

A Bird's-Eye View for Me and You Philippians

What a joy it is to be able to share with you the Word of God, and that's what we're going to do today. We're going to look once again at "A Bird's-Eye View for Me and You," the books of the New Testament. The study today is study number eleven, the book of Philippians. The background of this book goes something like this. The author was Paul the apostle. He was the first mentioned here in chapter 1, verse 1, and then another person was mentioned, and that was Timothy. Paul is recognized as the author with Timothy as his helper. In Philippians chapter 1 and verse 1, it says, *Paul and Timotheus... This is Timothy... the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons.* He's writing to the whole church. The date would have been around 62 A.D.

The setting is this. While Paul is in prison, the Philippian Christians are concerned for him. So, he provides some comfort to them through his letter. They were concerned for him, and he had led many of them to the Lord, and he wanted them to be comforted.

Now, the key verses here would be chapter 1, verse 27, and chapter 2, verses 5-8. Verse 27 of chapter 1 says, *Only let your conversation... or behavior... 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.* It's often said that a man's character is measured by what he does in private with no one looking around, but you know, God's always looking. And Paul the apostle says here, "Your behavior needs to be at all times as one that becometh the Gospel of Christ."

Philippians chapter 2, verses 5-8, says, *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,*

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

Now the purpose of the book, and there are several things we can look at here, but I believe first it was to encourage those in the Philippian church to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ, and that is, to live in, if you would, imitation of Christ as seen in the Gospel. Philippians 1:27, once again, says, *Only let your conversation ...or behavior... be as it becometh the gospel of Christ....*

And then we understand that these Philippians were to conduct themselves in a manner of conduct worthy of Christ. We've read some of that now. It says in Philippians chapter 2, verse 5, *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* Now, he's not saying here that we need to puff ourselves up and think that we are God or that we are Jesus Christ, but we are to be imitators of the Lord. It says in verse 8, *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* Now, we should understand that Christ died once. He died on the cross, and He doesn't ask us to die on a cross. We need to be willing to die for Him, and there are some who are dying for Him, but He says that we need to be obedient even to the death of the cross. We need to be obedient to God today, and He's not asking more of us than He puts within us to be able to accomplish.

Now Christ's manner is also seen revealed in Paul, according to Philippians chapter 1, verses 6-8. It says, *⁶Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.* He says that God is going to perform whatever He's given you to do,

and verse 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.*

He had a great burden for these people. He wanted them to prosper in the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 2:17 says, *Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.* He was comforting these people.

And Christ's manner is also seen revealed in Timothy. You can read about that in Philippians chapter 2, verses 19-24. Christ's manner is seen revealed in Epaphroditus, Philippians chapter 2, verses 25-30. Christ's manner is seen revealed in them, the Philippians, in the past, according to Philippians chapter 1, verses 3-5. In Philippians chapter 2 and verse 12 says, *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. Be obedient to God, he's saying, not to be saved but because you are saved.*

And note the enemies of Christ contrasted and warned of in Philippians chapter 1, verse 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.* Philippians 3:2 says, *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.... or the circumcision.... those people who try to tell you you're saved by keeping the law.*

The application for this book is this: Have the right mindset of standing fast in one spirit and striving for the faith of the Gospel. Philippians 1:27-28 says, *Only let your conversation.... behavior, and we've read this.... be as it becometh the gospel of Christ....* We need to strive for the faith of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are also to always seek unity. Now, I remind you he's not only writing this under the inspiration of God to the Philippian believers, but he's writing this to you and me today. And we're to always seek unity. Philippians chapter 2, verses 1-4, says, *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*Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, 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.* We need to help one another one another in the church today, our brothers and sisters in Christ. We need to be in unity.

Now, the right mindset is also forsaking our dependence on self and its glory and stretching toward the goal in Christ. In Philippians 3, verses 13-15, it says, ³*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.... That means you're saved.... be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

Paul says he had not reached the end of his journey, but he's forgetting those things which are behind, those mistakes that have been made and those successes. He's striving for the mastery. He's looking for the future, and he wants to serve God today and in the future. And that's the way we need to be. We need to understand that we've not reached the end of our journey yet, but we're here to serve God and bring honor and glory to His Son, Jesus Christ.

And we're also to have the right mindset in thinking on positive things. Philippians 4:8 says, *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. Think upon the things, once again, that help our minds to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

We also need to have the right actions, always abounding in love, according to Philippians chapter 1, verses 9-10. We need to seek to proclaim Christ in any situation, Philippians 1:15-18.

We need to have the right attitude, and that right attitude is to imitate Christ in His worthy life. Philippians 1:27, once, again, we keep coming upon this verse. *Only let your conversation.... or behavior....be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ....*

And this is hard. We need to do all things without complaining. That's very hard to do sometimes. But Philippians chapter 2, verse 14, says, *Do all things without murmurings and disputings.*

And we're always to rejoice. Philippians 2:18 says, *For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.* Philippians 4:4, *Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*

We're to put our confidence in Christ, and we need to understand that God is our Helper. He will complete good works in us, those works that He has started, according to Philippians chapter 1 and verse 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.* He works in us both to will and to work. God gives us righteousness through Jesus. He is able to raise us up and give us a new body, according to Philippians chapter 3, verses 20-21. ²⁰*For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: ²¹Who 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.*

We have that promise of God today that one day we're going to be changed. We're going to be fashioned like Jesus. That doesn't mean we're going to be God. That simply means that, because Jesus died, He gave His life on the cross of Calvary that you and I one day could be like Him in the sense that we have eternal life, and we're going to be with Him forever one day because we have trusted Him as our Savior.

Have you done that today? Why not bow your head where you are and ask Jesus to come into your heart. He loves you so much today. The Bible says in John 3:16 that God loved us so much, He loved mankind so much that He sent His only begotten Son, and that's Jesus, into the world that whosoever would believe in Him could have everlasting life. If you'll trust Him today to be your Savior, He'll save you because He came to seek and to save those who were lost. Ask Jesus to come into your heart right now.

And if you are saved, are you living for Him? Live for Him. Trust Him to lead you. It's not over with. God wants to use you for His honor and His glory.

It's been good being with you today, and let me remind you to look at our website, www.LRWM.org. You can leave prayer requests on that website, and I'll be glad to pray with you on any prayer request that you might have. Also, you can find Bible study helps there that will help you think your way through the Bible, and it'll help you with any problems that you might be having. It'll answer questions there on that website. Write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731, and I'll be glad to pray with you on any prayer request that you have.

Until this same time when you'll hear me say, "It is a good life," may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.