

Main Reading: **Philippians** 4:10-23

v. 10

If you hadn't picked up on it yet, Paul and the Philippians are a picture of *true*, brotherly **love**.

Paul loves the Philippians—they are his "joy and crown," as he said in our last session.

And the Philippians love Paul and are *deeply* **concerned** for his well-being.

Paul can sense their **care** towards him, and he is grateful for their **support**.

Allow me to paint the picture: The Philippians *constantly* cared for Paul.

He was in their "thoughts and prayers" as we might say...

But in *this* moment, Paul's situation required *more* prayer, *more* care,

and *yes*, even more *financial* support than normal.

Why? Because, remember, Paul is under house **arrest** in Rome.

And this is a good point for us to look at the situation from the Book of **Acts**.

He had limited freedom/comfort. **Acts** 28:16, People came and heard him preach **Acts** 28:23,

And he had to pay his own **rent** over the course of two years. **Acts** 28:30-31

So, now that Paul is in jail, the Philippians have *ample* opportunity to show him love.

When everything in your life is perfect, there is little opportunity for others to bless you.

But, when we experience **hardship**, it allows others in the church to

surround us with prayer and provide for our physical needs.

v. 11-12

Paul is appreciative of the Philippians support,

but he knows that he would've been taken care of—even without it.

Yes, he's *extremely* happy about their help, but Paul had learned to be **content** no matter what.

This idea is so counter cultural—so *foreign* to the world.

Our society is geared towards being **discontent**—"The grass is always greener on the other side"

I've been able to work a little bit in advertising, and for years,
the industry was dominated by what's called **inadequacy marketing**.

"How can we make people unhappy with their current situation, so they'll buy our product to fix it?"

And it works...because sinners are *never* satisfied.

We want *more* attention, *more* stuff, and *more* applause—it's a never-ending chase.

Paul, however, had learned to be satisfied in *every* circumstance.

What was his secret? The **sufficiency** of Christ. (The idea that *He* is *enough*)

Paul survived **shipwreck**, poverty, **snakebites**, jail, and more—and it wasn't in his own strength...
It's not that Paul learned to keep himself entertained, but that he realized his *only* need was Jesus.

There's a song, that you might've sung before, and the lyrics say:

*"Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is Your name, you are my **all in all**."*

We *all* need to realize that our sense of contentment can't be found by following our heart—

It can't be found inside of us *at all*. We find it in Jesus Christ. 2 **Corinthians** 3:5

So, you and I must learn to be, as Paul says, content...the Greek word **autarkes**.

It describes a **city** that has *all* the resources it needs (**food**, materials, **water** supply, etc)

Such a place would never have to import things from other places.

This describes the believer. We find *everything* we need in Jesus Christ,

and we don't need to go *anywhere* else.

He gives *every good* gift (**James** 1:17), every *spiritual* blessing (**Ephesians** 1:3), and though the Bible,

He provides us with *all* answers about living a life that pleases Him (2 **Peter** 1:3).

QUESTION: Where do people try to find contentment?

v. 13

This is the most *famous* verse in all of Philippians.

BibleStudyTools.com says that it is the 4th most searched-for Bible verse on their website.

So, we've all heard it...but let's break it down...

In the Greek, the first actual words are "**all things**" this is a technique in the Greek language...

If you wanted to place **emphasis**, you'd move a word or phrase to the beginning.

It's an actual grammatical tool called the "emphatic position."

So, "all things" is the *key* subject to this sentence...Now, here's what "all things" *doesn't* mean:

1. It doesn't mean God will help you **sin**.

- He would never help you do something wrong or ungodly.

2. It doesn't mean that you'll be able to leap tall buildings in a single bound like Superman (or any other super powers).

- God empowers us *primarily* w/ spiritual things—not w/ the ability to dunk a basketball.

3. This doesn't mean that you will *never* have to study or prepare for a test.

- God values hard work and studying.

4. This does not mean that you will never sin again.

Here's what it *does* mean:

1. You, as a Christian, will be able to face every circumstance by the power of God.

2. You will be able accomplish everything in the will of God.

And all this is possible because of Him—Christ—who strengthens us.

The word for strengthened is **endunamoo**, and it comes into our language as the word, **dynamite**💣

So, this isn't just a little bit of power...this is an overwhelming amount.

It's not that Paul *might* endure every circumstance...it's not that he *may* be content at all times.

He says "**I CAN do all things through Him who strengthens me**"

And that *same* God, who strengthened Paul to survive prison & persecution,

is the *same* God we have today.

So, if we are unable to be content in life, it's not that we haven't been given the strength.

Instead, we are looking in the wrong place...

So, don't look at your [circumstances](#), look at your Savior.

"You are either in very difficult circumstances right now, or about to head into some, or you have just stepped out of some momentarily. God had one Son without sin, but no sons without sorrow. But, in Jesus Christ, you have all you'll ever need to get you through every stage of life." — Steve Lawson

v. 14-18

Paul, yet again, [thanks](#) the Philippians for their gift.

He's done a lot of talking since his first thank you,
and he wants to make sure that his gratitude comes across *clearly*.

He then recalls how the Philippians have *always* supported his ministry.

From when he first got to Macedonia (a district that included Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea),
after he had left their town, *and* even now, 10 years later.

He refers to their giving as a [partnership](#). Why?

People who give money to missionaries and evangelism ministries, are participating in the Great Commission as well as those who actually go preach. [Matthew](#) 10:42, 1 [Samuel](#) 30:21-24

Now, Paul makes it clear, that he didn't *require* the gift.

He didn't come in and say *"I charge this amount to tell your city about Jesus"*

Or, *"I came to your church and now you owe me."*

Paul, in other places, says that he preached [free](#) of charge,
so that there would be no barriers for people to hear the Good News about Jesus.

In doing this, he is staying in line with what he has taught before. 2 [Corinthians](#) 9:7

It was not Paul's job to coerce, force, or [demand](#) that anyone give an offering.

Instead, by allowing people to give *freely*, they get to enjoy the [blessings](#) that come from giving.

[\[Explain difference between taxes and Christian giving\]](#)

Paul mentions Epaphroditus, who, remember, was the messenger sent from the Philippian church.

And the gift, which Epaphroditus brought to Paul, was plenty! It covered his needs.

And because the Philippians gave with the *right* attitude, it was an act of *worship* to God.

v. 19

Because the Philippians provided for Paul's need, Paul promises that God will supply for theirs.

Now, we don't *give* in order to *get*...that *shouldn't* be our motivation.

We give for several reasons: to pay church bills, give the pastor a salary, and more.

And God will give back to us in many ways—and it doesn't *have* to be financial.

Also, our giving doesn't always have to be financial...we can give time, effort, prayer, support, etc.

v. 20

Often times, in the church, we focus on *Jesus* Christ—and *rightly* so!

Or, we emphasize the work of the Holy *Spirit* in our lives—and *rightly* so!

But there are times when we forget about God the *Father*.

Sadly, some people have a low view of the Father...They think He's *mean*, and Jesus is the nice one.

But the Father is the person who kickstarted the Gospel; *sending* the Son & the Spirit. 1 *John* 3:1

Jesus even said "*As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you*" (John 15:9).

And because of this, we give *glory* to God.

Now, there are **3** types of glory that God has: intrinsic, manifest, and ascribed.

God is glorious by nature/*intrinsically*. *Psalm* 104:31 No one can *add* to or *subtract* from *this* glory.

God's *manifest* glory is found in stories like Moses. *Exodus* 34:18-22

But there is also *ascribed* glory. *Revelation* 4:11

v. 21

Here is Paul's goodbye to the Philippians. He tells them to "*greet everyone*" at Philippi.

And make no mistake, we should be displaying brotherly love in our churches today.

If *any* group should be expressing love to one another, it should be us. *John* 13:35

v. 22

Here's one of the coolest things in the *whole* book if you ask me:

Paul preached to some **Roman** soldiers, if you remember, they were called the Praetorian Guard.

Their job was to protect the Praetors, who were directly under the Emperor of Rome.

Since Paul was such a *high profile* prisoner, they also kept watch of him too.

And Paul preached until many of them believed.

So, these men, who once viewed the Emperor as God, now realized that Jesus is Lord...

And they were eager to hear from, and send "hellos" to, *other* Christians outside of Rome.

Now, there were Christians in Rome, they even got a letter from Paul a few years earlier.

And we know that Epaphroditus and Timothy were with Paul.

Plus, it's a possibility that Tychicus, Philemon, Onesimus,

John Mark, and a man called Jesus Justus were there as well.

(These names are mentioned elsewhere in Paul's letters.

The timeline of his ministry indicates that they *could've* been with him.)

v. 23

Paul started this letter, and all of his letters, by saying "**Grace and peace to you**"

And, here, he ends it with this phrase: "**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.**"

Grace is so important to the Christian life.

What the song says is true: "'Tis *grace* has brought me safe thus far. And *grace* will lead me home."

Paul starts each of his 13 letters with "**grace to you**" and he ends them with "**grace with you.**"

And I think this is related to an idea called the "**means of grace**"

The "means of grace" are the ways in which God *spiritually* **blesse**s the believer.

This list would include **Bible** reading, **prayer**, communion, baptism, and **fellowship** (church).

So, as *any* of us—the Philippians included—read this letter, it acts as a **highway** for God's grace to travel on and through to our souls—to our spirits.

And then, at the end of the letter, once we've finished reading it and are preparing to go out into the world, Paul says "**grace be with you**"

So, as we have studied this letter together, I hope that you have grown,
felt encouraged, and been a landing spot for God's grace.

And I hope that you have been *equipped* in some way to face the world
and live out your Christian faith.

QUESTION: *If you had to sum up the message of Philippians in a single sentence, what would you say?*