

Philippians 10-05-14b

Let's resume our study now in Philippians chapter 2 and I have offered the suggestion here that Paul is talking about a unique and special environment, a special set of circumstances that are available to a very limited number of people and we are in that select and august company ourselves. This isn't something that's available to people in general, it isn't even available to believers in general. There is a special joy, there is a special rejoicing, there is a unique environment that is characterized by these four potentials, paraklesis in Christ, which is encouragement in Christ, the same kind of, this is the Holy Spirit's name, the paraclete.

Jesus said, I go away, I will send you another comforter, parakletos, well this is the noun from that, this is that up-building, that great sense of, I am not alone, God is with me, God is on my side, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, lo, I am with you all the way even unto the end of the age, paraklesis, it is God's presence through the Holy Spirit that makes the presence of Christ real and the presence of the Father real in our lives. Paraklesis in Christ, paramouthion agape, and paramouthion, I didn't say too much about this word other than that it is comfort, but you will find this, virtually the same term used one other place in the scripture, and it's 1 Corinthians 14.3, and this is the verse that is talking about prophesying and speaking in tongues, and Paul, you remember 1 Corinthians 12, he says, earnestly desire the greater gifts, and then 13 is the love chapter, without love, this, that, and the other, then he returns to the subject of those special gifts that everybody was anxious to get into, prophesying and speaking in tongues, and so he is talking about prophecy and he says, one who speaks in tongues is basically gratifying himself, you might want to just keep your finger here and turn quickly to 1 Corinthians 14 because it's the same idea in a different context, pursue love, and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy, for one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands, but in spirit he speaks mysteries, it's kind of a solo flight there, in this temporary gift of tongues that pertained as a sign in the early, you know, the first generation of the church, that speaking in this particular kind of language, you're not speaking to men but to God, there were two different kinds of tongues as a sign gift in the early days of the church, one was the ability to preach in a language you did not previously know, this happened on the day of Pentecost, each man heard the gospel preached in his own language, in his own tongue, that was, I am now speaking Swahili and you are understanding me and I don't know Swahili on my own, that's one kind of tongues, this is another kind of tongues, this is the kind that the Pentecostals think they're getting into, you know, you've heard Robert Tilton and some of these other people give out with these random syllables and they say that they're speaking in some form of a spirit language, there was in fact some sort of glossolalia, some sort of glossé as it is here in verse 2, where you were not speaking to men but to God, and this was by way of marking out or identifying someone in the assembly upon whom God had laid his hand and we don't know exactly how it worked or what it was for, it's only spoken of in a couple of places, this is one of them, but here's the point, here's one guy speaking not to men but to God, no one understands, this is not Spanish or Swahili or some foreign language, he's not talking to men, he's speaking to

God, no one understands, but in spirit he speaks unknown things, he is speaking musteria, it's veiled, nobody can figure it out, and this is why you had to have an interpreter, this was a gift pair, it took two people for this gift to function, when somebody spoke in this spirit language and he's speaking to God, somebody had to be there to give out with a translation, otherwise it didn't do any good, but in verse 3, and this is where our word occurs, but one who prophesies speaks to men for three things, for oikodomain, oikodomeo, this is one who prophesies, this is one who has translated edification, oikos is house, you're building the house, building up the saints, you find this in Ephesians 4, oikodome, and paraklesis, that's your second term here in verse 3, the one who prophesies builds up, oikodome, encouragement, paraklesis, and paramouthion, it is encouragement in the sense of exhortation, of comfort by way of practical insight if you will, it's not just oh sob on my shoulder, I'll absorb the moisture here, just cry on me, this is the kind of comfort that pertains in some sort of practical advice and we get that insight from this verse, one who prophesies provides this, it is a function of communicating truth, isn't it great when you're in need of comfort and somebody doesn't just come up and pat your shoulder and say there, there, or what drives me just up the wall, I can hardly finish watching a movie when one of the characters is in some kind of dire straits and it's usually a woman and she looks at the hero and says promise me it's going to be okay, or it's a daughter talking to her dad who happens to be Jean-Claude Van Damme or somebody, oh daddy tell me it's all going to be okay, I promise it's going to be okay, when the events and circumstances are well beyond his control, there's international intrigues and missiles pointed at the earth and he's just blindly promising that it's all going to be okay, he doesn't know if it's going to be okay, it's not within his power to make it okay, even in the mythos of the movie, he's in no position to promise, thugs have captured mommy and here's dad and the daughter, tell me she's going to be okay, she's going to be fine, you don't know that, it's empty comfort, it has no substance, it has no reality, there's no actual truth, this is the kind of comfort that has substance, that has reality, that is grounded in truth, do you see what it is here, para muthia, muthia is the root, muthos, myth, by itself it's a negative term, in Timothy and other places where Paul says don't follow wives' fables and myths and legends that don't help anybody, but para muthia, this is para, alongside, paraclases, you've been called, para kaleo, you're called alongside and when you're alongside, you're able to render aid, this is like a paramedic, you're alongside and you can do some medicine, well, para muthos, muthos is the idea of communicating something, if it's a true myth, it's useless, but para muthia, para muthion came to mean you come alongside and communicate something that's actually helpful and in the Greek world, this would be a word of encouragement based on some sort of assurances grounded in reality, not myth, so that's what Paul is talking about here. So, when these things pertain, you have paraclases in Christ, you have para muthion of love, this is all very synonymous with speaking the truth to one another in love, this is practical encouragement given in love, it's not somebody wagging their finger and saying, you know what the Bible says about this, you're under judgment, you're obviously messed up because look at what is happening, well, that's not encouraging, that's not a loving delivery of comfort.

Para muthion agape, koinonia pneumatas, koinonia, fellowship of spirit, and the splagna and oiktermoi, this is the deeply felt empathy or longing that you have in common, and the oiktermoi, this is the mercies, these are both plural. If there are these things, then you have the imperative, fill up, make it happen, accomplish the of me joy, the joy I have just described for you in my adverse circumstances. How is Paul able to get through this? He's communicating with believers.

He says, you've been a comfort to me, I know you're praying for me, you've sent messengers to me, there are believers in my periphery, and there are people talking about Christ, and I am comforted and encouraged. So if you have the conditions, if you have like-minded believers, and these elements are present, take advantage of it. In fact, this is one of the translations of Plero, is to fulfill or to accomplish, it is availing yourself of the means of making a thing happen.

And in your English it says, by being, but in Greek it says, in order that you might think alike, think the same. And then everything else is participles, it's a process. That you might be one of these things.

It sounds like it's doing, but this is really being. And when you find participles, it is a condition, it is a state of being. So you're in a state of being of having the same love.

You are in the state of being of togetherness of soul, sun sukhoi, sun psyche. Your psyches are togetherness of soul. Together, you're all on the same page, singing out of the same hymnal, hearing the same drummer.

Thinking one thing. This is ta-hen, the one thing, thinking ones. You are in the condition, you all are in the condition of thinking one thing.

It makes sense to everybody the same way. It's like we're of like mind. I could give you just a real quick example.

We became familiar with Dr. Eddie Peter over in Indonesia and the great work that he's doing in teaching and the opportunities that he has with his seminary, with his church and with his translations of Dr. Criswell, which are now in audio form, which are now going out on the radio three times a day, twenty-one programs a week of good, solid gospel preaching and teaching derived from Dr. Criswell's sermons, adapted and translated and voiced into Indonesian by a seminary trained Indonesian pastor. It's played in the most prime times on that radio station. It's 8.30 in the morning, 2 o'clock in the afternoon and 6 or 7 o'clock in the evening, but it's prime time.

It's when their listenership is the greatest. That's when this is going out. We are a part of that.

When we as a church became aware of that opportunity, we were all thinking ones of one thing. What a great opportunity. We can help, even though we're small, even though we're halfway around the world.

We, God has given us, we are the only church supporting that whole panoply of ministries. Us. We and all of us are the only church supporting that.

All of us, I know, think that's great. It's the one thing all of us thinking. Nobody disagrees.

Nobody says, Eddie Peter, why are we sending support over there? We couldn't be in greater agreement. That's what he's talking about. This is what the opportunity is.

This is where the joy comes from. You think about the 140 million people who speak the Indonesian language. Every penny that we are able to send in that direction, God multiplies it like the widow's cruise.

These things are created, and they just keep on going. They're posted. I just moved those things over to a web server this week that are going to make them even easier to deliver and more ubiquitous and available to more and more people at a faster speed.

We can put more of them up. We've got more space. We can track it better.

It's easier to manage. How does it get any better than without leaving Plano participating in the preaching of the gospel to just thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands of people who are hungry for it? What a great thing. This is a source of joy.

Notice, all the time that I'm thinking about what God is doing over there in Indonesia through that, and the great opportunity that we have. Guess what I'm not thinking about? I'm not thinking about me. I'm not thinking about my difficulty.

I'm not thinking about my problems. I'm not saying, oh, this didn't happen, that didn't. I am too busy thinking about the fellowship of Christ, the up-building of love, the fellowship of spirit.

I love talking to Eddie Peter. I send messages back and forth with him almost every day. That guy, he reminds me of other people I have known in that he's doing a million things at once.

He is in his church one minute. He's on a mission trip the next minute. He's teaching down at the seminary the next minute.

He's working on his doctoral degree the next minute. He's making a CD the next minute. These audio sermons that he's making are going out on CDs.

He's handing them out by the hundreds. They're like little time bombs. They're like little landmines going out in that most dense of all Islamic.

Do you know how dense and thick Islam is in Indonesia? It is one of the fastest growing Islamic hotbeds in the world. And right in the middle of it, these little time bombs, these little landmines are going out all over the place, preaching of the gospel, preaching of the word of God, going out

all over. And you and I have a part in every single one of those.

Every single CD, every sermon, every... none of that would exist if it wasn't for this church. They would have had to close their doors. They wouldn't have a building.

They wouldn't have a place for the seminary to meet. You all, the people in this room, were used by God to fill a gap, to be a point of the spear for a particular thing that God wanted to do. And I just never get tired of thinking about it.

I just think it is so great. And all the time I'm thinking about that, my mind is totally off myself and any incidental problems I may have. And it is a source of joy.

And I think, what are my problems compared to somebody that can actually be in fear for their life? Somebody who is actually in danger of having their doors closed. Who would be out of a job and out of an opportunity for ministry. And over there, some group in some far off place cares enough to pray and to give and to support and to encourage.

It is mutual. All of these things are true of that particular situation and there are many others. Some of you have that type of opportunity individually.

We have other opportunities like this as a church. And all of these things are true. You just go down through that list.

And we enter into this joy. You can see it is the same kind of joy that Paul experienced when he looked around in the Praetorian. When he looked around at the Romans and he looked around at the world and he thought, in this school, I used to be a little hook-nosed, balding, squeaky-voiced Jewish Pharisee down there in Israel.

And now they think they have locked me up. They think they are going to stop the Gospel. And look what is happening.

Little landmines, little time bombs going out all over the place. The longer they lock me up, the more of them get spread in this area. So don't be feeling sorry.

Enter into my joy. This is the kind of joy you can accomplish, you can enter into when you look for these things and value them, exploit them, take advantage of them. It is one-mindedness, one-souledness, one-lovedness, one purpose, a single purpose.

And it is true and it is the purpose that is defined by God in Christ. It is the great agenda, the great plan that God is implementing in this world. We are not here to pay bills.

We are not here to get educated. We are not here to survive. We are not here to watch TV.

We are not here to find what pleasure we can get before we wrinkle up, prune up, fall over and die and get buried. We are here for grander, greater, gloriously eternal things. Don't miss it.

This is where the joy is and we are here in it together. It is a common purpose, a common opportunity. So, think the same, have the same love, be togethered souled ones, be one-thing thinking ones.

And then in verse 3, it says in English, do nothing. There is no do, there is no imperative verb here. He is continuing the thought.

Nothing according to striving for personal advantage in the group. That is a big long translation of a single word. In Greek, it is meidenkat eritheion.

Meiden means not having any part of, nothing to do with. May is the negative. Da is, this is like but not.

Nothing, no part of this. Negation in a big way. Nothing according to, kata, eritheion.

Eritheion is a really interesting word. It is translated selfishness or selfish ambition. But Paul uses it generally in lists of bad things and it is sort of in a list of bad things here.

But it has the idea of selfish advantage or doing something to advance yourself in a group. You have to be in a group and you have to be climbing over the others to get to the top. That is what this word means.

I used to think of it when I was in the service and I would see guys who were all career minded and it just seemed to me like they were wearing cleats and climbing on to others and cleating and climbing their way to the top, stepping and wounding and injuring others in their single minded selfish desire to be on top. I will bad mouth you. I will damage you.

I will belittle you. I will take credit for things that you have done. I will find fault.

I will plant little bugs in people's ears. This stuff happens. The careerism in the peacetime military is just astonishing.

You can't believe the depths to which some guys stoop to advance themselves. Shamelessly. It just leaves you agape.

Just speechless and I can tell you stories that would just melt your eyelashes of what guys would do and say in the interest of advancing their career, just stomp you to a bloody pulp and not think twice about it if they could be rated the lieutenant who is 2 out of 4 instead of 3 out of 4 or 4 out of 4 and better yet 1 out of 4. There is me and there is 3 other lieutenants. I have got to be sure that I am rated number 1 so I have got to trash you in some way, shape or form because you are my fellow lieutenant and it is you or me buddy and this particular fitness report might mean the difference between me getting promoted to captain or you getting promoted and by golly it is going to be me. The good thing about a war is guys can channel that hostility to a valid enemy

and not toward each other but the Marine Corps breeds in the Army and part of this I observed in the Army, there is some sense of, well I won't go into all that.

Anyway, that is what erytheia is. Abusive self-interest. I have got to climb to the top no matter what.

That is what erytheia is. None of that, none of this competitive me ahead of you stuff. Made to get promoted to captain.

Made kata keno doxian and you have essentially the same construction. Made but no way kata according to, then you have this word keno doxia. You will probably recognize one or both of the parts of this word.

Doxia is from doxa like doxology, this is glory and kenos is like the doctrine of kenosis emptying you know Jesus emptied himself we're going to get to that in a couple of verses kenos means empty and doksa means glory nothing from I think the Old King James translated it vainglory being vainglorious glorying in nothing to me you know you get examples of this in our entertainment media making a celebrity out of someone who totally doesn't deserve it fawning and and stumbling over to to get ahold of the hem of the garment of some singer or some sports figure what really I think the the pinnacle example of keno doksia is when an actor plays a part that has been written by somebody and the character is admirable or noble or accomplishes amazing things and people get obsessed with venerating the actor himself because of the part he played they impute the characteristics of the part to the actor who in many cases is the exact opposite here is someone of integrity and accomplishment of quiet fortitude and self-sacrificial heroics in the movie but the guy himself is a cheap shallow druggie womanizing disease-ridden pathetic excuse for a person but because he played this part people just fawn and salivate and obsess and follow the guy around and the same thing happens with singers this is keno doksia it is empty glory it is ascribing worth and value to something that is worthless and valueless and Paul says none of that none of that no selfish climbing over people with your cleats no covering yourself with glory over empty stupid things but in top a no-frost soon a last part of that frozen a this is from from net oh you put the Sunni on it kind of makes it a noun it's thinking and type a no is is is lowering a thing down bringing it down to ground level and it means humble mindedness humility but it's humility doesn't quite get it because the frozen a part is in there this is realistic thinking in terms of I know where I am in the in God's scheme of things and I am not up type a no-frost soon a humble mindedness and remember humility is not all shucks toe in the dirt you know cough cough excuse me type of stuff humility is is the strength and the self-discipline to not thrust yourself ahead of others in type a no-frost soon a in humble mindedness considering one another excelling yourselves and this is where you really get all of these group words you have a lay loose a lawn is the word that means another and a lay lawn is is a doubling of that it's it's one another another or another one another I'll I'll a loan it comes to mean one another or each other a lay loan and then you have a good morning this is not for now this is not a creno or or one of the other thinking judging words you in in school you might remember what a hegemony is it's the

rule it is the hegemon is the one that is worthy of approval it's it's the it's the high up guy and it's it's kind of a strange conversion where this word as a verb comes to mean to consider something to estimate someone but you can get it in English if you think about esteem someone held in high esteem is generally up there in some realm you esteem an author you esteem a singer you esteem a statesman someone you hold in esteem well estimate I estimate someone I I anyway don't the link between estimate and esteem is like the hegemon or hegemony the ruling over seeing kind of high up person and the verb for considering or seeing but here it is hegemony and this is a participle you are the ones who esteem one another as excelling yourselves this is another one of those conditions it's a participle it means this is a characteristic it is an ongoing part of things it's typical may not be universal you can fall you can fail you can all get selfish we can all get self-centered we can all get self-pitying but as a rule as a general thing you are a hegemon or you are one who esteems the one another's and notice it doesn't just say others like any others this is in the fellowship you don't have to esteem the criminal better than yourself you don't have to esteem the rascal better than yourself this these are those within this fellowship that has been described by the conditions that precede within the group within that special familial relationship this works because if each one is esteeming others better than himself everybody is getting esteemed right nobody left out right it doesn't work in a one-way direction I can't be esteeming you better than me and you're walking all over me all the time there are marriages where the wife is trying to esteem the husband in a godly and biblical and Christ like kind of love and the husband is a churlish boor and doesn't return doesn't reciprocate and it doesn't work it's lopsided it's a one-winged bird it just flops in a circle and spirals down it's like a helicopter with its you know stabilizers gone it only only one bit it's just gonna fail and fall I know Ken's gonna chew me out these helicopters have stabilizers leave me alone I'm talking about something else this is considering ones you are those who think in these terms within this group I am anxious for this person to have the best to have whatever I can offer to you know I am NOT climbing over them I'm not trying to cover myself with some kind of stupid glory I consider them I estimate them I esteem them as Hooper a Contos and this is from Hooper echo which means to have power over or to surpass I consider others as surpassing me and this comes over in the New King James as more important than but this really has the idea that everyone is is sort of a celebrity in our estimation this the easiest way to think of this is when Jesus said if you have done it to the least of these my brother and you have done it unto me how easy is it to put ourselves out on behalf of one another if you say well if this was the Lord Jesus and I had this opportunity to help to assist to encourage to comfort to do whatever it is that the opportunity arises if that was the Lord Jesus how fervently and fully what I throw myself into this how how far out of my way would I go if this was the Lord Jesus well the Lord Jesus says it is the least of my brethren now once again this is brethren defined and circumscribed by these conditions that Paul put up above it isn't as any old brethren it's these brethren within that fellowship that like-minded koinonia fellowship right but within those limits treat each other like the Lord Jesus you're gonna you're gonna climb over him you're gonna glory at his expense it's a lot easier if you just say well you know I'm not really sure I want to really turn well if this was the Lord Jesus would I be throwing myself into it I absolutely

would so I absolutely will and that's that's the corner we turn that's the advantage we have as believers who know the Word of God who have the opportunity to avail ourselves of teaching passages like this it changes our mind we are transformed by the renewing of our mind because we learn to view each other in that circle as the Lord Jesus and it is doable God the Holy Spirit enlightens us and illuminates us with the truth of the Word of God we say ah that's how it works and now I can enjoy doing it because it doesn't matter if this person understands appreciates or gets it maybe they're a believer that's not so far along in the faith maybe they're having a bad day or a bad week and then you know nobody's perfect nobody's gonna reciprocate like the Lord Jesus but I know that the Lord considers it as though I had done it for him and he appreciates it it is paraclases and Christo it's my fellowship with the Lord Jesus I he's not here for me to do for I can't be like the woman who washed his feet but I can I can do for someone in my periphery who qualifies under those conditionals and it is all the same as if I had done it for Christ what a great opportunity did you realize does it occur to us that we can do things for the Lord Jesus Christ yes we can and here are the conditions and here are the the opportunities according to their their nature their their type in realistic mindedness grounded thinking considering being ones who consider others excelling yourselves verse 4 and in Greek the Greek gets very obscure here in Greek this is not that of yourselves each looking carefully and I'll tell you right now that the the key to this is in the each's there are two each's in verse four there's an each at the beginning and there's an each at the end hekostas is the word each in Greek h-e-k-a-s-t-o-s hekostas and so this says not the stuff of yourselves he's talking to the group here Paul's talking to a group of believers and he says not the stuff it's just ta it's it's that that of the stuff pertaining to it they translate it your your interests there's no word for interest here it all that your own interest is just ta it's the stuff not the stuff of yourselves each scoping out this is scope-o and once again it's a participle not being ones who are scopers of who are over you know episkopos episkopos it are the the ones who look over who oversee so scopos it's like a scope like a telescope oscilloscope it's it's to look at a thing not being ones who carefully examine the stuff of singular each so here I am I'm one guy in the group and I am not going to be a guy who is carefully looking over the stuff of me because I'm one each but and it'll make more sense when I give the other half but ta the stuff of others hetero hetero is others of a different kind if you are a heterosexual which everybody seems to be familiar with these days you like others of a different kind a different gender right heteros means others of a different kind homogenous that's a genus of the same kind homo means the same hetero means different right well this is hetero the others others that are in a different boat others that are that are elsewhere in the group but ta hetero and this is the each plural it's almost impossible to get the Greek across in English it's not bad the way it is here not looking out for your own personal interest but also for the interests of others but what it misses is the singular each and the plural each not not each individual looking out for his own interests but the stuff of others all of the eachs looking out for it's it's each plural I sorry I can't think of a good way to get this across just trust me when I tell you that in the first instance there's little little island people little individual eachs saying I gotta look over my own stuff and he says not that it's all of the eachs the eachs plural looking out for every other eachs stuff it's a cross

connect you know they used to have a little puzzle do you ever see that puzzle where they say okay here's three circles and here's three squares and you and you put the three circles above each other three squares above each other and I say connect each circle to each square without crossing any lines remember that little thing and you can you can connect five out of the six but you can never get all three connected to all three without crossing a line it just can't be done well in this case all of the eachs are concerned about all of the other eachs it's a it's a God thing you can do it without crossing any lines each of the eachs is interested in the eachs of all of the other eachs the stuff of all the other eachs singular and plural that's as good as I can do if you don't get it I'm sorry but that's that's what it says and it's a beautiful thing in Greek and there's a lot of ellipsis here so think this in you have this attitude is not a translation for verse 5 but it literally says this be thinking and guess what it's a present active imperative keep on thinking this in you let this thinking abide in you which also in Christ Jesus there is no was think this in you which also in Christ Jesus who and more faith they who bark on this a participle it's a present participle think this in you which also thinking was in Christ who in the form of God existing he was an existing one present participle being in the form of God one he is an in the form of God one existing did not consider it a thing to be held on to we've talked about this before did a little bit more work on it in verse 5 and verse 6 the idea of harpagmon is to take a thing for your own advantage this is like looting why does someone loot this is available and it's unguarded and I'm going to take it because I can benefit from it and I don't care about the consequences to the person actually owns it it is the opposite of the kind of thinking he has just described I'm not going to be scoping out my own interests each one of us should be looking out for the interests of all of the other each is in the group right I am not climbing over you with my cleats let this thinking pertain think this like Jesus thought who existing in the form of God more faith that awesome people say with the form of God you mean he wasn't really God he was just in a form of God no because look at the next phrase did not consider it a something to take selfish advantage of to retain equality with God if he had said I don't want to go to the cross I don't want to fulfill the plan I like being God and I want to stay this way he didn't consider that to be a thing to take selfish advantage of that's what her pogmon means I could give you a big long word say but that's what it means it's the short form is like robbery but that doesn't really get it why does someone rob they are it is a self-centered self-interest there is a thing I wanted I need it I'm taking it I don't care what happens to anybody else I don't care if this is the last crust of bread for an orphan who's starving I need it I want it it's mine I'm taking it not that kind of thinking he didn't think even his equality with God something to take selfish advantage of or something to to avail himself of in his own interest hey I'm God I don't have to do this that wasn't his thinking and what better reason could you have for not doing a thing than being the very God but he didn't think that way but he emptied himself took on the form of a slave and came in the likeness of men this is where we'll pick up next time I will give you a clue if you want to muse on this for next time emptying himself taking the form of a slave and coming in the likeness of men these are aorist participles it's the only clue I'm going to give you if you remember the multitudinous times I have told you the nature of the aorist participle and its relationship to the main verb you should be able to meditate on this passage with great

and profound repercussions all three of these emptied himself took on the form of a slave and came in the likeness of men those are aorist participles being found in appearance as a man aorist participle then you have the main verb in verse 8 aorist active indicative he type a node himself remember that type a no for soon a now you've got the verb he type a node himself in the light of everything in verse 7 so think about that we'll detail it see how close you get next week but here's here's the upshot of the whole thing what a great privilege what a great opportunity do not fail to appreciate the gift that God has given us in our fellowship every like-minded believer you know is a gift from God and it creates opportunities for all of the things Paul details to enter into the kind of joy that he describes don't miss it don't get distracted don't let circumstances or people or things or any other kind of subjectivity take away the joy that is the theme of this letter it's a gift of God it's a good and perfect gift that has come down from the father of lights and what a shame if we fumble it if we miss if we lose sight of it we'll pick up here next week we'll close in a word of prayer father thank you for the truth of your word thank you for the fascinating way that Paul expresses these great truths we pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress them in our hearts and cause us to be ever mindful of these great things that the Lord Jesus has given us in accordance with your plan and through the power of the Spirit and the power of your word we pray that as a result our lives both individually and collectively will reflect your glory that we'll be prepared for life in this age and in the ages to come we ask it all in Jesus name amen