

## Philippians 10-04-02a

This is Friday, the 2nd of April, 2010. Good Friday, as they like to say. We're in the book of Philippians.

I thought briefly about doing a resurrection weekend special today and Sunday, but I am so fascinated by the things that we're seeing in the first chapter of Philippians that I decided to move smartly forward in that study. And so we will pick up a couple of items in the section we have already covered and then move forward in the second session to the remainder of the chapter. But we'll begin as we typically do by going to the Lord in prayer and ensuring that we're available for and susceptible to the ministry of God's Holy Spirit, because that is really where the teaching takes place.

I can organize material and present it. I can pull together facts and information and try to present it in a happy fashion. But the only thing that really transforms our soul is the work of the Holy Spirit in taking the truth that is hopefully somewhere in that presentation and working divine effectual grace in our minds and in our hearts to change us and shift our thought patterns, shift our perspective, make us think in a different way.

It overcomes our default evil nature. It corrects the deficiencies that come from our inherent corruption. There is no human agency that can do that.

It's only God, the Holy Spirit. And two things are required for that process. One is the uninhibited presence and power of the Holy Spirit because we have cultivated that and we have qualified ourselves for his ministry.

And the other is the presence and the power of the truth of God's word. And those two things come together as we do for Bible class. And we recognize that as we go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, what a tremendous demonstration of your love and your grace and your power we see in our assembly and in our individual lives as we recognize that despite the fact that we are made of dust, that we are fallen, that we are conceived in iniquity and born in sin, that we are hopeless, helpless, and useless on our own, you take these poor ingredients, the result of our intentional failure and our willful disobedience, beginning with our forefathers in the garden and extending down through the ages of history, but you take these things that seem so hopeless and so insignificant and you turn them into something permanent, something eternal, something that reflects your glory. And we are grateful to be the objects of your compassion and to be the recipients of grace through the Lord Jesus who offered himself and was the ultimate expression of all of these aspects of your character and has left for us an example and a manifestation of the mind that we should have, the attitudes and the thoughts and the life style in terms of priorities that we should have ourselves. We thank you for this book of Philippians, its preservation and the faithful men who have investigated it and whose labors we glean and reap the benefits from.

And we pray that as we study this portion of it tonight, that God the Holy Spirit will reveal to us the divine and eternal truths that are contained therein and that we will be able to see its relevance and its efficacy and its power as it pertains to us as individuals and as a group. We ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen.

Well, I have been really grateful for the opportunity to look once again at this great book of Philippians. I have seen it in detail in times past, both as a seminary student and in doing some less detailed studies that have not survived down to the present day, probably happily so. And we began last week looking at the introduction, the greeting and the record of Paul's prayer.

And I was reminded by my erstwhile roomie this past week that when we did the study of Colossians some years ago, I had covered in the opening, I think actually the second night that we met studying Colossians, I had reviewed a study of the prayers of Paul in his epistles as they are recorded. You know, Paul talks about what he prays in several of these epistles. And if you survey those, and that by the way, is one of the first Bible classes I ever attempted to present back when I was a seminary student up in Tulsa, one of my maiden voyages into the waters of preparation and presentation was on the prayers of Paul.

And I revisited and enhanced that study in Colossians. And we're not going to review that here, but I would commend it to your attention. The lessons are up for Colossians on the website.

And there is a lot of, I'm not recommending my study of it necessarily, but the material that was covered in that, and I think it's lesson 2B, something like that in Colossians, I think the first night we did an introduction much as we did for Philippians. And then in the second one, we began covering the prayers of Paul, but you can check with Ken to get the details. He knows which lesson it is.

But it's a really interesting study to see, to lay the prayers of Paul as they are recorded in his epistles side by side and to see the perspective that he has and what his thoughts are when he thinks of believers and what he prays for and how he prays for those things. It's a wonderfully fruitful study, but since we've already done it once, I'm not going to do it again. I'll simply mention that it's there if you're interested.

What I am going to do is return to what seems to be a stock phrase and is almost always given somewhat short shrift, especially in modern commentaries, and I've got a raft of them. I've got shelves full of commentaries. And it reminds me of the internet.

There is so much commentary that you hardly know what's valuable and what's not. On the internet, when you go and research a topic, you Google a thing, you're likely to get tens of thousands of hits. And you hope that the good ones are up on the first few pages, hopefully on the first page, hopefully at the top of the first page, but you never really know.

And if you're looking for a particular thing, sometimes you have to dig down through and

everything seems to be of equal weight. And the beauty of Google, and I'll give them a free plug here, but all of your software and so on wants to install the Yahoo toolbar or the Bing toolbar or the, this toolbar and the, that toolbar. Trust me.

When I tell you there is a single search engine that you should use, and that's Google, get Yahoo off your screen, get Bing off your screen, any other toolbar that has installed itself, go up into your browser and get the thing off of there. You only need one toolbar. And that's, that's Google.

And they have a little thing that will put itself at the top, right of your screen, look on their webpage, go to the add-ons or whatever, find the thing and install it and use Google. Don't use anything else. And I'll tell you why.

Google is the only search engine that does a really superior job of prioritizing the hits so that you get the most useful results early. I have tried the others. I have been searching since the early days of the internet.

I have used AltaVista. I have used every search engine under the sun. I've used aggregators.

Just cut to the chase. Use Google. Trust me on this.

You will save time. We are to be stewards of the resources God has given us. One of those resources is time.

Don't waste your time. Use Google. Free, no charge.

Advice. But one of the reasons is you, there is too much information. It is impossible to get any sense of the reality of things when you are inundated with too much information.

And Google does a better job, not a perfect job, but a better job of giving you what you are looking for on the first few pages and the others do not. It is frustrating beyond all expression. In the same way, when you go to study the word of God, you look at a book like Philippians, there are reams of paper.

There are 50 gallon barrels of ink. There is an untold amount of commentary on this book and you have to find what's valuable and what's useful. It has been analyzed.

It's been turned every which way. It's been sliced and diced. It's been shredded.

It's been vegematic. It's been pureed. It's been turned upside down and inside out.

And when all is said and done, you just walk away saying, well, but how can I just get at the truth of the book? Here's why I am digressing a little bit on this topic. We, as a group, have been studying the word of God together for a long time. All of us.

There's nobody listening to the sound of my voice that isn't a veteran of Bible class and this is, in

a way, sort of the niche that we find ourselves in. God doesn't bring us new believers to initiate into the basics of the faith. We've done a couple of studies on basics or fundamentals years ago, but we're generally past that.

And we, for whatever reason, find ourselves further along than going back and revisiting basics. And you individually are at the place, and most of you do this in some way, shape or form, of actually doing some preparation and presentation of your own. You may just do this for kids.

You may do this in conversation with other people. You do this in combat in your college classes where you have to counter the nefarious aberrations that get tossed around. But for whatever reason, you are at the place where you need to be able to investigate and do some things yourself.

So as a part of my philosophy of preparation for this particular study of Philippians, I have decided that it might be a good idea to offer not only a coverage of the material, which is great and wonderful, but I'm going to sort of open the study door a little bit and offer you some thoughts or at least show you what I do when I prepare Bible class, what I consider to be useful resources, good places to go, and how to do this weeding out process. In the same way that I recommend to you Google on the Internet, I'm going to recommend to you certain trustworthy resources where you can quickly go and get what you need when you can't get me on the phone or send me an email and you think, well, I would like ultimately for you all to be independent students of the Word of God and be able to feed yourself when necessary. I don't want to work myself totally out of a job, but you all are at the place where you can largely, and you do this anyway, I'm just going to offer you some of my thoughts and suggestions on how you can do it effectively and maybe save some time in what you're already doing.

This is what we all should do, when it's time to meditate, when it's time to do the Psalm chapter one thing, to delight ourselves in the law of the Lord and meditate on it day and night. I don't expect you to say, well, it's time to meditate, let me go get an mp3 of a GTBC Bible class. You can turn to the Word of God and look at verses and if you see something that's a kind of a stumper, isn't real clear, where can you turn, besides saying, well, gee, can I find some Bible class or some note that I made in Bible class, you can go to some of the same sources that I consult and check them yourself.

And so I thought I would just offer you this because, you know, the generation is shifting, we're scrolling further along and when we're younger we are students, when we're older we are teachers and eventually we are history. So before I scroll off, I hope to offer, especially to our young people, some trustworthy places to go for perspective and for viewpoint and for helpful commentary on the Word of God. No single pastor, no single teacher is adequate or sufficient for reference on these things and we need to find the places where God has put helpful information.

So with that in mind, let's take a look at this section that we've already covered in the beginning of

Philippians. Paul and Timothy, and I'm just going to read this from the New King James. Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ.

Bondservants, S. Timothy was known to the Philippians, they'd made two previous visits there. Paul and Timothy were a team and Timothy is with Paul at this time and Paul is similarly sort of vetting or authenticating somebody who is going to be around as a minister of the truth of God after he himself is out of the picture. Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi with the bishops and deacons.

You address those who are saints. We talked about what saint means, what sanctified and set apart one means. We talked about who the bishops and deacons are.

You have those who exercise authority as overseeing. They are the strategy guys, the policy makers, those with the oversight, big picture people. And the deacons, those who carry out the daily tasks related to the group.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And we talked about those words, charis and irene, grace and peace. We're going to talk about them a little bit more tonight.

Then Paul details the content of his prayers. You look at verse 3, I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine. And then he gives the content.

Verse 9, he continues, and this I pray, that. And then he gives some more content of his prayer. And why does he do this? Well, the same reason that I am sharing with you some of the resources that I use in preparing Bible class.

Paul, in sharing the mechanics and the content of his prayers, is giving an example, encouraging them to pray along similar lines, with similar perspective, with similar goals and objectives, with proper orientation to what can and should be prayed for, and other things that don't come by prayer. And it serves a double purpose. Paul communicates to the Philippians his concern, his love, his personal investment in them, and he also gives them a great model prayer.

Jesus gave his disciples a model prayer. When you pray, they said, Lord, teach us to pray. And he says, well, when you pray, pray this way.

And he gave them these areas of thanksgiving, personal request, intercession, and format, prayer to the Father in the name of the Son, in the power of the Spirit. That's your mechanic of prayer. And anybody that doesn't know that, it becomes immediately manifest.

I can't tell you how many dozens and dozens and dozens of prayers I've heard on the radio and on television from people who ought to know better, who are messing that up. Prayer is addressed to the Father, always, exclusively. We pray to God the Father.

Jesus Christ, in John 14 6, says, I am the way to the Father. No man comes to the Father but by me. His goal is to bring us to the Father.

We enter the throne room, in Hebrews 10, hearts having been sprinkled, bodies having been washed, evil conscience having been purified, and so on. Whose throne room is it? It's the Father's throne room. The Father sits on the throne.

The Lord Jesus Christ is at the Father's right hand, waiting until his enemies are made his footstool. He will sit on the throne of his father, David. Who sits on the throne? Who has made a way for us into the throne room, through the veil, as it were? We cover this in Hebrews.

Prayer is addressed to the Father. I thank my God. That's God the Father.

If there's any question, any doubt about that, look at verse 2. Grace to you and peace from God our Father. I thank my God. Addressed to God the Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When you pray in someone's name, you speak in their interest. You have them as your focus. You represent them.

If an ambassador goes to a foreign country, he is going to negotiate, he is going to speak, he is going to greet, he is going to thank, he is going to encourage, he is going to request, he is going to enter into negotiations, in the name of the United States of America. We don't just invoke Jesus' name because it's a magic talisman. It's not a cross that we hang on the rear-view mirror of our prayer.

We pray in Jesus' name, and that speaks volumes about what the content of the prayer should be. Oh God, give me what I want, in Jesus' name, is an oxymoron. It is a contradiction.

If I'm asking God for what I want, in Jesus' name, the name of Jesus isn't involved in what I want. I should be praying for what Jesus wants, what he died for, what he lives for, what his presence on this earth communicated. If I pray for you in Jesus' name, what is the nature of my prayer going to be? Oh God, please make, fill in your name here, well from their sickness.

Well, I should pray that in, fill in your name here who is sick, I should pray it in their name. Let's say I know someone named Xavier, because I know for sure that I don't know anybody by that name. So we'll talk about Xavier.

Xavier is sick. Oh God, please help Xavier. Oh God, please heal Xavier.

I should pray in Xavier's name, amen, because all I'm interested in is getting Xavier, or I should pray in my own name, because maybe I really like Xavier and it pains me and distresses me that Xavier is sick, and so I'm going to pray in my own name. Oh God, help Sam out by healing this guy. If I'm going to pray for someone's recovery in the physical realm in Jesus' name, what do I have to be thinking? What role does this person play in the plan of God? How is this going to

reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ if this guy gets healed? I've got to shift my perspective.

I'm not just praying because I think it would be a good idea if X gets well. I have to think strategically in terms of the plan and purpose of God. Why should God heal this guy? How is it in the interest of the Lord Jesus that this person recover? Well, there are ways, and we've talked about this in the past.

So prayer is prayed. It is addressed to God the Father. It is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and if you think in those terms when you compose your prayer, everything is in Jesus' name.

It all has to fit in the program of manifesting Jesus Christ, glorifying Jesus Christ, reflecting who and what He is and how He fulfills the plan and purpose of the Father. Well, that just transforms the content and the nature of your prayers, and guess what? We have to think. We can't just let out any old thing.

You know how toddlers are when you're walking down the mall and you pass somebody and they say, Mommy, that lady's fat. Look, child, you can't just say that. You've got to be aware.

You've got to think in context. You know, reaching out and grabbing stuff off the store shelves. You know how this is.

You put a little child in the grocery cart and you're wheeling down and you're looking over at the macaroni and they're pulling the candy off the opposite shelf. You say, no, no, no, no. Look, you've got to grow up.

You've got to not just indulge, say the first thing that comes into your mind, grab the first thing that attracts your attention. In prayer, we have to do the same thing. When you are praying in Jesus' name, you can't just say, Oh, God, here's the plan of Sam.

Here's what I would like. I'd like to be out of debt. I'd like to have this.

I'd like to have that. I'd like to be well all the time. I'd like all my aches and pains to go away.

Oh, and God, by the way, there's some other people I think you ought to just do this. That's baby talk. That's candy grabbing.

That's dribbling down the front of our shirt. Praying in Jesus' name requires thinking Jesus' thoughts, looking at life and circumstance from the divine perspective. If I'm going to pray in Jesus' name, I've got to make the case from Jesus' perspective.

I've got to convince the Father, so to speak, that what I'm asking for is in Jesus' interest and on His behalf and reflects His glory. So I have to think. And prayer becomes a great exercise in the application of the Word of God, a great exercise in thinking the thoughts of God and looking at things from His perspective and saying, Well, there might be a good reason for Xavier to get well.

But it's not to gratify Sam. It's because Xavier does a great work of ministry. Xavier reflects the glory of God by being a good husband or a good father or a good employee or is a great prayer warrior or is a great encouragement and has a gift that benefits the group or whatever it may be.

But I'm not just saying, Oh God, please give me that sack of licorice. I'm saying, Lord, in Jesus' name, this is why from my perspective and from what I understand as I apply Your Word and as I try to look at things from Your point of view, this is why it seems to me that it would be a great thing if this person got well. It's transformative and it grows us up.

It helps us think like spiritual adults instead of spiritual children. Prayer is addressed to God the Father always exclusively without exception. Do not claim to be a member of this church or to ever heard the sound of my voice and pray to Jesus or pray to the Holy Spirit.

I will disown you. I will deny. I will shut the door and say, I never knew you.

You should know better than this. We've covered this so many times and anybody else that does this, you can be tactful and you can be nice. You don't have to vibrate and go into shock.

But just be aware, this is an area where someone has not studied the Word of God. Prayer is addressed to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Now what about that? Can you just rip off a prayer any old time you feel like it? If you're praying in the power of the Spirit, if the Spirit, Romans 8, is going to communicate what we say to God in the throne room with groanings that cannot be uttered, how do I know he's going to do that? Does that just happen automatically? Is he nothing more than a big copper wire from earth to heaven or a piece of fiber or whatever? Wireless? Is he just a cell tower communicating anything I say at my whim? If prayer is in the power of the Holy Spirit, guess what? You have to be in communion with the Spirit.

If he's not listening to me, he's not going to say anything that I say in the language of heaven. And my prayer is just me talking into a pillow. It's not going to go anywhere, do anything.

The power of the Holy Spirit. So before I pray, I have to stop and take stock. Am I someone to whom and for whom God the Holy Spirit can minister? Have I sprinkled my heart from an evil conscience? Have I washed my body with pure water? Meaning, have I examined myself to see if I'm in the faith? Have I acknowledged my transgressions? Have I claimed the cleansing blood of Christ? Am I walking in the light? Have I looked for an expunged evil practice in my life? Or am I a glib, superficial person just assuming that God is going to listen to me regardless of my level of obedience? Blessing, I heard Dr. Cooper making this point on the radio this afternoon from actually a year ago, Good Friday, but he has made this point in the past and he made it again in a short interview on the radio.

Dr. Lamar Cooper down at Crystal College has done a great job of making the point that blessing is contingent on obedience. One of our blessings is that we have a hearing, we have a voice, we

have the privilege of communicating directly to the Lord God Almighty Creator of the universe. We have the privilege of going to the highest power there is and speaking our mind.

But there are conditions for that. You know how some clubs don't let you in without a coat and tie? Some places won't let you in the door, you know, no shirt, no shoes, no service. It is the same in approaching God.

We approach, Hebrews chapter 10, heart having been sprinkled, body having been washed. We don't just rush in where angels literally fear to tread and assume that we're going to be heard. God's still got guardians of the throne room just like he did before Lucifer fell.

And you don't get heard and your prayers do not rise any higher than the top of your head without obedience, without those conditions being met. Address to the Father, name of the Son, power of the Spirit. And anytime we pray, outside of those emergency, oh God help I'm running into the ditch prayers, but anytime we plan on addressing the Father we need to stop and take these things in mind.

It is no small thing to address ourselves to the Creator God of the universe who put the galaxies in space. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. That's the initial communication of the prayer of Paul, and he begins just as Jesus does in the model prayer with thanksgiving.

And just as a quick review, if you do not begin by expressing gratitude, your prayer is upside down. But what I want to do here is return to verse 2 for a moment to look at these terms, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is by way of a prayer.

It sounds like a wish, but if the Apostle, thinking of this dear group of friends and spiritual family members in Philippi with whom he has broken bread, both physically and spiritually, whom he has visited, they are truly his. He founded that church, they have grown, they have expanded, they're doing what they're supposed to do. Paul is proud of them as it were, as their spiritual father in Christ.

When he says grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, what does he mean by that? What is in his heart? It sounds like, well, when you begin a letter you say dear Bob, dear Sam. Well, what do you mean by dear? Well, most people don't mean anything by it. You know, dear sir.

Well, in what way is sir, this unknown anonymous person I'm writing to, dear sir, my blender broke and I'd like another one because it's under warranty. They're not dear to me in any way, shape, or form. It's just a convention.

And sadly, people have assumed that grace to you and peace is just a convention. It's like, dear Philippians, it's not. And this is where I'm going to now fulfill my threat to explain how to find good resources.

This book is one of my favorites. It's a volume from a set. It was given to me actually by Ann Criswell and it was published in 1834.

Believe it or not, it's leather bound and the back labeling there is pretty much unreadable at this point. But it is a set, you can of course get a much newer, better set, of Adam Clark. This is Adam Clark's commentary.

C-L-A-R-K-E. Adam Clark was a Methodist, but this is back when the Methodists still had their covers screwed on straight. And Adam Clark is great.

You can find Matthew Henry, you can find Jameson, Fawcett, and Brown, you can find a lot of popular commentaries floating around. I will tell you, Google, Adam Clark is to biblical commentary what Google is to... and he wrote in the late 17, early 1800s, right at the turn of the century, just after this nation was founded. George Washington was president when he was writing this commentary.

And I tell you, it is some of the best you will find. Not perfect, lacks some of the recent alleged advances in scholarship and so on, but if you want to find somebody who really had a heart for the Word of God, who had great spiritual insight, had a gift for elucidating the important things in a text, you will not find a better guy than Adam Clark. Let me read you what he has to say on this passage.

He, first of all, when you get to the grace to you and peace, this volume is the second volume of the New Testament. He's got, I believe, three volumes or four on the Old Testament and two on the New. And this is volume two of the New Testament section.

And so it begins with Romans. And this is the first place you encounter the greeting from Paul. So he covers it extensively in Romans.

In Philippians, he says, go back and see Romans, kind of like I said, go back and see Colossians, if you want to do the prayers of Paul. So I go back to Romans chapter 1 in his commentary to get his discussion of this greeting, grace to you and peace. Grace to you.

Charis Humen. And he unashamedly puts the Greek in there. Charis Humen, may you be partakers of the divine favor, the source whence every blessing is derived.

He goes on to say, I think it necessary once for all to give the several acceptations of this word grace, which occur in the sacred writings. So he's going to do a word study on grace. This word study goes.

The other great thing about Adam Clark in written form is the text of the King James is at the top above the horizontal line. And then his discussion is down below. So you don't have to have your Bible open separately.

As you do with so many commentaries, you got to have your Bible open over here because they'll say now the next phrase and you say, what is the next phrase? We got to go look it up in your Bible. He's got the whole text of the King James right up here at the top. But you'll notice that there are three lines of King James up here and all of this is his two column commentary down below because he's got a lot to say.

And his discussion on Charis, on grace, covers all of page 35 here and similarly all of page 36 pretty much. And he's going to give this under 12 points. So he's got he's got basically three of these page columns on grace.

I just tell you ahead of time they're going to be 12 points and they are great. I was going to do a word study on grace and I looked at Adam Clark and I thought, you know what, let me just give you Adam Clark. It's done.

It's as good as it gets. I can't improve on it. I can't advance upon it.

He does a terrific job here. So number one, the word Charis signifies in general favor or benevolence, but especially that favor which is powerful and active and loads its object with benefits. Charis isn't just best wishes.

Charis loads you with benefits. It does something. It is active.

You may remember that in the various Greek words for love that agape is the active love, love that does something. It doesn't just sit there and philos, oh yeah, you're my friend. I mean, you know, friendship is a great thing, but when I say someone is my friend, that doesn't tell you anything about have I ever actually done anything for my friend.

Agape is a doing love. Agape makes a difference because of love. This is the love that wives have for husbands when they do their laundry.

I love you and because of that I do this drudgy chore. That's agape. That's not just a, you know, philosophy, philosophia, love of wisdom.

You just sit around like a philosopher and think thoughts and maybe write them down and blog them. You know, I don't know that a blog ever significantly, maybe it did, but a blog has never helped me. What helps me is, you know, somebody puts a shoulder under the wheel and let's get this task accomplished.

Agape. Well, in the same way, Charis is a positive disposition toward you that loads you with benefits. It benefits you in some significant way.

Luke 1 30, Fear not Mary, thou has found favor, Charon, with God. Luke 2 40, And the child grew, and the grace of God, Charis Theou, the favor of God was upon him. This is a material benefit.

God benefited Mary. God did something for Mary, made provision for her. God benefited and did something active for the child Jesus.

He grew in grace, grew by means of grace. God gave him access. Do you ever wonder how Jesus had such great knowledge of the Old Testament as a child of 12? He grew by means of grace, not just in grace in some sort of general, though it's just sort of a holy glow grace, kind of a golden plate behind his head.

God made provision. Jesus had access to faithful men who knew the scriptures and tutored him and taught him. He didn't just arrive.

God didn't send an angel along with a big funnel and a pitcher full of Old Testament knowledge and pour it into the child Jesus' head. God graced him. God benefited him, loaded him with benefit so that he had access to what he needed to learn.

And by the age of 12, he was confounding the doctors, confounding the PhDs at the temple and probably having a grand old time doing it, I might add. The child grew. That's your Luke passage 552.

Jesus increased in favor, Khariti, grace with God and man. Acts 247, having favor, Kharin, grace with all the people. Acts 433, and great grace.

By the way, if you miss any of these references, get yourself a copy of Clark and you'll have them all. I'm just reading you what he wrote. Acts 433, great grace, Kharis, favor was upon them all.

The apostles were at that time in universal favor with the multitude. In this sense, the word occurs in a great variety of places, both in the Old and New Testaments. That's number one.

And these are pretty much in order of prevalence or occurrence. Number two, hence it is often used for the blessing which it dispenses. For if God be favorably disposed toward a person, his beneficent acts in that person's behalf will be a necessary consequence of such favor.

John 114, from which we derive the name of our group. Full of grace and truth, accomplished in all spiritual blessings. Ibid 516, and grace upon grace.

He who is full of the most excellent blessings confers them liberally on all believers. That's John 516, by the way. Acts 1123, when he had seen the grace of God, i.e. he had the fullest evidence that they were richly endowed with heavenly gifts.

1 Corinthians 1.4, the grace of God which is given you. These are the divine blessings conferred upon you. 2 Corinthians 9.8, God is able to make all grace abound toward you, i.e. to enrich you with every benediction.

You see what a great word study this is? He's not just giving you the meanings, but he's taking

you to the passages and showing you how in context that meaning makes sense and brings out the import and what we should bring from those passages. And you can make a little note out by the side. This is Clark's definition number two.

This is the actual benefit of the grace, the blessing that came from grace, being referred to by that term. This is a common acceptance of the word, and in this sense the word grace or favor is now generally understood among religious people. The grace of God meaning with them some divine or spiritual blessing communicated.

It's not an abstract, it's a material thing. Well, that's two of the twelve points. It's time for us to pause and take our break, but the two things that we've covered in this session as we look at Philippians and look at what Paul introduces to us here are first of all the subject of prayer, how important it is.

Paul so often begins his letters by reminding his audience of his prayers and by implication of what their prayers should be like. And secondly, the content of that prayer. I thank God in every prayer making request for you all with joy.

And a part of that request is that grace will be communicated to them, that peace will be communicated to them, that God's beneficence, that God's blessing will come upon them. How can you pray that for someone unless you know how God's grace works, what the qualifications are. And if you are going to pray that God can bless someone, what do you have to know? You can pray as well that those things that are necessary to bring that person under the spigot of God's blessing.

If someone can benefit from a bath and someone needs a bath, you've got to get them under the spigot. You've got to get them under the water. And you can't just say, oh God give that person a shower.

That person has to be brought to the place where they themselves will go get under the water. So when you pray, when you express the wish, grace and peace to this person, there's a lot of other things you can pray as well. Oh Lord, especially, and I'm talking especially about people you know well and are in your circle of loved ones where you can do this carefully and without being judgmental.

Oh Lord, reveal to this person the faults that they need to confess. I hope that people pray that for me. Oh Lord, reveal to Sam where he is screwing up so that he can acknowledge that and bring himself into the place of blessing so that he can be more obedient, more enlightened, more illuminated, more filled with the mind of Christ.

In order to do that, I have to eliminate my sinful behavior, my patterns of evil. In order to do that, I have to be able to see those. Oh Lord, illuminate, reveal, show, impress, convict.

It's a valid prayer to pray for one another in love, not in spite, not in revenge. Oh God, show that turkey where he screwed up. In love, make intercession for one another.

This is what we've seen so far. We'll pause here and take our break. We'll come back and pick up and see what else Adam Clark can tell us about the word grace.