

**Monday 1/3****Related Verses****Phil. 1:1-2**

1 Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in <sup>1</sup>Philippi, <sup>2</sup>with the <sup>3</sup>overseers and <sup>4</sup>deacons:

2 <sup>1</sup>Grace to you and <sup>2</sup>peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Titus 2:11-14**

11 For the grace of God, bringing salvation to all men, has appeared,

12 Training us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in the present age,

13 Awaiting the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

14 Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify to Himself a particular people as His unique possession, zealous of good works.

**Phil. 3:1, 3, 8**

1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, for me it is not irksome, but for you it is safe.

3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,

8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

In the Bible there are two books which are concerned with experience rather than doctrine,... Song of Songs and Philippians....Every book in the Bible has both a background and a subject....At the time the book of Philippians was written, the Judaizers were exercising their influence over the believers in Christ (3:2-4). The Judaizers were very strong for the Jewish religion. They not only practiced their religion, but they promoted it and even fought for it....As a result of the Jewish dispersion, these Judaizers were spread over the Mediterranean region.... No other group of people could match the zeal with which the

Judaizers promoted their religion. Even in Philippi, a city in Macedonia, they were exercising their influence over the believers.... [In 3:2] the fact that the "dogs" are associated with the evil workers and the concision indicates that the "dogs" are religious people. The evil workers mentioned here...were those who advocated circumcision. But as they zealously promoted circumcision, they were like barking dogs.... [This] was one aspect of the background against which the book of Philippians was written.... [Also], the Judaistic believers [were] preaching Christ because of envy and strife in rivalry with the apostle Paul.... [Positively, there was] the participation of the Philippian believers with the apostle Paul in the furtherance of the gospel (1:5-7; 4:14-19).... [However], there was still at least some amount of dissension among them (1:27; 2:1-4; 4:2-3).

The subject of Philippians is the experience of Christ....It was necessary for the Philippians to experience Christ in order to overcome the influence of the Judaizers [3:2-4]...acquire discernment concerning the different ways of preaching Christ [1:9-11]... [and] participate in the furtherance of the gospel (1:5, 27-30). Through the experience of Christ, we are able to share in God's move in His economy. Finally, the experience of Christ is for the abolishing of dissension (2:5, 12-16). (*Life-study of Philippians*, pp. 1-4, 5, 7, 8-10)

**Portions from the footnotes****Phil. 1:1, note 1 Philippi**

Philippi was the chief city in the province of Macedonia of the ancient Roman Empire (Acts 16:12). Through Paul's first ministry journey to Europe (Acts 16:10-12), the first church in Europe was raised up in that city.

**Phil. 1:1, note 2 with**

Here it is not "the saints...and the overseers and deacons"; rather, it is "the saints...with the overseers and deacons." This is highly significant in that it indicates that in the local church the saints, the overseers, and the deacons are not three groups. The church has only one group, composed of all the saints (including the overseers and deacons), who are the components of a local church. This indicates further that in any locality there should be just one church with one group of people, comprising all the saints in that locality.

**Phil. 1:1, note 3 overseers**

Overseers are the elders in a local church (Acts 20:17, 28). *Elder* denotes the person, and overseer the function.

An overseer is an elder in function. Here overseers are mentioned instead of elders, indicating that the elders were fulfilling their responsibility.

**Phil. 1:1, note 4 deacons**

The Greek word means *serving ones*. The deacons are the serving ones in a local church and are under the direction of the overseers (1 Tim. 3:8). This verse, showing that a local church is composed of the saints, with overseers to take the lead and deacons to serve, indicates that the church in Philippi was in good order.

**Phil. 1:2, note 1 Grace**

Grace is God as our enjoyment (John 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:10). (Eph. 1:2, note 1)

**Phil. 1:2, note 2 peace**

Peace is the condition that issues from grace, from the enjoyment of God our Father. (Eph. 1:2, note 2)

*Suggested daily reading: Life-study of Philippians, pp. 1-5, 8-13; Hymns: #541*

**Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 7 – Sections: Enjoying God By Eating And Drinking Him; God Desiring Man To Enjoy Him by Eating And Drinking Him; The Lord Jesus Being Man's Real Food**

**Tuesday 1/4****Related Verses****Phil. 1:3-6 (5-6)**

3 I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you,

4 Always in my every petition on behalf of you all, making my petition with joy,

5 For your <sup>1</sup>fellowship unto the furtherance of the <sup>2</sup>gospel from the first day until now,

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

**Phil. 3:9-10, 12-14**

9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,

10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

**12** Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

**13** Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,

**14** I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.

**Phil. 1:27**

**27** Only, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, that whether coming and seeing you or being absent, I may hear of the things concerning you, that you stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together along with the faith of the gospel,

**Rom. 1:16**

**16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes, both to Jew first and to Greek.

**John 15:5, 11**

**5** I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

**11** These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full.

**Portions from the footnotes**

**Phil. 1:5, note 1 fellowship**

*Fellowship* here means *participation, communication*. See note 261 in Rom. 15. The saints in Philippi had fellowship unto the gospel, participating in the furtherance of the gospel through the apostle Paul's ministry. This participation included their financial contributions to the apostle (4:10, 15-16), which issued in the furtherance of the gospel. This kind of fellowship, which kept them from being individualistic and diversely minded, implies that they were one with the apostle Paul and with one another. This gave them the ground for their experience and enjoyment of Christ, which is the main point of this book. The Christ-experiencing and -enjoying life is a life in the furtherance of the gospel, a gospel-preaching life, not individualistic but corporate. Hence, there is the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel. The more fellowship we have in the furtherance of the gospel, the more Christ we

experience and enjoy. This kills our self, ambition, preference, and choice.

**Phil. 1:5, note 2 gospel**

Concerning the gospel, in this book Paul used several significant terms: *fellowship unto... the gospel, the defense and confirmation of the gospel* (v. 7), *the advancement of the gospel* (v. 12), and *the faith of the gospel* (v. 27). Paul's preaching of Christ as the gospel included fellowship, defense, confirmation, advancement, and the faith. In contrast, the Judaistic believers preached Christ out of rivalry, factiousness, selfish ambition, envy, and strife, and did not cause the gospel to advance.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

The whole book of Philippians is a definition of the gospel. The gospel is the proclamation of the move of God on earth according to His economy. This means that the gospel is the preaching of God's economy. Thus, the gospel includes the matter of magnifying Christ and living Christ. It includes every aspect of the experience of Christ covered in this book. For the Philippian believers to participate with Paul in the furtherance of the gospel meant that they were partaking in the move of God's economy on earth. (*Life-study of Philippians*, p. 7)

[Verses 5 and 6] indicate that the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel is a good work, a work initiated by Christ. Christ will complete this work until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians unveils the fact that the experience of Christ is the fellowship unto the gospel until the Lord Jesus comes back....From the time we are saved until the time the Lord Jesus comes back, our Christian life should be a gospel-preaching life. We are not here for our education, job, or family, and we are not here to earn money or to gain a reputation or position. We are here to live a gospel-preaching life, a life that preaches Christ.

[However], our gospel-preaching life should not be individualistic; rather, it must be corporate. This is the reason that in the preaching of the gospel we have fellowship.... If we simply engage in the preaching of the gospel, we shall not have very much experience of Christ. The experience of Christ is not mainly in the preaching; it is in the fellowship. We need to preach the gospel in fellowship. As long as you have fellowship in your preaching of the gospel, you will experience Christ. (*The Experience of Christ*, pp. 13-15)

*Suggested daily reading: Life-study of Philippians, pp. 7-8, 13-14; The Experience of Christ, pp. 13-15; Hymns: #1295*

**Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 7 – Sections: God Desiring Man Not to Work for Him but to Eat and Drink Him (paragraphs 1-4)**

**Wednesday 1/5**

**Related Verses**

**Phil. 1:7-8**

**7** Even as it is right for me to think this concerning you all because you have me in your heart, since both in my bonds and in the <sup>1</sup>defense and confirmation of the gospel you are all <sup>2</sup>fellow partakers <sup>3</sup>with me of grace.

**8** For God is my witness how I long after you all in the inward parts of Christ Jesus.

**2 Cor. 5:14-15**

**14** For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;

**15** And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

**Phil. 1:20-21**

**20** According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

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

**2 Cor. 4:15-16**

**15** For all things are for your sakes that the grace which has abounded through the greater number may cause the thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

**16** Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

**Phil. 2:5**

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

**Rom. 5:15, 17**

15 But it is not that as the offense was, so also the gracious gift is; for if by the offense of the one the many died, much more the grace of God and the free gift in grace of the one man Jesus Christ have abounded to the many.

17 For if by the offense of the one death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

**Portions from the footnotes****Phil. 1:7, note 1 defense**

On the negative side, the defense of the gospel is for the resisting of perverting and distorting heresies, such as Judaism, dealt with in Galatians, and Gnosticism, dealt with in Colossians. On the positive side, the confirmation of the gospel is for the announcing of the revelations of God's mysteries concerning Christ and the church as unveiled in the apostle's Epistles. In preaching such a gospel according to God's economy, Paul renounced religion, law, culture, ordinances, customs, habits, and every kind of "ism" — everything that was apart from God's economy. Because Paul preached such a gospel, he was regarded as a troublemaker, a pest (Acts 24:5).

**Phil. 1:7, note 2 fellow**

Fellow partakers of grace are those who share and enjoy the processed Triune God as grace. The apostle was such in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, and the saints in Philippi were fellow partakers with him in this grace.

**Phil. 1:7, note 3 with**

Or, of my grace. Paul's grace was the grace that he enjoyed and that surpassed his sufferings in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. This grace was not God objectively; it was the Triune God processed to be his portion subjectively and experientially.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

To suffer for the gospel...is to stand for the interest of God's economy. As long as we remain in the Lord's recovery, caring for the accomplishment of God's economy, our destiny is to suffer for the gospel....Along with suffering for the gospel, there is always the enjoyment of

grace....Suffering for God's economy brings in the supply of grace.

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he was suffering for the gospel. In 1:7, 13, 14, and 17 he refers to his bonds, that is, his imprisonment. This indicates clearly that the book of Philippians was written from prison. Although Paul was a prisoner,... [he] was enjoying the Lord. Verse 7, in which Paul speaks of partaking of grace, indicates this. Paul was in bonds, but he was enjoying grace. This verse indicates clearly and strongly that for Paul prison was a place of feasting and not merely of suffering.

[Verse 8] indicates that Paul experienced the inward parts of Christ. The Greek word rendered "inward parts" means bowels. It signifies inward affection, then tender mercy and sympathy. Paul was one with Christ even in His bowels, the tender inward parts, in longing after the saints.

Verses 7 and 8 belong together and should not be separated. Notice that verse 8 begins with the conjunction "for." This indicates that grace is related to the inward parts of Christ. Paul partook of grace, for he longed after all the saints in the inward parts of Christ. To enjoy Christ is to be one in Christ's inward parts. This refers not only to enjoyment, but also to living Christ. To live Christ is to abide in His inward parts and there to enjoy Him as grace.

To magnify Christ [v. 20] and to live Christ [v. 21] require that we remain in the inward parts of Christ. In simple words, this is to abide in Him. If we would be those in Christ, we must be in His inward parts. We need to be in His tender heart and delicate feelings. If we abide here, we shall enjoy Christ as grace and experience Him in a very practical way. As we experience Christ and enjoy Him as our grace, we shall be sustained in suffering for the gospel by caring for the accomplishment of God's economy on earth today. (*Life-study of Philippians*, pp. 22-23, 25-26, 30)

*Suggested daily reading: Life-study of Philippians, pp. 21-31, 273, 276-280; Hymns: #497; #563*

*Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 7 – Sections: God Desiring Man Not to Work for Him but to Eat and Drink Him (paragraphs 5-8)*

**Thursday 1/6****Related Verses****Phil. 1:9-11**

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in <sup>1</sup>full knowledge and all <sup>2</sup>discernment,

10 So that you may approve by testing the things which differ and are more excellent, that you may be pure and without offense unto the day of Christ,

11 Being filled with the fruit of righteousness, which is through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

**1 Thes. 3:10-13**

10 Night and day petitioning exceedingly so that we may see your face and complete the things that are lacking in your faith?

11 Now may our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus make straight our path to you;

12 And the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we also to you,

13 So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

**Col. 1:4-6, 9-10**

4 Because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have unto all the saints

5 Because of the hope laid up for you in the heavens, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,

6 Which has come to you, even as it is also in all the world, bearing fruit and growing, as also in you, since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;

9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

10 To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,

**Portions from the footnotes****Phil. 1:9, note 1 full**

The Philippian believers had much love. Yet their love needed to abound, to overflow more and more, not foolishly

but in full knowledge, not in ignorance but in all discernment, that they might approve by testing the things that differ and are more excellent. This should include the discerning of the differing preachings of the gospel in vv. 15-18 and of the different kinds of people in 3:2-3.

**Phil. 1:9, note 2 discernment**

Sensitive perception, moral tact. Paul's desire was that the Philippians, some of whom had been distracted from God's economy by the preaching of the Judaistic believers, would not love the Judaistic believers foolishly but would love them soberly with love that abounded in full knowledge and sensitive perception.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

According to the context of 1:9, Paul's meaning was that the Philippians needed knowledge and discernment to distinguish between Paul's preaching and that of the Judaistic believers. We today also need to discern between the many different kinds of preaching....Discernment is the power of perception, the ability to perceive matters in a sensitive way. Certain famous preachers may be knowledgeable and eloquent. But if we have discernment, we shall realize that the goal of their preaching is the furtherance of their own work, not the advancement of God's economy. In order to discern the preaching of others in this way, we need more experience of Christ. Only the experience of Christ can cause love to abound in us in full knowledge and all discernment. Supplied with such a love, we shall love others, but not foolishly.

[In verse 10] the Greek word rendered pure means judged by sunlight, that is, tested as genuine; hence, pure, sincere. To be without offense means not to be offending, not to cause others to stumble. In discerning things, we need to be pure....Otherwise, we shall offend others. It is not easy to be discerning in a way that is pure and without offense. This depends very much on our motive.

In verses 9 and 10 Paul prayed three things on behalf of the Philippians: that their love would abound in full knowledge and all discernment; that they would approve by testing the things which differ; and that they would be pure and without offense unto the day of Christ. The secret to these three matters is found in verse 11....According to grammar, verse 11 is a modifier related to the three items for which Paul prayed. Having been filled with the fruit of righteousness, the Philippians could abound in love, prove by testing all things, and be pure and without offense. This

indicates that being filled with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ is a necessary condition for these three matters. In order for our love to abound, to approve by testing the things which differ, and to be pure and without offense, we must first be filled with the fruit of righteousness which is through Jesus Christ.

Verse 11 refers to the experience of Christ because of the phrase "through Jesus Christ." The fruit of righteousness is through Christ. It comes to us through our experience of Christ. From the Christ we enjoy and experience, we have the fruit of righteousness. The more we experience Christ, the more this experience will issue in the fruit of righteousness. The fruit of righteousness is the living product of a proper life with a righteous standing before God and man. This could not come about by the believers' natural man for their boast, but through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. Our love, therefore, should abound in a way that is according to God's economy. If we experience Christ, our love will abound, we shall prove things by testing, and we shall be pure and without offense. (*Life-study of Philippians*, pp. 18, 19-20)

*Suggested daily reading: Life-study of Philippians, pp. 9-10, 16-20, 31-32; Hymns: #407; #744*

**Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 7 – Sections: God Desiring Man to Be Transformed and to Be Like Him by Eating and Drinking**

**Friday 1/7**

**Related Verses**

**Phil. 1:12-16**

**12** Now I want you to know, brothers, that the things concerning me have turned out rather to the advancement of the gospel,

**13** So that my bonds have become manifest as being <sup>1</sup>in Christ among the whole <sup>2</sup>Practorian guard and to all the rest.

**14** And most of the brothers, being confident in the Lord because of my bonds, are more exceedingly bold to speak the word of God without fear.

**15** <sup>1</sup>Some preach Christ even because of envy and strife, and some also because of good will,

**16** These out of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.

**Acts 20:23-24**

**23** Except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in city after city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

**24** But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

**Phil. 1:19**

**19** For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

**Col. 4:2-4**

**2** Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,

**3** Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),

**4** That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak.

**Portions from the footnotes**

**Phil. 1:13, note 1 in**

I.e., for Christ's sake.

**Phil. 1:13, note 2 Praetorian**

The imperial guard of Caesar.

**Phil. 1:15, note 1 Some**

Those Christians who were opposing Paul and his ministry (2 Cor. 10:7; 11:22-23). Even at the apostle's time there were some who preached the gospel out of envy of Paul and in strife with him.

**Portions from the Life-study messages**

The Greek word rendered advancement [in verse 12] refers to the advancement made by pioneers who cut the way before an army to further its march. Paul's sufferings made such an advancement for the gospel. Paul was a pioneer cutting the way so that the church as the army of God could march on. He knew that his sufferings were preparing the way, even the highway, for the advancement of the gospel. Apart from such sufferings, there would not have been this advancement. Even we today are marching on the way cut by Paul in his sufferings for the gospel.

Throughout the centuries, much debris has been thrown on the highway to block the way cut by Paul. Today there is no need for us to cut another highway, but there is the

need to clear the one cut by Paul. Even this causes enmity....But we have been commissioned by the Lord to clear the way so that the church may advance.... For many years we have been helping to clear the way, and we trust that the young generation in the Lord's recovery will march on. We expect that, sooner or later, the Lord's people will travel on the way that is being cleared for them.

[In verse 14 we see that], far from being a discouragement, Paul's imprisonment was an encouragement, an encouragement to the brothers to speak the word of God without fear. I expect that instead of discouraging us the opposition today will encourage us to speak the word of God with boldness. May all the saints be stirred up to speak God's word. (*Life-study of Philippians*, pp. 27-28)

In chapter one of Philippians, a chapter on the fellowship unto the gospel, Paul says that some preach Christ out of envy, strife, and rivalry (vv. 15-16).... Those who preach Christ out of envy, strife, and rivalry certainly do not have the fellowship unto the gospel. If we do not have this fellowship, we cannot have the experience of Christ.

I am very happy that the young people are zealous to preach the gospel....But now I must ask whether or not in their preaching of the gospel they have the experience of Christ. This depends upon whether or not they have the fellowship unto the gospel. It is not a simple matter to have this fellowship. It requires that we put ourselves, our ambition, our reputation, and our position aside. This is a real killing. The fellowship unto the gospel kills the self, the flesh, and the natural man. It also kills our ambition, desire, preference, and choice. This is the reason that the fellowship in the preaching of the gospel causes us to experience Christ. Thus,... in Philippians, the first way to experience Christ is in the fellowship unto the gospel. (*The Experience of Christ*, pp. 15-16)

In 1:15 Paul says that some also preached Christ out of good will. These were the ones who had fellowship, participation, in the preaching of the gospel with Paul and worked together with him for the defense of the gospel, preaching Christ out of love [v. 16]. (*Life-study of Philippians*, p. 33)

*Suggested daily reading: Life-study of Philippians, pp. 27-28; Hymns: #925; #1295*

*Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 7 – Sections: The Subject of the Bible Being Eating and Drinking God*

**Saturday 1/8**

Related Verses

**Phil. 1:15-18**

**15** Some preach Christ even because of envy and <sup>2</sup>strife, and some also because of good will,

**16** These out of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.

**17** But the others announce Christ out of <sup>1</sup>selfish ambition, not purely, thinking to raise up <sup>2</sup>affliction in my bonds.

**18** What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truthfulness, Christ is announced; and in this I rejoice; yes, and I will rejoice;

**Col. 1:24-27**

**24** I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;

**25** Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

**26** The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;

**27** To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

**Phil. 4:1-4**

**1** So then, my brothers, beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, in the same way stand firm in the Lord, beloved.

**2** I exhort Euodias, and I exhort Syntyche, to think the same thing in the Lord.

**3** Yes, I ask you also, genuine yokefellow, assist them, since they contended with me in the gospel, as well as with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

**4** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Portions from the footnotes

**Phil. 1:15, note 2 strife**

Factiousness, partisanship.

**Phil. 1:17, note 1 selfish**

Self-seeking, rivalry, faction.

**Phil. 1:17, note 2 affliction**

Lit., pressure. Those who announced Christ out of selfish ambition endeavored to make Paul's bonds press him more heavily by depreciating him and his ministry while he was outwardly laid aside from his preaching. Paul's affliction in bonds was due not to his preaching of the gospel but to his defense of the gospel. The Judaizers mixed the gospel with the law and circumcision. Paul defended it. This caused the riot which put him into bonds (Acts 21:27-36).

Portions from the Life-study messages

Even in the first century there were different ways of preaching Christ [1:15-17]. Both Paul and the Judaistic believers preached Christ, but in their preaching of Him they were very different....Concerning the gospel, Paul uses in Philippians several significant terms: "fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel" (1:5), "the defense and confirmation of the gospel" (1:7), "the advancement of the gospel" (1:12), "the faith of the gospel" (1:27).... When many Christians preach the gospel today, they do not do so in the way of the fellowship of the gospel. They are not engaged in the defense of the gospel, and they do not exercise for the confirmation of the gospel. Their preaching may not lead to the advancement of the gospel, and they may not even have an adequate understanding of the faith of the gospel. For this reason, there are different ways of preaching Christ. Paul's preaching of Christ included fellowship, defense, confirmation, advancement, and faith. But when the Judaistic believers preached Christ, they preached Him in an altogether different way. Instead of preaching Christ in the way of fellowship, they preached Him because of envy. Instead of preaching Christ in a way to defend the gospel, they did so because of strife. Yes, the Judaistic believers did preach Christ, but their preaching was not for the confirmation of the gospel. On the contrary, they preached Christ out of rivalry, out of factiousness and selfish ambition. Instead of all the positive aspects of the gospel, there were envy, strife, and rivalry. Such a

preaching of the gospel did not cause the advancement of the gospel.

In principle, today's situation is the same as the situation in Paul's time.... Much of today's preaching is not healthy. In this preaching something is presented to people, but it is not healthy food. Rather, it is sweet and sugarcoated, pleasant tasting, but lacking in nourishment. We must be able to discern between such preaching and the preaching of Christ according to God's economy.

If we have the fellowship unto the gospel, the defense and confirmation of the gospel, and the advancement of the gospel, our preaching of the gospel will be healthy. The proper preaching of the gospel is safeguarded by these matters.... May we all learn to discern the different ways of preaching Christ. In particular, may we discern between healthy preaching and that which is unhealthy.

[In verse 18 we see that] Paul's heart was so broadened by grace that he even rejoiced in his opposing ones' preaching of Christ in pretense. What an upright spirit is this! This is the outworking of the life, nature, and mind of Christ who lived in him. His experience of Christ was an enjoyment. Such a life rejoices no matter what the circumstances may be. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 33-36, 37-38, 36)

*Suggested daily reading: Life-study of Philippians, pp. 5-6, 32-38; Hymns: #922; #1292; #1295, v. 5*

### Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1-2)
- II. Living Christ to magnify Him (1:3-30)
  - A. Fellowship for the furtherance of the gospel (vv. 3-18)

### Crucial points

The book of Philippians is on the experience of Christ. In chapter one we see Christ as the One lived out and magnified (1:3-30). The first way to experience this Christ is in the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel (vv. 3-18).

At the time the book of Philippians was written, the Judaizers were exercising their influence over the believers in Christ (3:2-4). These Judaizers were Judaistic believers in Christ who held to the Jewish religion and who were

bringing certain aspects of Judaism into the church life. Because Paul renounced Judaism with its law, rituals, traditions, and the practice of circumcision, the Judaizers preached Christ in rivalry with Paul (vv. 15-18). They preached Christ out of a concern for Judaism, but Paul preached Christ for the carrying out of God's economy, for the building up of the church, the Body of Christ.

Thus, there were two different ways of preaching Christ. Paul's preaching of Christ included fellowship (v. 5), defense (v. 7), confirmation (v. 7), advancement (v. 12), and the faith (v. 27). In contrast, the Judaistic believers preached Christ out of rivalry, factiousness, selfish ambition (v. 17), envy, and strife (v. 15), and did not cause the gospel to advance (v. 12). Therefore, Paul prayed that the love of the saints in the church would abound yet more and more in full knowledge and all discernment, so that they might approve by testing the things which differ and are more excellent (vv. 9-10).

The saints in Philippi had fellowship unto the gospel (v. 5), participating in the furtherance of the gospel through the apostle Paul's ministry. Their having this kind of fellowship, which kept them from being individualistic and diversely minded, implies that they were one with the apostle Paul and with one another. This gave them the ground for their experience and enjoyment of Christ, which is the main point of this book.

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he was suffering for the gospel (vv. 7, 13, 14, 17). In particular Paul's imprisonment was due, not merely to his preaching of the gospel, but to his defense and confirmation of the gospel (v. 7). In preaching such a gospel, Paul renounced everything that was apart from God's economy. Therefore, he was regarded as a troublemaker, a pest (Acts 24:5).

As one in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, Paul enjoyed the processed Triune God as grace. In verse 18 we see that Paul's heart was so broadened by grace that he even rejoiced in his opposing ones' preaching of Christ in pretense. The Philippians participated in this enjoyment of grace with Paul for the furtherance of the gospel (v. 7). Verse 8 indicates that Paul was one with Christ even in His bowels, the tender inward parts, in longing after the saints.

### Lord's Day 1/9

#### Related Verses

#### **Phil. 4:10-20**

**10** But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly because now at length you have caused your thinking for me to blossom anew; for which matter you had indeed taken thought, but lacked opportunity.

**11** Not that I speak according to lack, for I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be content.

**12** I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack.

**13** I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

**14** Nevertheless you did well to have fellowship with me in my affliction.

**15** And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I went out from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the account of giving and receiving except you only;

**16** For even in Thessalonica you sent both once and again to my need.

**17** Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit which increases to your account.

**18** But I have received in full all things and abound; I have been filled, receiving from Epaphroditus the things from you, a sweet-smelling savor, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

**19** And my God will fill your every need according to His riches, in glory, in Christ Jesus.

**20** Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

#### **Further Reading:**

*Life-study of Philippians, msgs. 1-3*  
*The Experience of Christ, chp. 2*