

Philippians

Week Four of an Eight-Week Men's Bible Study

Pastor Chris Meade

Thursdays 7-8:30pm

We are making our way to the midway point. What a rich, dense, small book. Tonight we finish Chapter Two. Two more chapters to go. If there is one thing that I pray you are learning as we have gone through this journey in the book of Philippians, it is that you have seen the power of the gospel to infiltrate and impact each area of your lives.

- **Acts 16—the gospel breaks all barriers we put up!**
God seeks and saves a diverse group of people from all walks of life, backgrounds, socio-economics, cultures, genders, and worldviews. Each person is uniquely made by God and each person is uniquely reached by His Spirit.
- **Philippians 1—the gospel impacts our circumstances!**
No matter what situation we find ourselves in, God gives us the ability to have joy.
 - **Paul’s joy** despite being imprisoned for the gospel.
 - **Philippians’ joy** in financially supporting the ministry of the gospel, despite their poverty.
 - **Paul’s joy** that the gospel is being preached, despite men’s motives.
 - **All made possible when “For ME to live is CHRIST, and to die is gain!”** When our love for Jesus is supreme, all other loves fall into their proper and right perspectives. We seek the Gift-Giver, not just the gifts.
- **Philippians 1—the gospel impacts our purpose.**
 - We are to live a life “worthy of the gospel”
 - Standing firm in unity.
 - Striving in solidarity, side-by-side, for the gospel.
 - Not frightened or intimidated by opposition.
 - Ready to suffer for Christ.
- **Philippians 2—the gospel impacts our view of self.**
 - God has called us to lead in sacrifice, laying down our wants and desires for the benefit of others. He has also called us to promote unity.
 - Christ did that as the ultimate example for us to follow.

Week 4: Philippians 2:12-30

¹²Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling . . .

- **As you have always obeyed . . . not only as in my presence**
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- **Therefore, don't miss the connection . . .**
 - Our obedience is not tied to a personality, or to circumstances, but to the obedience of Christ. It is Jesus who is our highest model and motivation. It is His willingness to be humble and obey, even to death, which is our foundation and motivation.
 - **Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**
 - **It's not** "Work for . . ." or "Work to receive . . ." or "Work to complete . . ."
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¹³for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

- This IS our SANCTIFICATION. (Jesus + Nothing = Everything)
Ephesians 2:8-9
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¹⁴Do all things without grumbling or disputing, ¹⁵that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

- **Do all things without grumbling or disputing . . .**

- Is this focused toward each other in the church, toward God, or both?
- Paul is using a specific illustration of Israel's complaining to God during the exodus in Deuteronomy.
- Emphasis is on "**all things**" as this is arranged first in the Greek text.
- Spurgeon: Three examples of what we must not murmur against. . .
 - The providence of God.
 - One another.
 - The ungodly world.
 - "Dispute not with God; let him do what seemeth him good. Dispute not with your fellow Christians, raise not railing accusations against them. When Calvin was told that Luther had spoken ill of him, he said, 'Let Luther call me devil if he please, I will never say of him but that he is a most dear and valiant servant of the Lord.' Raise not intricate and knotty points by way of controversy." (Spurgeon)

- **". . . among whom you shine as lights in the world . . ."**

- Internal disunity tarnishes our external proclamation of the gospel.
- Who are people in your sphere of influence that are able to see your light?

Models in Ministry

Paul:

¹⁷Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

- Living out his teaching and Christ’s example.
 - Never ask anyone to do what you are not willing to do yourself.
 - Don’t just teach it, live it. Be a model of the gospel impacting your life.
- Old Testament reference “drink offering”—an additional offering of wine or perfume that was poured out to the side of the animal being sacrificed to God.
 - Paul sees his very life as a sacrifice in compliment to their sacrifice of obedient faith. For him, to lay down his life for the benefit of his brothers and sisters is a joy.

Timothy

¹⁹I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. ²⁰For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. ²¹For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.²² But you know Timothy's^[d] proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. ²³I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, ²⁴and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

What characteristics of Timothy do you follow?

Epaphroditus

²⁵I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, ²⁶for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. ²⁷Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. ²⁹So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, ³⁰for he nearly died^(f) for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

- **Epaphroditus**
 - Three special relationships of Epaphroditus to Paul:
 - **Brother** - Speaks of a relationship to be enjoyed.
 - **Fellow Worker** - Speaks of a job to be done.
 - **Fellow Soldier** - Speaks of a battle to be won.

What a great description of our relationship as men of God in this church!

To whom are you a brother?

What is your “job” or ministry you are involved in?

How are you engaging in the “battle”?

- **Messenger** - Was sent by the church in Philippi to deliver the church’s letter to Paul as well as care for and minister to Paul while he was under house arrest, delivering the financial gift from the church to Paul.

Food for Thought:

We all are called to live out our salvation in service to the gospel in awe and respect because of what it cost Jesus. We are to be models. We are to look to models who exemplify Christ. But we are not to put our faith and hope in the models we partner and serve with. Nor are we to try to be personalities that people should put their faith in. Only Christ is our perfect model.

Table Discussion:

- 1) Any aha moments that God spoke to you?

- 2) Obedience to the gospel: What makes it easier to “obey God” in church or around a “spiritual person” than when we are at work? With the boys? Or by ourselves? Has our obedience/behavior become more of a mask we wear to make ourselves look better around other church people? Honestly, where are you at?

- 3) Where is God at work in your life? How is He changing your “will and work”? How do you fight against doing things in your own power, and resting instead in the power that God has given you?

- 4) Who have been your models of ministry? How have they impacted your walk and ministry? Has one failed or fallen? How did this impact your life and walk with Jesus? Why?