

Philippians 10-08-06b

We're ready now to resume our study, and I wanted to spend a little bit of time making sure that we have fully, maybe not fully, but sufficiently covered some of the material in verses 12 through 16, because getting this informs your understanding of the rest of the chapter and on into chapter four. And so it's, as with so much of scripture, it's multidimensional. It's an easy thing to say, oh, brethren, I haven't apprehended.

I forget what's behind. I move forward to what's ahead. I press through the gold of the upper ground.

You just kind of move right along, and you don't really stop and think about how much Paul is saying in a short amount of space here with few words. And it's very powerfully expressed in Greek. And I'm leaving that part out, which just goes across all of my grain, but I wanna be sure we get the concepts.

There's one final dimension of this that I wanna cover before we leave it, and it's a quick one, but what are we looking at? What's behind and what's ahead? So we've talked about personally, impediments that might be holding me back because I haven't let go, even though God has already forgiven and cleansed and graced and converted bad into good and everything else. Sometimes we just perversely don't wanna let go. We sometimes almost fall in love with our problems, and we have sort of a ugly scar that we're kind of proud of.

You know, guys used to think, wouldn't it be great if I had a manly scar that would, you know, if you could get it to go in just the right place. With my luck, I would be trying for a manly scar, and it would just look silly and ridiculous. I would have to get 12 of them before one finally hit in the right place.

But in the movies, of course, the scars are perfect. You know, the blood always drips in just the right place, and Bruce Willis always looks just more and more manly, even though anybody that went through a 10th of what he went through would be on a stretcher being carried off. But, you know, he falls from a third floor thing, and he just groans a little and gets up, and we would be in traction from, anyway.

We sometimes think that we, I don't know why, you know, things come into my head from odd sources, but the Eagle Song, Get Over It, one part of that song, talking about people who glory in their problems, and one part of it says, "You wave it like a flag, you wear it like a crown." And this is what we are tempted sometimes to do. We are almost defined by some crisis or some problem or some big episode, and it is somewhat unique in the experience of our people around us. And I'm not thinking of anybody in this group or any particular episode, but you all have known this, you've seen this, where somebody has had some terrible thing that they've gone through.

Maybe they got cancer or some loved one had some horrific exit from life or whatever, and it's a defining and attention-drawing circumstance. Well, there is a part of us, some of us more than others, that sort of doesn't want to let that go. Hey, I'm kind of special because of this problem or this circumstance or this issue or this experience. And it becomes something we want to wave like a flag or wear like a crown.

And this is something we need to get rid of. So we've talked about that on the personal level. Look, don't let something become an obstacle or an impediment to the goal.

Reach for what's in front. We also talked about not letting the failures and problems of others hold us back or what so-and-so did to me. I am a victim.

And this is, a lot of psychological counseling could be saved if believers would just recognize that when Paul says, forgetting that which is behind, that includes your victimhood and your brokenness and all this other terminology that they like to lay on things that is simply wallowing in the past and not recognizing and acknowledging and thanking God for his saving, cleansing, healing, move forward grace. And there is a part of us that just kind of, hey, that's kind of part of what makes me who I am and I'm unique and people pay attention to me. They say, oh, and they nod their heads and oh, that's so tragic.

And Paul says, forget that stuff. Not only ours, but what others do or what others have done to us. I like that Southern Gospel song.

In fact, there's a 78 on eBay right now, a Statesman label, Statesman Quartet record, don't worry, I have it already, of I'll Leave It All Behind. There's some of the greatest gospel piano in that, Hovi Lister's got a wonderful little rolling bass line in that thing. Dun, dun, dun, dun, dun, dun, dun.

And then he goes on and Jake Hess sings, I'll leave it all behind. And it's looking ahead. All of that sin and sorrow, I'm gonna leave it all behind.

And that's what we have to do. There's no future in it. Isn't that a famous saying? There's no future in the past.

There isn't. There is no future in the past. Forget about it, leave it.

Even if it made you famous for a day, even if you were notorious amongst your, forget it. And what other people have done and the ignominy and the ill fame and the tragic misfortunes and failures and egregious, oh, this pastor ran off with so-and-so and split the group and leave it. It's in the past.

Forgetting those things which are behind, it's not useful, it's not helpful to the extent that it's useful and helpful, break a pattern, don't go and do likewise, learn from history, fine. But don't dwell on it. Don't let it be a millstone, move ahead.

Well, there is another dimension. And we also talked about the things of this earth in general versus heavenly, spiritual, future things. Don't get caught up in materialism.

Look ahead to heavenlyism. Look ahead to the, I would call it immaterialism. We wanna be immaterialists.

We wanna look ahead to the heavenly realms. But there's a fourth dimension here and it is in the context and we have to address it as well to understand what Paul is saying. And that is a dispensational point of view.

There's the individual, there's the collective, there is the temporal, if you will, earthly versus heavenly, and there is the dispensational. Paul started life as an Old Testament saint and a big one, a good one, a peg the meter Pharisee. One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal.

Paul could have comfortably milked the whole Pharisee, disciple of Gamaliel, eighth day, Benjamite, prominent family. He could have lived in that past dispensationally. This is the problem with the Judaizers.

This is the problem with those that Paul writes to the Galatians about. These who he has mentioned earlier in this context and says they are cut downers. They think they're the circumcision, but they're not the circumcision.

We are the true circumcision. Forget the old circumcision, forget the works of the law, forget the old paradigm, forget the old dispensation. It's literally over with.

Forgetting that which is behind. And once again, it's a kind of forgetting. Do we learn from the Old Testament? Absolutely.

Woe unto the church, woe unto the believer, woe unto the pastor who doesn't mind the riches of the Old Testament. All these things were written for our instruction. And if they're written for our instruction, we had better get in there and get instructed by them.

That's why we always have an Old Testament study. Since we began Grace and Truth Bible Church in the early 90s as just a once a week Bible study, we alternate, we do Old Testament study, New Testament study, Old Testament study, New Testament study. We have never not had an Old Testament study, particularly when we had more than one going at the same time.

Why? Because it's essential. We don't forget those things. But in terms of living in the old dispensation, living under the law, going back to the old way, if we've been freed by the law comes the knowledge of sin.

The law was a schoolmaster, bring us to Christ. If you have been freed from a thing, why would you go back and once again be enslaved? Paul says, if you put yourself back under the law, you

are cut off from Christ. You are crucifying the Son of God afresh and putting him to an open shame doing that.

That's the kind of forgetting we're talking about. And forging and reaching toward what is ahead, this is again, everything that the church age means. And we look at ourselves, not just for our individual opportunities in this age and the potentials that God gives us in terms of inheritance and reward and opportunity, but you look at what the church is, what the body constitutes, where we are in the framework of God's plan, eschatology, prophecy, end times, tribulation, millennial kingdom, looking at it from that standpoint.

And we look at ourselves as part of something much greater than ourselves. And this is, it serves the same sort of function as patriotism, which is almost a bad word anymore. But there is an esprit de corps that goes beyond here I am and I'm moving forward, exploiting the personal opportunities and working through the challenges.

And God is dealing with me as an individual child of his. We are part of something larger than ourselves. We are body and bride of Christ.

There is a corporate future. There are corporate opportunities. There is the 10 thousands of saints singing the song of the lamb.

There is the great sweep of history and we are a part of that. And when Paul says, forgetting those things which are behind, there is a shout out to the Judaizers. You're stuck in the past.

You're stuck in the old paradigm. You've got to think in terms of the movement of God's plan. We look ahead.

God is doing a new thing. It's a new way of life. It's a new form of energizing with the individual presence of the Holy Spirit with the completed work of Christ.

We're in a new era. Things are different. I was perusing just this afternoon a book and one of the things the guy was talking about was how to get material together for a presentation that you might make.

Well, this book was written in the mid 1980s. From the illustrations he gives, I think it was written toward the end of President Reagan's first term because he quotes some early things that President Reagan said, but it's before the fall of the wall and all that. So I think I didn't look, but I think this book was probably written in 84, 85, somewhere in there.

So when he says gather material, what does he say? Well, go to your local library. Check out Bartlett's familiar quotations. Look for papers and journals and magazine articles.

Read the press. Watch television and mine different things for illustrations of whatever it is you're trying to do or examples. Familiarize yourself with history, but he's talking about all this.

Well, just a few years later, there's just a, I mean, you wanna talk about the mother of all paradigm shifts. Look at what happened when the information age hit. It is as big, if not bigger, than the industrial revolution.

The information revolution that we have just lived through, most all of us, is earth shatteringly different. I was reading a statistic that in the last 60 years, computing power has increased 14 orders of magnitude. That's power times power, that's power to the 14th.

That's times itself, isn't that right? Orders of magnitude, be like that to the 14th power. I mean, it's huge. And you think about the big supercomputers that they had in 1950, when computers really started coming online.

But it's just huge. And now you've got that probably in your lap or on your desk. You can get it for a few hundred dollars.

And it is only going to continue to increase. There's a famous thing called Moore's law that computing strength doubles every so often. Well, here's the thing.

You look at what computers have been able to achieve. Look at the world of video games. Some of you already look at that world a lot.

But look at the world of video games and look at the progress since the early days of say, Quake and Doom, when we had these blocky 16 color graphics and limited space and so on. And now, I mean, it is, just walk through any electronic store where they've got some of these games on display where there's realistic 3D. It looks like a movie.

People's mouths are moving and their faces are contorting and the realism that they've been able to achieve. And you think about where computers were in the late 1980s, 20 years ago, we were looking at amber and green screens and now we've got this virtual reality. Well, some of us were because we were poor.

There were a few color screens around back then. But here's my point. Suppose you forget everything you know about God and spiritual things and we're just gonna be humans and we're gonna be secular humanist, atheist, secular science loving people.

All right, this is what's happened in 20 years. Where do you think computers are gonna be 50 years from now? Which would be the year 2060, all right? And assuming we don't annihilate ourselves or melt down and go back to cave, that everything just continues progressively, where do you think it's gonna be in the year 2160, 150 years from now? If progress continues at the rate that it has over the last 20 years, where do you think we're gonna be 200 years from now? How about a thousand years from now? What do you think information technology is gonna be capable of a thousand years from now? Do you think it can create vast alternate realities into which you could immerse to the extent that you wouldn't know, be like this, the Star Trek

holodeck idea. These guys are not pulling this stuff out of thin air.

They're looking ahead to what they anticipate could happen. All of phasers, warp drive, all this stuff is based on science and hypotheses and theories and research into real things. They're not fantasizing when they talk about warping space to move things, that this is a potential.

They're not fantasizing when they have phasers. They're not fantasizing when they have holographic alternate realities. What do you think they could do in a thousand years? Well, that's how human beings look ahead.

People that love science say, oh, you know, in a thousand years, how many of the people making those predictions are gonna be around to see or enjoy any of that? They're gonna be dead dust. Where are all the people that lived a thousand years ago in the year 1010? All of these, you know, flea bitten, dusty, smelly, illiterate people wandering around trying not to get killed by the next invading army or co-opted by the local Catholic church or whatever it might be. Where are they now? Do they know, if somebody had said, oh, just think where we'll be a thousand years from now, we'll have indoor plumbing and all kinds of neat things.

You know, well, they don't know, they don't care. They're gone. Here's my point.

When you think about this fourth dimension I'm suggesting of forgetting what's behind and reaching toward what's ahead, you know what the great thing is about being a believer? We will be there for what's ahead. You will be there. You're not winking out.

You're not going away. It's not pie in somebody else's sky by and by. You and I will be there.

We, us, ourselves. Not a copy, not a clone, not an alternate, not me ensconced in a silicon chip. You and I will be literally resurrected to join the Lord Jesus Christ in eternal glory in the future.

We will be there to see these things. Knowing this, does it not make sense to try to get ready to not be goofily ill-equipped and unprepared and utterly ignorant when that time comes and we show up? I have been in this situation. I suspect at least a few of you have been in this situation where you suddenly find yourself in a strange place asked to do things that you've never seen done.

You've never been there before. You're just utterly at a loss. You couldn't find anybody less ready to do whatever it is you want me to do, wherever it is I am.

I don't know where the door is. I don't know who these people are. I don't know what is going on.

I see people doing stuff. I just am utterly and totally confused. Get me out of here.

How tragic to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, raised on the day of the rapture and feel that way. But I promise you thousands and thousands and thousands of our fellow believers are

gonna feel exactly that way because they're not paying attention to what's in the word of God. Reaching forward to those things which are ahead and apprehending them means you'll be ready.

Have you also had the positive side of that experience? Like you've been in school and they've trained you in a skill. I think about somebody that's been trained in first aid or trained to do the Heimlich or trained to do a particular. I remember when I got trained in self-defense.

Never thought that there would be any immediate occasion to use it but I was out in town and probably in a place that wasn't the best place to be and all of a sudden shenanigans started taking place and I knew exactly what to do. I was calm. I was confident.

I was prepared. Didn't see it coming. Didn't look for it but here it came.

Somebody was drunk and angry for no apparent reason. Didn't know him. Didn't see him coming but hey, I'm ready.

I'm equipped. I know what this is. I know how to handle it.

I can preserve myself and what a great alternate outcome to have something come up and you find, hey, that training they gave me really works. I know exactly what to do. I did it and it works.

Remember driver's ed and they tell you if you go into a skid, turn into the skid and do this and the other. Well, if you've ever been in a skid and you turned into the skid and you see how the car behaves, you say, hey, it works. I did it.

I remembered it. It happened. This is what we want to happen when the Lord Jesus returns.

We want to be excited. We want to be ready and to know what's going on. How embarrassing would it be when everybody cranks up the song of praise for the lamb and you don't know the words? Is there any excuse? They're in the Bible.

How could you not know that tune? How could you not be ready to sing it full throated, totally committed, sing it lusty and with gusto because you believe it, you've experienced it, you know it and you're ready. And God says, okay, here are the assignments during the millennial kingdom. Fill in your name here.

I want you to go and do this. And we say, you know what? I spent my whole life getting ready for just that job. I know exactly what to do.

By God's grace, through the experiences he gave me, I can see how perfectly fitted I am for this particular assignment. What a great thing that God took me through what he took me through. Gave me those seemingly incoherent experiences because look at this, I'm perfect for this job.

That's where we want to be. Looking forward to those things which are ahead. Here's the point of

application.

If we can remember that this is where we are and this is where we're going, it transforms daily life into a whole new adventure. Things aren't just there for their own sake. We don't just get through things to get through them so that they won't be something to get through tomorrow.

We get through them because they are preparatory. They count, they mean something, they matter, they help us. All things weave together, work together for good to those who love God, to those who are aware of this call, the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

That's the same call as Romans 8, 28 and 29. Those who are called are those who are looking for the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. How many people do you know? How many people do you see? How many people do you hear who are allegedly Christians and have no concept of what the call is? Too much in this earth.

If we could just get a few more people saved, if we could just build a bigger building, if we could get this ministry off the ground, if we could get this small thing here done, this little task accomplished, raise your sights, lift your eyes, lift up your eyes to the hills where the strength is coming from. All of those passages we saw when we were going through Abram and when he lifted up his eyes and saw Mount Moriah, Jesus lifted up his eyes. We gotta lift up our eyes.

We gotta be ready. There are big things coming, huge things. We are gonna be so... How many days of your kindergarten or first grade experience do you remember? How many specific days can you think of out of the entire year that most of us spend in one or the other of those grades or both? Don't know, don't care.

I'm sure I had tragedies, trials, ups and downs, fights, bad grades, good grades. I don't remember any of it, why? Because everything that has happened since is so much more valuable and important and significant. What we think is valuable, important, significant now is gonna be like kindergarten and first grade.

We have got to look ahead, reach toward those things which are part of that upward call. Therefore, verse 15, let us as many as are mature. If you think you've been around a while, if you think you've got some stuff under the belt from Bible study, praise God.

But if you are the mature, if you are the growing in grace and knowledge of the Savior type, then you're gonna have this mind. And the reverse is also true. If we don't have this mind, it says something about our maturity.

And it may be an uncomfortable statement. If we can't think ahead, if we're not looking beyond the moment, we're not mature. I don't care how long you've been studying.

I don't care how many Bible trivia questions you can get right. If we are not looking ahead, if we're

not living our life in the light of eternity, we are not mature. As many as are mature have this mind.

If you think otherwise in anything, God will reveal it to you if you have this mind. If you're moving in that direction and haven't gotten there yet, but you're trying to go that way, God will reveal it. One of the fastest ways to get insight into the word of God is get interested in the eternal future.

The eternal future illuminates a lot of formerly obscure passages. We've seen this together over the years, have we not? How many things in scripture, they're seeming conundrums and seemingly tough interpretive nuts to crack. But when you start looking at the big picture and the light of eternity and what God is up to in history, suddenly it resolves, suddenly it becomes clear.

If in anything you haven't gotten there yet, God will reveal even this to you. To the degree that we have already attained, let's walk by the same rule. To the extent that we have gained understanding, if we know what we know, then let's walk in the light of it.

It's tragic to know a thing and not do it, to get into the skid and not use your turn into the skid knowledge and crash and burn and say, you know, I knew better than that. And I just, I didn't. Well, what's the point of knowing it if I don't use what I know? Brethren, join in following my example and note those who so walk.

And I've mentioned before, there's a big anti-judging, you know, oh, you know, judge not lest you be judged and nobody wants to say anything bad about other people. We have a responsibility to note how other people walk. Let me put that more emphatically.

You, each one of you, you and I, all of us individually have a responsibility to figure out how people in our periphery are walking. You need to look at me and figure out is Sam walking as he should or not? To what extent is he a good example and to what extent is he not? That's pretty much where it ends. You can't legitimately punish me, but you can note.

Paul doesn't say join in following my example and punish those who walk any differently. That's judging. Judging is, what does the judge do? Pass a sentence.

You are guilty and three to five. You are guilty and 90 days, \$500 fine. You are guilty and here's your penalty.

Judging is inflicting a penalty. It's one thing to note. It's one thing to observe.

One thing to draw a conclusion about where somebody is. It is entirely a different thing to then decide that you are going to punish or reward. You know, to over extol somebody is almost as bad as trying to tear them down or ruin their reputation or punish them verbally or whatever else.

Paul says, note those who so walk as you have us for a pattern. Look for other people that have got this view. Look for those that can see past the immediate.

This is the kind of company you want to keep. This is the kind of friendship you want to cultivate. This is the sort of group you want to be in because the whole is greater than the sum of the parts and Christ is in the midst of such a group.

God, the Holy Spirit can operate within such a group. We are blessed. There is a dynamic that goes beyond the individual people in that group.

Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. Who do you assemble with? Well, try to find those who so walk. Make a note because there are plenty who walk a different way.

And this is in the realm of believers. And even though they are saved by the blood of Christ, shed on the cross, they are enemies of that cross. Their end, their thing to look forward to is just the opposite.

This is a contrast to all of these wonderful things that God has in store for those who love him. These people are going to end up on a completely different train, arriving at a completely different destination. Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly.

And their destruction is noted in passages. If you keep your finger here and turn to Luke 12, when we went through the gospel of Luke, we looked at this in great detail. We're just going to make a quick review of it.

Look at Luke 12, verse 42. The Lord said, who then is that faithful and wise steward? This is a good question. Who is the faithful and wise steward? Paul says, look around, figure it out.

Figure out who the faithful and wise steward is. Take a note, make a mark. Who then is that faithful and wise steward whom his master will make ruler over his household? Reward in the future, reward in the eternal future, past the end of this life.

To give them their portion of food in due season. Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you, he, the master, will make him the servant ruler over all that he has.

This chimes in with many other passages we've seen, ruling and reigning with Christ. Promises to the overcomers, Revelation chapter two and three. Walk with Christ in white, sit with him on his throne.

You have been faithful in a few things, I'll make you ruler over many things, time and time again. That faithful servant, what is the relationship of the servant to the master? There's a bond there. This is not just any old stray servant walking down the street.

This is a servant that has a servant relationship to a single master. The master knows who his servants are, the servant knows who his master is, right? It's important to note because truly I say to you, he will make him ruler over all that he has. He will promote him.

But, verse 45, if that servant says in his heart, that servant, the same servant belongs to the master, the relationship has not changed. It doesn't say, but if the master is walking down the street and somebody else's servant malfunctions in some way, it's the same servant. This is a believer, that's the point.

If you have to be a believer to be promoted and made ruler over all that he has, this servant in verse 45 and following has the exact same relationship to the master. You can't explain this away as unbelievers. It's a believer.

That servant, a believer says in his heart, my master delays his coming. And he begins to beat the male and female servants and to eat and drink and be drunk. Fellow servants, abusing fellow believers, right? Crimes against the brethren.

The master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, at an hour when he is not aware. Why is he not looking and why is he unaware? Because he is too much in this world. He is gratifying himself.

He hasn't learned, he's not ready, he's not prepared. He is not anticipating, he's not looking and reaching for those things which are ahead. And so he's totally taken by surprise.

He's in the middle of self-gratification. Master shows up and will cut him in two and apportion him his meros, his portion. Very same word you have over in Revelation 20.

The dogs and the hypocrites and fornicators and liars have their meros in the lake of fire, their portion, their inheritance. He will apportion him his inheritance with the faithless. It says unbelievers and that just torques it into thinking, oh, he's gonna have it with a lake of fire or something.

Remember at the time that Luke wrote, nobody knew what a lake of fire was. It hadn't been spoken of. You don't get a lake of fire until John writes the Revelation, 60 some odd years after Luke.

Certainly after the words that Jesus speaks here. Will cut him into an apportion of his portion with the faithless. This is apostia, those who have no faith.

And that servant who knew his master's will. How can an unbeliever know the master's will? You say, well, it's just the will that he accept Jesus. That is so flat, two-dimensional, shallow, misguided, misapprehension.

I am not even gonna address it. This is a believer and he knew his master's will. He is aware.

God, the Holy Spirit has come by way of conviction. He has heard the teaching of the word of God. He knew his master's will, but he did not prepare himself.

He did not do according to that will. He shall be beaten with many stripes. Jesus Christ is going to come back and believers are gonna be beaten with stripes.

So much for the everybody will be happy over there. A few of us are gonna be happy over there. A lot of us are gonna be beaten with a bunch of stripes.

This is the word of God. And this Pollyanna, cotton candy fantasy of what's gonna happen when the Lord Jesus comes back is perpetrated by people who do not read their Bibles, who do not know their scriptures. There's a guy that has just written a book.

If you get the daily barrage from a World Net Daily, you've gotten an email about this, but there's a book that a guy has written that's called Shocked by the Bible. And in there, you will find a few of the things that we've learned over the years, like Christmas is not mentioned. There is no Easter.

It doesn't say that people go to heaven when they die. That's even in there. The Bible says the only person that's been to heaven is Jesus and so on.

He gets a few of these little nuggets out and they're published in a book, Shocked by the Bible. And they said, you better read this book so you won't be surprised and shocked by what the Bible. Listen, you better read the Bible.

If you don't wanna be shocked by the Bible, read the Bible, skip the book, read the Bible, study the Bible, learn the Bible. Knew his master's will, didn't prepare himself, did not do according to that will, he will be beaten with many stripes. It's not the reward seat of Christ.

The Bema is not the honors ceremony seat of Christ. It's the judgment seat, judgment. Judgment will be meted out at the judgment seat of Christ.

That bonfire of wood, hay and stubble is not sort of a far off thing. It's near, but he who did not know yet committed things deserving of stripes shall be beaten with few. This is the person Paul is talking about in our passage in Philippians, what we have just seen.

If in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. We can learn, we can make progress, we can escape the judgment that comes on those who willfully disobey, who know the master's will and just decide it's not important. So everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required.

Let me ask you, are we those to whom much has been given? What would you say? Do we live in the latter days of the church age? Do we have unprecedented access to the truth of God's word? Unprecedented, never in history, never not until the last 15 years have we had the kind of grossly available access. You don't need anything but a library card to sit down in front of a computer and go to biblos.com or a host of other websites and have vast amounts of resources.

You have got 27 different Bible translations, you've got the Hebrew, the Greek, you've got Strong's, you've got Lexicons, you've got Commentaries, you've got Interpretive Helps, you've got a Vista, a Wealth, a vast theological library for free.

Do you have any idea how much money it takes to build a theological library just 20 or 25 years ago? I do because I did. And all of that and more is available to you right now, free. We have been given much.

Why do you think this is true? Is it just a happenstance? Well, a lot of unbelievers made the internet and we're just kind of cruising along getting a benefit. No, there is a reason why this is available. There is a reason why God raised up a lot of creative and ministry-oriented people to put Bible software together.

Now, these people are not just software people, they're believers and they recognize the value of God's Word. They're not trying to interpret it for you, they're trying to make it available to you. If you get a chance to listen to Bob Pritchett talk about how that Logos Company was founded, you get an insight into what God has given us.

What does Jesus say here? If you want a refrigerator verse, for everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required. And then ask yourself, am I someone to whom much has been given? The answer is yes. So what is the concomitant? Much will be required of me.

Much will be required of you. Don't think you're gonna be standing in the comfortable middle of the bell curve surrounded by thousands and thousands of people you can just kind of schlep on through unnoticed. We have been given much and much will be required.

And by the way, this shouldn't be a scary thought. I look forward to this and you should too, because we've been given a lot and look at all of the great things that we've been able to learn. Look at all of the insights that we've gotten into scripture.

Look at how many times we've gotten together and been blessed by each other's company and have together explored the riches of God's Word. It's gonna be a great day because we are going to know when we get there. We're gonna see the Lord Jesus and be glad when we see Him.

And when He says, how many of you want to get on a white horse and travel down with me and start cleaning up this mess on the earth? My hand will be in the air. My roomie's hand will be in the air. I know a lot of your hands are gonna be in the air.

And just let me, I don't care if I'm one of the last guys, just if I can just be one of that. I don't wanna be one of the saints marching in. I wanna be one of the saints marching forth.

Yeah, I'll let the New Orleans people march in. I wanna march forth. I wanna be on a horse.

I wanna be swinging a sword. I wanna be accompanying the Lord Jesus and getting those things

done and know what's going on. Know the battle plan.

Know what the objectives are for the millennium and beyond. And we do. And there's nothing to fear from the judgment seat of Christ for us.

We have been given much. Much is gonna be required, but you know how it is if you've ever had a big test coming up, but you study and it's a subject you kinda like anyway, and you almost look forward to it because you get to show what you know. Got a recital coming, but you've played that piece over and over and over.

And I'm kinda glad for the opportunity to not just inflict this on my parents, but play it for people that haven't heard it before and play it well. And when you're up for the challenge, it's a glory. It's a fun thing.

And it reflects on your teacher, it reflects on your parents, and it reflects on a lot of other people besides you. And it's a great thing. Nothing to fear.

If we follow the Lord's advice, prepare ourselves. To whom much has been committed of him, they will ask the more. Does that ring a bell at all? To whom much has been committed? What did Paul say? I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

And what does Jesus say? You commit your way unto me, I will commit great things to you. And those to whom much has been committed are gonna be asked the more. And this is just as much positive as it might be negative.

If God commits things to us, truth, opportunities, and we're faithful, you've been faithful in a few things, I will make you rule over many things. It's an opportunity. And there's no reason for us to be taken by surprise.

This is what Paul is talking about. He says, look, here is my example. I'm sitting here in prison and I'm telling you, I think this is great because I'm looking at it as an opportunity.

I'm looking at it as seeing the gospel preached. I've got the opportunity to sit down and write you this letter and think about your situation and send Timothy and send Epaphroditus. Here's an enforced time of rest.

God's given me a chance to recharge my batteries. I look at the glass is half full. Look at my example, follow my example.

This is the way the Lord Jesus looked at his earthly mission. He didn't just see the cross. He saw all of the people who were gonna come to his father through the cross.

He looked to it and through it and beyond it. And for the joy that was set before him, he reached

and pressed forward to those things which were ahead. And that got him through the intermediate ground.

He despised the shame because he was looking to the glory of sitting at his father right hand with his mission fulfilled and with many sons brought to glory. So we have that same opportunity. So there's a lot going on in this Philippians passage.

Paul says it in a few words, but it's huge. It encompasses human history. It encompasses the span of our life.

It encompasses things on earth and things in heaven, the things that are past, the things that are future. And he says, look, there are so many people walking and they're just caught up in their own stuff. Their God is their belly.

Don't fall for that. You need to note those people and separate from them. Note the people who've got the right idea.

That's who you associate with. That's your example. That's who you wanna be numbered with.

It's a choice. And we make that choice all the time. Who do you choose to hang out with? How do you choose to think? It's coming up at the judgment.

Much has been committed to us. Much will be required. Much has been given.

Much is gonna be asked. And isn't it great to be able to say, Lord, be it to me according to your word. I'm ready.

Bring the judgment. I can't wait. It's just going to be blessing after blessing and reward after reward.

Let's go. So, not tied to this life. Our citizenship is in heaven.

Our permanent residence, our possessions, our future, our associations, our life in all its fullness is in heaven. From which we eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is a topic that we'll look at this last portion and the therefore, remember, there's no big number four in Paul's letter when he wrote it.

He didn't divide the chapter here. And this end of chapter three and that citizenship idea, really, if I was gonna put the chapter four marker, I would have moved it down a verse. Because the conclusion, the great striking summation is chapter four, verse one.

That's the last verse of chapter three. Therefore, because of all of these things we've looked at, my beloved and longed for brethren, Paul's heart goes out to them. He embraces them.

He's drawing them to himself. He longs for them. He says, my joy and crown.

You are my joy and crown. Stand fast in the Lord, beloved ones. Stand fast in the Lord.

What a great exhortation. That's a good note on which to conclude. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for this passage of scripture and the truth that it reveals to us and that reminds us of. May God the Holy Spirit find us willing and motivated and bring these truths to our minds at the times when we most need to establish our goals and our priorities and make those decisions that will reflect an understanding of eternal things so that the Lord Jesus Christ is glorified in our lives and we are prepared for an eternal future with him and with you. We pray all these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.