a little heated with his argument. Bro. Ostis saw where the conversation was headed and he wisely put on the brakes and began to still the conversation. The God of peace wants there to be peace, first in our own hearts, but also in our congregations. When we air our complaints and frustrations without discretion in the assembly of saints it only causes confusion and offenses. The Scriptures are full of counsel on how to take care of our problems. If we have ought against a brother it mentions going to him in private first. This is for the purpose of quietly minimizing noise and friction that may exist. There have been outsiders come in and go away discouraged by disruptions that shouldn't have occurred.

There is a saying something to the effect - "if you disagree, disagree agreeably." In other words, we should always conduct ourselves in a manner that becomes a Christian. "The servant of the Lord, must not strive; but be gentle unto all men..."

I also heard an account of a congregation wanting to relocate. Some wanted to make the move and some didn't. Business time came and the majority of the congregation wanted to make the move. There was an older brother there who was opposed to the move; but once the decision was made, he was one of the first ones there with his hammer ready to work on the new building project. I thought that was a good Christian example. It is a beautiful picture to see a group of saints working together in peace and unity for the furtherance of the cause of Christ. "Follow the things, which make for peace."

—Bro. Bob Wilson



**DECEMBER 26, 2004**

### **THE BLESSING OF FAITHFUL SUPPORT**

Philippians 4:10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. II Cor. 9:7.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Giving of our means to the work of the Lord is not only a great blessing to His ministers, but it also will turn for fruit to our account in Heaven.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Philippians 4:10), The Greek renders this verse: "And I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last your thinking of me

revived, as to which indeed you thought, but lacked opportunity."

(Verse 11), "*content*": self-satisfied. It was not gratification of covetous desires that he was concerned about their giving, for the Lord had instructed him to rise above his circumstances and be happy in the Lord and thankful regardless.

(Verse 12), "*abased*": humbled or humiliated. "*abound*": To have plenty and more than enough. The Lord would have us all to learn this important lesson. In times of scarcity and necessities when things are close and narrow we must keep happy in Him and cheerful. Then in times of plenty and abundance we must keep poor in spirit and our trust solely in Him. We must learn to take prosperity and adversity, triumph and disaster, bad feelings and good feelings, health and affliction, praise and ridicule. Outward or surrounding conditions must not be the gauge of our spiritual temperature. In other words, we must be a thermostat and not just a thermometer.

(Verse 13), "*strengtheneth*": gives power. It was through the inward inspiration and guidance of the Spirit of Christ within him that he was able to meet the extremities of situation and circumstance. Man, in his own selfish realm of thought, is not so prone to be content.

(Verse 14), "*communicate with my affliction*": sharing with my troubles.

(Verse 16), "*necessity*": need.

(Verse 17), "*account*": From the Greek word "logos," the definition of which is far reaching. Principally it means a word, something spoken (including the thought); a topic or subject of discourse; also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive; and it also has an extended meaning of *computation*. Now this is what Paul's thought is. What these brethren gave in loving sacrifice for Paul's need as a consecrated servant of the Lord would be computed or reckoned to their account before God in heaven. Many of us work with computers in this day and what you program into a computer's memory can be retained on record for future reference and use. Note: What we give to help, (whoever it might be as humanity or the work of the gospel and the ministers thereof), goes into the memory of our spiritual computer in Heaven before the all-knowing God. The writer in Hebrews 10:34 spoke of those who had helped him: "For ye had

compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods (the seizure of your possessions), knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." We all have an account in heaven, as Jesus said in Matthew 6:20, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

(Verse 20), "*for ever and ever*": The Greek expression is: "to the ages of the ages." "Amen": This is a Hebrew word, an interesting and greatly important word. It basically means (from the Hebrew) to build up or support, to render firm or faithful, to trust or believe, to be permanent or quiet and to be true or certain. Other words come from this universal expression: assurance, believe, stable, establish, faith, faithful, steadfast, sure, true, truth, etc. The general literal thought expressed when we say "Amen" is: "So be it!" We make the statement and then add, "So be it!" That means that it will be and we have not a shred of a doubt about it.

(Verse 21-22), "*Salute*": There are different applications: to enfold in the arms; to welcome; and to embrace. "*Caesar's household*": There is firm indication in the ancient records that some of Nero's family (He was the cruel emperor of Rome at that time) were Christians converted through the ministry of Paul.

The note at the end of this epistle reads: "It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus." This means that Epaphroditus conveyed this letter from Paul to the church at Philippi.

( II Cor. 9:7), "*grudgingly*": not in sadness, heaviness, or grief.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

This is our final lesson from this loving epistle from the apostle Paul to the Church of God at Philippi. In these final words in which he concludes his letter, Paul gives us some insight of these brethren who were so dear to him and the ministering that they offered to him in his needs in the work of Christ. It appears that there was an elapse of time since they had communicated to him of their earthly substance. And now Paul rejoices in the gifts he had received from them sent by the hand of his brother, companion in labor and fellow-soldier, Epaphroditus, whom he

had sent to them. Epaphroditus returned from Philippi with the bounteous offerings that were to Paul an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God.

Paul introduces to us here a great secret to happiness and success, a lesson that every Christian needs to learn. It is the thought of contentment. He also said in I Timothy 6:6 that "godliness with contentment is great gain" and in verse 8: "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content." How vital is this lesson to be learned! He also shows some of the beauty of giving and ministering to the needs of others, another vital lesson that every child of God needs to take into their scroll of knowledge and experience.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why was Paul mainly so glad for the liberality of the church at Philippi?
2. What great lesson had Paul learned and how did it help him?
3. What kind of account do we have with God and how does giving affect it?
4. How did Paul feel about the offering that they sent to him?
5. How must we give if we desire God to be pleased with our gifts?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

How a man handles and what he does with the means that God permits him to have has everything to do with our spiritual and eternal destiny. Psalm 112 is a vivid treatise about the man who fears the Lord and delights greatly in His commandments. Among the various things spoken of such a man it says: "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever." Paul quotes that in II Corinthians 9:9 in speaking of the importance of giving and sharing with others of our substance. It was one of the outstanding attributes of the church at Philippi. Their generosity and ministering of their substance, accompanied by the warm affection manifested to Paul, was a great blessing to this man of God. Blessed are all who overcome this world of greed and selfishness and find the joy and blessing of giving to help others and the work of Christ.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

John 3:16 is one of the most quoted Scriptures of the Bible. It says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave..." God has proven His love for mankind by what He has given. If you will look around you right now you will, no doubt, see some of the blessings He has given that you did not work for and you could not buy. The most precious gift that He gave us is His only begotten son, Jesus Christ

Jesus gave His sinless life to pay for our redemption. His supreme sacrifice proved His great love for us.

Paul proved His love for the Philippians by ministering to their needs, they proved their love for Paul by giving to him.

How can we prove our love for God, the brethren and our fellow man unless we give them something? James said, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." Love, like faith, is hard to show without works.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14:23. We see that there is a great blessing in loving the Lord and keeping His words. For us to keep His words we must love the "Lord," our "neighbor" and even our "enemies." The scope of God's love is very broad and the responsibility to keep His words is very great. It will require us to unselfishly give our time, talents, knowledge and earthly possessions to fulfill our responsibility to Him and our fellow man.

Paul said if I "...have not charity, I am nothing." Let us not have a reclusive attitude but strive to show our love to others by giving more of the good things God has bestowed upon us. We will find that the presence of the Lord will be very near us and our experience with Him will be greatly strengthened and we will have great treasure laid up where moth and rust do not corrupt.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey





# FAITH<sup>AND</sup>VICTORY

USPS 104-620

## Church of God Servant



Subscribe or give a gift subscription to the *Faith and Victory* for one year (eleven issues) for only \$5.00. This 16 page holiness paper is published in the interest of the Church of God. It teaches salvation from all sin, sanctification for believers, unity and oneness for which Jesus prayed as recorded in John 17:21.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Amount of money enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Gift to \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_ years.

**Mail Order Blank and remittance to:**

**FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE**  
**P. O. Box 518, Guthrie, OK 73044**  
**1-800-767-1479**

4th/04

## *Subscription Order*

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ copy/ies of the  
*Bible Lessons* quarterly to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription rate: \$1.25 per copy per  
quarter; or \$5.00 per copy for one year  
(issued quarterly).

Please find enclosed payment in the  
amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ .

Mail to:  
FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE  
P. O. Box 518  
Guthrie, OK 73044

4th/04



