

Session 37: Why Paul Rejoiced over the Philippians

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 37).

Philippians 1:11 *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.*

The Fruits of Righteousness:

- We will be presented “blameless in spirit, soul and body”
- We will patiently endure the suffering of this present time.
- We will be “more than conquerors” when it comes to the suffering of Christ.
- We will not faint at our tribulations.
- We will not be ashamed of those who are suffering for the truth.

2 Timothy 1: 8 *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: ...*

2 Timothy 1: 4 *Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;*

- We will be persuaded that God will do what he says he will do.
- We will be persuaded that God’s word will produce what it was designed to produce.
- We will be partakers *of the afflictions of Christ.*

2 Timothy 1: 8 *... but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;*

- We will be partakers *of God’s grace*
- We will stand fast in one spirit (unity) in the face of those who seek to divide the assembly.
- We will not be terrified by our enemies, but our afflictions will cause others to wax confident, speaking the word boldly without fear.
- We will not have a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.
- We will, in whatsoever state we are in, be content.

The only way we can be content, no matter if we “abase or abound, if we are full or hungry, if we abound or suffer need,” is by “approving things which are excellent.” The point I am trying to make here is that, if Paul were praying for God to change his physical circumstances, he would not be “approving things which are excellent.”

Of course, we change the circumstances which we can change (we look for a job, take an aspirin, have surgery, etc.), but for those things which we cannot change (the subject of this part of our study), we approve excellent which means we find contentment in the midst of adverse situations (just like Paul did in Philippians 4).

***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. ¹¹Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. ¹²I 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. ¹³I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

Now, let us tie this into the issue of prayer. Before we read, we need the context. Paul is in prison and no one has been talking to Paul about what he might need, about giving to him, while he is there.

***Philippians 4:14** Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. ¹⁵Now 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.*

This is why Paul rejoiced over the Philippians.

Space for personal reflection and notes

Session 38: Why Paul Rejoiced over the Philippians, Continued

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Philippians 4:14 *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.*

The Philippians had supported Paul in the past.

Philippians 4:16 *For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.*

But there came a time when Paul did not receive anything from the Philippians, not because they did not want to help Paul, but because they did not have opportunity to do so.

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.*

Paul rejoices in the Philippians gift to him but not because he got some help from them.

Philippians 4:11 *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

More importantly, than the gift they sent to Paul, he gets to see the doctrine working in them.

Philippians 4:17 *Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.*

The things happening to Paul may have been intended to make him quit and or to intimidate his followers into quitting. But Paul says that quite the opposite was happening.

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.*

Philippians 4:20 *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.

The Philippians cared about Paul; therefore, they prayed for him.

***Philippians 1:19** For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,*

What kind of salvation was Paul talking about? It was salvation from the intended effects of the policy of evils' attacks against Paul; attacks which were meant to silence him and his followers.

Paul said those attacks would not be successful because of the Philippians' "prayer, and the supply of the Spirit." They were not praying for Paul to be released or for the attacks to stop; they were praying for Paul to endure and to be encouraged. By praying for Paul, which activated their understanding of the doctrine, the Philippians decided how best to encourage Paul and reminded him of their love and care for him. They sent Epaphroditus with a gift to help Paul.

According to verse 19, that gift was the result of their prayers and "the supply of the Spirit." What was the "supply of the Spirit?" It was the result of the doctrine working in them; it was the result of Christ living his life in them; it was the result of the effectual working of God's word in their inner man.

In Philippians 4:19, Paul called it 'God supplying the need,' but God did not magically do that; he did that through the life of his Son being lived in the Philippians. That is how God works today in this dispensation of Gentile grace: not by changing outward circumstances via his omnipotent power, but by the life of his Jesus being lived in and through us.

How did God supply Paul's need? The Philippians sent it to him. They prayed, thought through the doctrine, made a decision, and then they acted on it.

***Philippians 1:9** 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.*

This is the same process that we should employ.

Space for personal reflection and notes

Session 39: Why Paul Rejoiced over the Philippians, Continued

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 39).

Let us set the stage (so to speak) about a final list of what prayer is and what prayer is not.

Some of these we will be familiar with, others of these will present a new and different way to view prayer. Let me say that what we are talking about is prayer in its fundamental form, or what it is at its core.

We are not talking about the different kinds of prayers: requests, intercession, thanksgiving, etc. We are talking about prayer in general.

One more thing, this next section is primarily about prayer as it concerns us. After we discuss this, we will talk about prayer for others, prayers of thanksgiving, etc. But sonship prayer as it concerns us is what I chose to discuss first; here it is.

(If you are reading the notes without the video/audio, the answers to these will be given at the end of this session.)

What Prayer Is

- Prayer is not about changing outward circumstances.
- Prayer is about _____ in the midst of those circumstances.
- Prayer does not work like magic in that all we need do is pray and that is the end of our part in it.
- Prayer must be accompanied by and attached to _____.
- Prayer, in and of itself, is not the end. In other words, the exhortations to pray are not about engaging in the exercise of prayer simply for prayers sake. This is only 'saying prayers.'
- Prayer is a part of the _____.

Prayer is a necessary part of the process whereby we are conformed to the image of God's Son, whereby Christ dwells in our hearts by faith and whereby his life is made manifest in our mortal bodies. This is praying properly, which is very different from just 'saying prayers.'

- Prayer is not the means by which we get whatever we think of.

- Prayer is part of the means by which we get those things which are in accordance with _____.

(Those things will be written in Paul's epistles.)

- Prayer is not something we do only when we get in trouble, when we really want something or when we need help in some way. In this way, prayer is thought to be only for the 'big stuff' with the idea that we can handle the small stuff.
- Prayer is for everything. Since prayer is what _____ in our minds, it is designed to be a necessary part of every part of our life, all through the day.
- Prayer is not about secluding ourselves off in order to think about a bunch of stuff to talk to God about, or discuss things after the fact.
- Prayer is meant to _____ into our everyday lives in _____ (hence: instant in prayer.)

For sons and daughters, it is meant to be as natural (and as necessary) as breathing.

- Prayer is not something we do because we are told to pray or because it is how to get stuff from God.
- Prayer is part of the _____, _____ - _____ between us, and our heavenly Father.

Because his presence is not manifested to our physical senses (we do not see him with our eyes, hear him with our ears, touch him with our hands), prayer is the way we carry out and develop that Father/son relationship.

And now here comes the big one we need to wrap our minds around.

- Prayer is not primarily something we schedule. I am not saying you cannot schedule a time for prayer each day. What I am saying is if this is how we carry out our prayer life, we are missing the point.
- Real sonship prayer is _____.

It is not just another thing we do; it is meant to naturally permeate every area of life. (It is designed to be at work in us as much as our physical heart beating to pump blood: as much as our lungs are inhaling and exhaling oxygen.)

When I say prayer is meant to be a lifestyle, what am I talking about? What I really mean to say is that proper prayer will involve a lifestyle change. Prayer as an adopted son or daughter is as much of a change as any other kind of lifestyle changes you can think of.

Let me step aside here to say that everything we have been learning has been leading up to this point. Finally, we are at a place where we can take what we know and integrate it into the proper practice of prayer.

That means we have to abandon our old concepts of what prayer is, how it works, and its purpose in exchange for what our apostle says prayer is, how it works and what it is for.

Sonship prayer is designed to work in our everyday lives. It is not so much about secluding ourselves off for hours every day to run through a long list of things we would like God to do.

Sonship prayer is a way of life; and if I may say so, it is a different way of life. It is a lifestyle which now uses constant, 'spur of the moment' prayers, all through the day, to evaluate our thoughts, our words and our actions in light of the doctrine we have been learning.

This takes an awareness of the part prayer plays in "Christ being formed in us." So let me give you the principle we discussed a couple of weeks back. Prayer is designed to take the doctrine we are learning and manifest it in the midst of our circumstances.

In the past, I have talked with you about daily prayer, having a time at the end of your day in which you review your day with your heavenly Father. But I talked to you about that in the beginning, when we did not know very much about sonship prayer or the doctrine of how Christ would be made manifest in our bodies. At that time, it would have been difficult (if not impossible) to evaluate every thought, word, or action by the doctrine in real time.

As I said to you back then, just going over your day was going to serve as a kind of rehearsal or practice for something we would do later in a much more practical way. The (slightly advanced) truth of the matter is that we need to pray (on the fly, so to speak) in order to evaluate our thoughts as we are having them.

Is it a bad thing to do this at the end of the day, as we think back to what has gone through our minds? Of course not, as long as we do not stop being instant in prayer during the day. Do not replace unceasing prayer in the midst of your everyday living with a recap at night. Why? First, you will not remember it all. Second, waiting until the end of the day to pray is not consistent with either being instant in prayer or praying without ceasing. Third (and I hope you understand this in the way I mean to say it) engaging in only the end-of-day recap is sort of a child's way of praying.

A mature, experienced son is able to do that same work of referencing the doctrine at the start of things, in the thought process, and correct any wrong words or actions before they take place. Again, the more you do it, the more natural it becomes – practice, practice, practice.

By the way, this is who you were meant to be. I am not asking you to become a freak; this was supposed to be the norm. Instead, Satan’s policy of evil has replaced the godly norm with a facsimile which, under close examination, is nothing more than a cheap, worthless and non-functioning imitation; the merit of which lies solely in making the flesh feel good about how spiritual it is. (I can say that because I have been there.)

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

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