

## **The Joy of Giving** **Philippians 4:14-23**

### **All Stand and Read Scripture**

Philippians 4:14-23 (NASB)

<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, you have done well to share *with me* in my affliction.

<sup>15</sup> You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; <sup>16</sup> for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs. <sup>17</sup> Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. <sup>18</sup> But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup> And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. <sup>20</sup> Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>21</sup> Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.

<sup>22</sup> All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

### **Prayer**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

This will be our last of a series of sermons from the book of Philippians. The theme of Philippians was an effort to describe the attitude, mindset and outlook we as believers must have if we want to experience the joy of the Lord.

Our Christian walk starts when we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior and turn from worldly ways and live a new life with Christ.

Philippians 3:8-11 (NASB)

<sup>8</sup> More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, <sup>9</sup> and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the Law*, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; <sup>11</sup> in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

We are saved through faith in Christ and gain righteousness because of Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. When we are baptized, we are buried with Him in conformity to His death and die to our old self and are raised, like Christ, into a newness of life.

Paul explains it more fully in

Romans 6:3-7 (NASB)

<sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin

Because of our new life in Christ, Paul tells us that we will be transferring our citizenship in this world to a citizenship in heaven.

Philippians 3:20 (NASB)

<sup>20</sup> For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

Paul also tells us in Philippians that we will encounter trials and our faith will be tested. We are to combat those trials by knowing how Christ, who is our example, would handle them.

We are told that when we turn to Christ, our faith will be tested.

James 1:2-5 (NASB)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Paul tells us that once we start our walk with Christ, we must give up on earthly wisdom and knowledge and seek to "know Christ". This is an intimate knowledge that we gain of Christ, by praying for wisdom from the studying and reading of His Word, the Bible.

<sup>5</sup> But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Our life has changed from a self centered life to a life of servitude to Christ. This involves changing our mindset to be like Christ. We are to have the mind or attitude of Christ.

## Philippians 2:5 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

- Jesus had an **unselfish attitude**. We are not to live to make a good impression but to care about the interest of others. (2:3,4)
- Jesus had a **servant attitude**. Jesus came to earth and took on the form of a servant (2:7), even though Jesus was God in human form.
- Jesus had a **humble attitude**. Christ humbled Himself by becoming man and giving up His comfort of Heaven with God. (2:7) We are to think of others as better than ourselves. (2:3)
- Jesus had an **obedient attitude**. Christ came to earth to do the will of the father even “to the point of death”. (2:8) God gives us the desire to obey Him and the power to do what pleases Him. (2:13)
- Jesus had a **patient attitude**. We are to endure the difficulties in life and have a willingness to wait for our reward. Waiting on the Lord renews our strength (Isa. 40:31)
- Jesus had a **sacrificial attitude**. Jesus of course made the ultimate sacrifice, his life! (2:8)

If we have the love of Christ in our hearts, developing a Christ-like attitude isn't such a daunting feat!

### **It is something we desire and strive for.**

Jesus never said it would be easy being a Christian. However, most of us have experienced in life that anything worthwhile shouldn't be easy. Otherwise it loses its worth. So let all of us keep striving to be like Christ.

May all of us have the light of Jesus Christ shining in us for the world to see..

May all of us be unselfish, serve others, give generously, abolish pride, be obedient, seek unity among the brethren, and practice patience.

Paul told us all of these things so we can know what our life will look like if we are serving Christ.

The difference between the flesh and the spirit is best described in

## Romans 8:5-9 (NASB)

<sup>5</sup> For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, <sup>7</sup> because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, <sup>8</sup> and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup> However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

Once we have taken on the attitude of Christ in our lives, Paul tells of blessings that we will receive from God.

- **JOY.** When we surrender ourselves to Christ we no longer seek happiness. **Happiness** is *“A temporary feeling of pleasure based upon positive circumstances”*. Instead we experience joy. **Joy** is *“A persistent confidence in the character of God that transcends circumstances and leads to a sense of well-being”*.

**Joy is a mindset or an attitude.** It gives us a sense of well being because we have surrendered ourselves to God and know that He is faithful to keep His promises and will provide our needs.

**Joy is a choice, not a feeling.** We choose to have joy in our lives by our attitude and mindset because we have given God control of our lives. We can trust that our current circumstances will work out for good because we love the Lord.

**PEACE OF GOD.** We have peace of God when we have received peace with God by being reconciled back to God through our salvation through Christ. The peace of God is an inner peace or contentment that we have by knowing Christ. It will cause us to know that whatever event happens in our life, whether it is good or bad by earthly standards, that it will work out for our good spiritually because God has promised that blessing to us. If we are to have the **peace of God**, we must allow Christ to be your Lord, trust His Word, and obey His commandments.

Philippians 4:6-7 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

One last thing that Paul wanted to tell the Philippians was a thank you for their financial support. He told them of the blessings that they receive when they freely gave financially. I have entitled my message **The Joy of Giving**.

## **BODY:**

### **I. Giving Advances the Gospel.**

Philippians 4:14-15 (NASB)

<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, you have done well to share *with me* in my affliction.

<sup>15</sup> You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

<sup>16</sup> for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs.

All of us have different gifts that we can use to preach the Gospel.

We may:

- Become missionaries and preach Christ in foreign countries.
- Preach
- Teach
- Give Money

If we do not have the gift to go to a mission field or lead in church, we all can help advance the Gospel by supporting those who can. This is what the Philippians did several times for Paul.

Romans 12:4-8 (NASB)

<sup>4</sup> For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. <sup>6</sup> Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; <sup>7</sup> if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; <sup>8</sup> or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; **he who gives, with liberality**; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Secondly,

### **II. Giving Benefits the Giver.**

Philippians 4:17 (NASB)

<sup>17</sup> Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

When we give we help the receiver as well as yourself. We are told not to store up for ourselves treasures on earth, but in heaven. When we give to others we the people that are won to Christ becomes “our fruit” as well as the

missionaries, because we gave them the financial support that they needed in order to work there.

Our giving is not only of money, it is also of ourselves and our time. Remember Matthew 25 at the judgment? What was the deciding factor between whether you were a sheep or a goat?

Matthew 25:35-36 (NASB)

<sup>35</sup> For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; <sup>36</sup> naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.

### III. Giving Worships God.

Philippians 4:18 (NASB)

<sup>18</sup> But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

Paul is using the language of Old Testament sacrifice when he refers to “a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God”. Giving is an act of worship to God.

Picture a sacrifice on the altar and the smoke to rising upward into the clouds and into the nostrils of God.

Exodus 29:18 (NASB)

<sup>18</sup> You shall offer up in smoke the whole ram on the altar; it is a burnt offering to the LORD: it is a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD.

That is why we pass an offering plate each Sunday. It is part of our worship. Giving is an act of worship. It is a sacrifice that is acceptable to God. In Old Testament times, you expressed your worship in animal sacrifice. It was pointing forward to a time when a Messiah would come and offer a once for all sacrifice. The blood of goats and animals cannot take away sin. Sins can only be forgiven by faith in Jesus Christ. They looked forward to the cross, we look back to the cross.

We sacrifice today. It does not make us right with God. We can read of wealthy men who give large donations to liberal churches. These are men who do not believe the gospel. Once they give the check to the church, they don't somehow become a Christian.

If we give a sacrifice of financial giving as a Christian with the heart of worship, our offering will be well-pleasing to God. As a Christian, we love Christ. How do we love Christ: **by worshipping**. One of the ways to worship is by **financial giving**. God loves a willing giver. It is the **attitude** of the giver that provides a “soothing aroma to God”.

2 Corinthians 8:3-4 (NASB)

<sup>3</sup> For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, <sup>4</sup> begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,

Our giving should be something that we very much WANT to do.

#### IV. Giving Guarantees Provision.

Philippians 4:19 (NASB)

<sup>19</sup> And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

This is a promise for people who generously give to God. That He will supply their spiritual needs.

Paul wanted the Philippians to know that even with their generous giving, that they could not out give God. This scripture should not be pulled from context; it is a promise to those who GIVE!

So, what is the “riches in glory” that Paul is referring to? It is that we are reconciled to God through Christ and have a hope of eternal salvation. It is the joy and peace of God and contentment that we receive by serving Him. It is the constant love and attention from God in our lives. It is the promise that He will never leave us and will be faithful to His promises.

The great apostle, despite all of his trials, was able to testify to the marvelous love of God.

Romans 8:38-39 (NASB)

<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Philippians 4:20-23 (NASB)

<sup>20</sup> Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>21</sup> Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.

<sup>22</sup> All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

When we give, God is glorified.

God loves a cheerful giver. Giving of ourselves, our time, and of God's financial blessings to us should be a burning desire within us. You have what you have, because God has been gracious to you!

2 Corinthians 8:3-5 (NASB)

<sup>3</sup> For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, <sup>4</sup> begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, <sup>5</sup> and *this*, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

The most important offering that we can make is of ourselves. It is not a duty, it is a privilege; it is an attitude.

If you have never turned your life over to Christ, today could be your day of salvation. Christ wants you to start living your life for Him and passionately pursue knowing Him. Christ died for all of your sins. Sin separates us from a perfect and Holy God and prevents us from knowing Christ. Christ has promised to take away your sins.

If you have not turned your life over to Christ, I want to give you that opportunity this morning.

If you are need of prayer, or want to become recognized as a member of Greenwood Christian church, please come forward this morning as we sing the invitation hymn.

## **He is Lord.**

He is Lord. He is Lord.  
He has risen from the grave and He is Lord.  
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess  
That Jesus Christ is Lord.