



Philippians

Living in the Joy of Knowing Christ!

The Joy of Knowing God's Supply!

Philippians 4:10-23

Message #15 of 15 – S1003

Sermon given on July 3, 2022



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Joy of Knowing God's Supply!

Philippians 4:10-23

Opening Comments

- **Before we get started – stand up and greet someone around you**
- Turn to **Philippians 4**
- Today, we conclude our series through the book of **Philippians – Living in the Joy of Knowing Christ!**
- Paul wrote this letter as a response to a gift of support he received from the church in Philippi
- Keep your finger in Philippians 4 and turn to **2 Corinthians 11**
- He was in Rome awaiting trial after the Jewish religious leaders falsely accused him
- Even though there is an unmistakable tone of joy in this letter, it could not have been an easy time for him
- Paul's life purpose was to preach the gospel
- Serving God is not always easy – which Paul knew all too well
- **2 Corinthians 11:23-29**
- Even though Paul's circumstances were dark – God has a way of meeting us there with His gracious light **Psalm 23:4**

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

- If you are a child of God, He will not leave you to suffer alone in the darkness – He has a plan
- Turn back to **Philippians 4**
- For Paul, God sent Epaphroditus from Philippi with financial support so that his stay is more comfortable
- This was especially significant because the Philippians were experiencing their own challenges
- They were being generous in their poverty – like the widow and her two mites in Mark 12
- It is not surprising that Paul experiences joy as a response to the generosity of the Philippians
- But his reason for joy may not be what we think
- Let's pray and then look at these verses

- Pray

Teaching

- **The Joy of Knowing God's Supply!**
 - **Philippians 4:10**
 - Remembered generosity is always a source of joy and rejoicing.
 - If you pause and think you might remember something generous someone did for you. What do you feel when you think of it?
 - The Bible promises a blessing to the generous **Proverbs 22:9**
He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.
 - Paul was not getting a steady flow of support – it seems only the Philippians were caring for him in that way
 - Paul then makes one of the most radical statements in this letter
 - **Philippians 4:11-12**
 - Paul wants them to know that his joy over their generosity is not about what it means for him.
 - Paul's needs did not determine the state of his emotions – he was contented
- Contented: feeling or showing satisfaction with one's possessions, status, or situation.**
- Contentment may be one of the most difficult states to achieve in this life - It is a very unnatural state
 - Paul was not naturally contented – he 'learned' contentment
 - Verse 12 tells us how he learned it
 - By being abased (humbled) and abounding – Paul learned contentment by living in humble circumstances and living with abundance
 - In his life he had times with plenty of food and there were times when he went hungry
 - There were times when He had more than he needed to live and there were times when he experienced what it felt like to not have enough
 - 'I have learned' – This is a single Greek word that means to learn a secret.
 - Paul chose this word to impart a specific understanding for contentment.

- Christian contentment is not something that can be learned apart from Christ.
 - The opposite of contentment is discontentment
- Discontented: not feeling or showing satisfaction with one's possessions, status, or situation.**
- Discontentment is feeling that you should have more or better things than you do
 - It is feeling or acting like you should be in a different place in life
 - It is feeling or acting like there is something wrong about the circumstances of your life
 - It is a very natural feeling when things are not the way you think they ought to be – It is natural but it is not holy
 - A Scripture we are all familiar with is **Proverbs 3:5-6**
- Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.**
- Three things in this Scripture – first – **Trust in the Lord**
 - Trusting in the Lord means not trusting in yourself or anyone else
 - It means looking at your circumstances and confessing to God that you are not able to do anything about them and believing that He is able, willing, and planning to do something when He is ready
 - Second – **Lean not on your own understanding**
 - Sometimes it is hard to understand why certain things happen or don't happen in our lives
 - We should seek to understand as best we are able by seeking the Lord
 - But we don't lean on our understanding
 - We don't look to our understanding for strength or support
 - By faith we believe that God knows everything about our circumstances, and He will reveal to us what we need to know if we seek Him
 - That is what we lean on for strength and support
 - Third – **In all your ways acknowledge Him**
 - When it says 'your ways' it is referring to the ways of your life
 - God should be a part of every part of your life
 - Think about God and your job, your marriage, your family, your health, your dreams, desires, and wishes

- Everything you are doing in this life is connected to God – acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths
- Contentment is not natural, but it is possible – it can be learned
- It is learned by going through the things of life and deliberately trusting the Lord, leaning not on your own understanding, and acknowledging God in everything in your life
- For some people that might feel impossible – not according to Paul

- **Philippians 4:13**

- This may be one of the most mis-applied verses in the Bible
- In context, Paul is referring to contentment
- Christian contentment requires abandoning self-sufficiency for God-sufficiency **R. Kent Hughes**

“Contentment is rooted in the eternal God rather than in the temporal self.”

- Contentment is impossible to people who live independently of God
- The more dependent we are upon God, the more contentment we will experience.
- It does not say that I can do whatever I want or set my mind to.
- Paul is saying that in whatever circumstances God places him, he can be content and do what God wills him to do.
- This is an expression of utter dependence upon and trust in God.
- Paul is claiming God’s supernatural power to do whatever God wants him to do **Colossians 1:28-29**

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. 29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

- Paul is using all of his energy and strength to do what God wants him to do but it is the strength that Christ provides that gets the work done.
- Philippians 4:13 applies to those who believe they know what God wants them to do and are trusting Him, leaning not on their own understanding and acknowledging Him and are doing their very best to do God’s will
- Paul then thanks them for the gift again

- **Philippians 4:14-16**

- And to make sure they don’t misunderstand his joy

- **Philippians 4:17-18**

- He wasn't seeking another gift, more support
- He wanted them to know that their faith was pleasing to God and that they were living out **Romans 12:1**

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

- Then Paul concludes this thought with a promise
- **Philippians 4:19**
- This is a promise to those who live generous lives.
- Just as God had provided for Paul through the Philippians, God would provide for the Philippians 'according to His riches'.
- This is not promised to the selfish Christian.
- God will meet your need but not your greed.
- Just because you want something, doesn't mean God is obligated to give it to you.
- And just because you think you need something; doesn't mean you actually do.
- God will provide everything you need to live a life in Christ that glorifies God.
- When you believe God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus, you are better able to be content.
- The thought of the Philippians generosity in Christ and God's gracious provision through Christ causes Paul to break out in a doxology and then a brief closing.
- **Philippians 4:20-23**
- The book of Philippians has been a source of joy for millions of people for two millennia
- And while reading and studying will bring some of the joy
- The fullness of joy promised in this book is from knowing Christ better and better
- If you want more joy – get to know Jesus more
- Every day, just a little more Jesus
- Our next book will be the Old Testament book of Zechariah
- Read ahead and look for Jesus – He is all through this fascinating book - **Pray**