

Philippians 10-08-27a

This is Friday, the 27th of August, 2010. We continue our study in the book of Philippians. We are resuming at chapter 4, verse 2. We'll take a moment, as is our custom, to focus our concentration as we go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, we're thankful, as always, for this opportunity to spend time together and to study and fellowship in your word. We ask that the truth that is contained in this passage will be understandable, that it will be meaningful, that it will be memorable, and that each of us will come away from our study tonight and our conversations better equipped and more fully prepared to live the life to which we have been called, a life that will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus and will fulfill your plan and purpose for us. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. This section of Philippians to which we address ourselves tonight, of course, was not on the other side of a chapter division in the original letter. So, beginning at verse 17 of chapter 3, if you will read with me the preceding context of the portion we look at tonight, Paul says to the believers in Philippi, Brethren, join in following my example and note those who so walk as you have us for a pattern.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to his glorious body, according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things to himself. Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

Well, we've spent a lot more time in the earlier part of that than we have in this latter portion, but it is all of a piece. And it leads into what Paul is going to say to these ladies Euodia and Syntyche in verse 2 and following of chapter 4. And we know from our recollection of what we've seen in the entirety of the letter that we've covered so far, that the themes of unity, of looking at opportunities, of setting aside the things that partake of selfishness, earthly mindedness, short-sightedness, that's the goal, to look at things in terms of their opportunity. It's easy to get caught up in the details of trial or the details of challenge, the details of hard stuff.

It's easy. And we take a perverse sort of pleasure almost in, you know, look at my scar, look at my wound, look at my problem, look how bad this is. Have you ever seen anything like this? It's our nature.

And there's nothing intrinsically wrong with that. It becomes a problem when it prevents us from moving on and moving forward and saying, however, even though this happened, look at what I can still do. Look at what the opportunities are.

And, you know, actually, because of this, I have gained some benefits that I would not have gotten otherwise. I got sick and missed work. And I thought that was really terrible until I found that I was able to spend some time on things that I really needed to think about and meditate on.

I had a great conversation with someone I never would have been able to speak the truth together with in love, but for this unfortunate episode. And it is in the secular world called looking at the glass as half full instead of half empty. In the spiritual realm, this is the mind of Christ.

We don't look forward. When the Lord Jesus was looking at the cross, he recognized that it was a bitter cup that he had to drink. But he said to his father, nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.

And we are told that Christ, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross. And the joy is what he focuses on. It's looking at the potential, looking at how can God bless.

This is where we get the whatsoever things are true, honest, and so forth. This is a command. Think on these things.

When you look at a situation, when you look at a circumstance, when you look at things as they are, change your mind. Have a changed mind. Let this mind be in you.

Let this froneo, let this kind of thinking be in you. And let it characterize you as a group. And what we're going to be looking at tonight is a transition from Paul talking about what we do in our individual mind to emphasis on our collective mind.

He has been talking about this all along. Let this mind be in you, plural. You all do these things for one another.

Look out for the interests of others as well as your own. And we've been seeing these one another's all the way through, but we're really going to see the... I remember when I was a little kid, I used to start on one end of the teeter-totter and walk up to the axis point. And then when you take one more step, the thing flips over.

Now you're on the downhill side, going down the other leg of it. And we're going to kind of tip over to the corporate or group dynamic of these truths, the application of these things that Paul has been talking about in the context of the group primarily. It's been a thread all along, but it's coming to the fore.

It's coming to the forefront. So in verse 20 and 21, he says, remember, we are temporary residents here. Our citizenship, our home is in heaven.

And we are waiting for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. And he uses all of the titles. He doesn't just say we're waiting for Jesus.

He doesn't just say we're waiting for the Lord. He doesn't just say we're waiting for the Savior. And it's no accident.

He says, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. That's all of his most common titles. The only thing that's not in there is Son of God.

But his most frequently used appellations are right here. And what are they? We're waiting for the Savior. What is Savior in the natural sense of the word, not so much the spiritual or Christian sense? What is a Savior? It's a deliverer.

Joshua was a deliverer. Moses, the deliverer. They've got statues and paintings of Moses, the deliverer.

And it means that there was a bad situation and you are delivered. The baby is inside the womb, comes out, it is delivered. You bring a package that's in transition to its destination, it's delivered.

And the one who brings it and accomplishes the purpose for which the package was sent, which is to get it to its destination so it can be opened and used, he's the deliverer. And Paul says our citizenship is in heaven and we are waiting for the deliverer to deliver us out of this present evil age and take us to where our citizenship is. And it's a reminder that this citizenship isn't an impersonal thing.

It's not an abstract. The Lord Jesus Christ is going to come and take us out. He is going to pick us up like a package and deliver us to our heavenly citizenship.

He is our Savior. But a better translation, I think, here is we wait for the deliverer. Don't get caught up in this.

This is a situation from which we want to be delivered. Students can't wait to be delivered from the hardship of going to school. People in training can't wait to be delivered.

You want to graduate, you want to get out. Pregnant women can't wait to be delivered and have the fruit of all of that nine months of nurture and the labor at the end. And you want the baby.

You want the child. You want the addition to your family. You want that offspring that you and your spouse are going to cherish.

It's a deliverance. It's a deliverance out of a very uncomfortable physical situation and a deliverance into a wonderful new state. You have someone in your family that was not there before and it forever changes your life.

Whatever happens afterward, it's a change. And it's almost always just a wonderful, great blessing. And the reason I say almost always is I'm still thinking about this.

I'm not being facetious. I'm thinking about this awful situation where some girlfriend set her boyfriend's bed on fire and he had four or five kids in the house and one of them died in the fire. A two-year-old died in the fire.

And she's now in lockup, charged with capital murder because she was mad at her boyfriend and set his bed on fire and he could only get four of the five kids out before the place went up in flames. And that just has happened within the last 36 hours or so locally. And it's tragic when you have a child and then you lose them.

So it's almost always a blessing, but sometimes for whatever reason those blessings are cut short. But this is the kind of evil that persists in the world. It's the kind of catastrophe and calamity and hardship and sadness and sorrow that we want to be delivered from.

I assure you on the basis of the Word of God, in the Kingdom of the Father, such things will never happen. They will be a memory. They will be something that enhances our appreciation for our deliverance because it doesn't happen anymore.

Nobody appreciates deliverance like somebody that really needed it. You can read about it. You can hear about it.

But when you yourself are the one who has been in a terrible strait and have been released, once I was blind, but now I see. Once I was a slave, but now I'm free. Nobody can sing a song of deliverance like somebody that has been in that kind of bondage.

And that's our citizenship. And we wait, even though we know God has a purpose for us going through this life. And we enjoy many great blessings, many wonderful provisions.

We gain many terrific insights. We're drawn closer to the Lord and closer to one another. God uses it for a tremendous purpose.

It doesn't change the fact that our longing ought to be, should always be, the fulfillment of all of these wonderful potentials and promises that God has made through Christ for us. He is our deliverer. And we wait for Him.

What happens if you're not waiting for something and it just shows up? It's a surprise. I don't know if this has ever happened to you, but if you've ever been in a state of partial dress and somebody comes in that you didn't expect, somebody you don't know well, perhaps. I've kind of been on the reverse end of that.

I've been in a small room and suddenly somebody came. This is a harmless story I can tell, but this has happened more than once. When I was a teenager, shortly before I left home, I was in the cuarto de baño, or whatever you want to call it there.

I was in the facilities. My cousin, my girl cousin, who was also in her mid to late teens, didn't know

anybody was in there. She had been across the hall and she wanted to come in there and shower or something.

She thought she would just make a fast trip across the hall and get into the bathroom without having to put on a robe or anything. So she came in and had nothing on. I was in there, not in a complete state of unembarrassment either.

It created a very awkward moment because neither one of us was ready for that. Not at all. You don't want to be unprepared.

Notice it says, from which, heaven, from which we eagerly wait. We're expecting. We're watching.

We're not going to be taken by surprise. We want to not be found unclothed, but fully clothed, Paul says in another place. We want to be overclothed, clothed upon.

We want the robe of righteousness. We have the opportunity now, by faith, to get dressed and be ready. Remember that gospel song? I've mentioned it before.

Rusty old halo, skinny white gown, a robe so woolly it scratches. You don't want to be getting there on the minimal plan. You don't want to be getting in there on the saved-yet-so-as-by-fire plan.

We're eagerly waiting. We're not surprised, and we look around and, oh my heavens, there's the Lord. I didn't see that coming.

And it's as close as our last heartbeat. Regardless of the timing of the rapture, regardless of where we are prophetically, your heart can stop at any time. And the older you get, the more sure you are of that fact, the more of your peers you see dropping around you.

And I was talking to my roommate here about our classmates that have already checked out at a far younger age than us and have entered into all kinds of stages of decrepitude that we thankfully have not entered into. And you just don't know what's going to happen to you. You don't know what kind of cancer you might get.

You don't know what kind of bus might hit you or what kind of accident might befall you or what sort of plumbing may give out on you. You just don't know. You have the apportioned time that God granted when He planned life and eternity past and He didn't see fit to tell us when it's up.

And we need to live every day to its fullest, knowing that it's a gift from God and we ought to be looking forward for the joy that is set before us, eagerly waiting, one eye on heaven all the time. Is this argument really worth winning on a technical point at the cost of spiritual fruit, at the cost of fellowship, at the cost of my citizenship in heaven? If I constantly see myself as a citizen of heaven, I'm not going to be very petty. I'm not going to be very childish.

I'm not going to be very self-absorbed. I'm not going to be very self-centered or very selfish. I will put the interests of others ahead of my own.

I will let this mind dwell in me that was also in Christ Jesus. So that's the idea. And so he says, we are eagerly waiting for the Deliverer, the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those are his titles. He is the authority. He is the head of all things to the church.

He is our Lord. And there is a truth in the Lordship part of Lordship salvation. It's not connected to the means of salvation, but it is certainly connected to the status of salvation.

If you are a believer, Christ is the Lord of your life. There's no making him the Lord. They used to say, when I was a little kid, make Christ the Lord of your life.

You don't make Christ the Lord of your life. He is the Lord of your life. And we should live in that light.

You don't say, make the general the commander of the base. Make the colonel the commander of your regiment. What? He is the commander.

And you'd better adjust to that and function accordingly. You can either fall on the rock or the rock is going to fall on you. And he is the Lord.

He is Jesus, humanity. And he is Christ, the anointed one, the fulfillment of all of God's plans for salvation that were formed in eternity past. Who will transform our lowly body? It doesn't say replace.

It doesn't say swap. It doesn't say do away with. It says transform.

Transform. Why does it say this? This is meta-schematizo. You know what a schema is? A schema.

We talk about a scheme. I've got in the grand scheme of things, that's the schema. It's almost literally the tent.

It's the immediate environment. Meta means to change. Metamorphosis.

What is that? Change your morphos, change your form. Metanoeo, change your mind. Meta-schematizo, change your tent.

Now, if you change your mind, you don't pull your brain out and stick another one in normally. I mean, it's not like changing your oil. You change your mind, it's the same mind operating in a different way, right? If you change form, a caterpillar goes in and comes out as a moth or a butterfly.

I forget some of the technical words there. It's been a long time since I had high school biology, but I think they neglected to cover that when I was at Navy. So I'm having to go back 35 years here.

But as I recall, it's the same bug that spins itself into a silk cocoon or a chrysalis or a pupa or whatever that thing is. And it changes inside. It changes form and it comes out.

It's the same creature. That creature didn't drop out the bottom and another one came in the top like a hermit crab and surprise, now I can fly. It changed its form.

It's the same thing changed. And however literally you want to take this, this does not say, who will do away with our old body and issue us a new one. It says, Meta Schema Dizo.

Transform our lowly body. And lowly here is Taipeino Seos. And the Taipeino part of that, Taipeino Frosune is humble thinking, humility.

Taipeino means down low, means humble, not elevated, not elegant, not greatly respected. It means it's, this is the cut rate, bare bones, AM radio model. You don't get power locks and seats and windows and you get an AM radio and a crank for the window and it'll start and drive.

You get the vinyl upholstery and that's it. Taipeino Seos, Soma. This Soma, I'm sitting in talking to you from right here is going to be transformed.

I don't know the mechanism. I wouldn't even begin to hypothesize or imagine what God is going to do. I'm just telling you what the book says and it doesn't say replace and it doesn't say discard.

It says transform. Is God going to do something with the, you know, I think about this in super literal terms and you realize that probably over the course of your life, I don't know how many different actual bodies you've had because you slough off skin cells and new ones form. You have blood cells that leave and you know, there's probably half or two thirds of everything I've ever been is somewhere else now because we shed, we discard, we rejuvenate, we create new cells to replace cells that die and so on and we're kind of a work in progress our whole life.

So in what sense, you know, is God going to gather all of my molecules? What if my molecules subsequently end up being a part of two or three other people over the course of history? Think about water molecules, water in, water out. Do you think about perspiration? You think about hair growing, being clipped off? And so what does it mean? Transform this tent. I would suggest, and I don't know, this is me talking here.

I would suggest that we go up one level. I love literal interpretation, but I don't think it's talking about the actual cells, molecules, bones, skin and so on. I am not the child I was when my mother took pictures of me in Barstow.

I am not the man I was when I was at Annapolis. I am not the man I was before I smashed my

discs and blew out my knee. And you know, we change, we deteriorate almost from the start.

And we're different. But, does the mother who took pictures of me when I was a child still know me and recognize me because of who I am, how I sound, what I look like, my morphos, my schematos? Can she recognize me? Can she pick me out of a crowd? Yes, she can. It's my being.

It's my identity. My body and my physical appearance are a part of my identity. And people who haven't even seen me for decades will eventually probably recognize me because I'm the same person.

It's my personhood with emphasis on the physical side of it. Right? It's me. It's me, myself and I that is going to be transformed.

I've often wondered about this, and forgive me, I know it's too much Star Trek. It's, you know, shouldn't have read so much Asimov and Bradbury when I was younger. I'm sorry, but I think about these things.

If it were possible to stick me in a human mimeograph, a human Xerox, a human copier and hit copy, color, and out comes an exact duplicate of me. Molecule for molecule, cell for cell, skin for skin. Here I am.

It's a totally duplicate Sam. And I'm talking sort of from a secular point of view. We're leaving out the soul, and the spirit, the invisible, unique essence.

This is what you have to think about with Star Trek. You know, transporter, you disassemble the molecules, convert them to energy, send the energy somewhere else, reconvert the energy into different molecules arranged in exactly the same pattern, almost. And even in the Star Trek universe, they recognize there's going to be a little bit of loss.

They can tell you've been through the transporter because you're not arranged quite the same. But if somebody could, and they've actually had people speculate on this and tell stories, how would the copy know he wasn't me? If he had my same memories, if he had my same scars, how do I know when I woke up this morning that I'm the same Sam that went to bed last night? The Sam that has lived all of my life up to this point could have died last night. I could be an exact copy.

I woke up this morning, but because I'm a copy, I've got all his memories. I've got all of his scars. I've got all of his stuff.

So how would I know that I'm not a copy? Well, you wouldn't. I know. It's strange.

It's weird. I apologize. But it's in the passage.

I feel compelled to cover this, because it's in the passage. Meta Schema Tidzo. God says, quit your sci-fi speculation.

It's the same you. Think about this. When you go to heaven, quote unquote, when you die, and you go to the afterlife, you go to the future kingdoms, and you look around everybody, how do you know that they're the real deal? How do I know that that's my grandmother, and that that's not just something made up to look like my grandmother? How do I know that God isn't just kind of fooling me? And how do I know? How do I know those people are really those people? I'm not just having some kind of a dream, and I'm going to wake up, and I'm going to be on a table being fed by a tube or something, and it was all just a vivid dream.

How do I know those people are really those people? Here's the point. How do we know that resurrection is real? It's not a sleight of hand where I have reproduced a copy of things. It's not a simulation.

Everybody in the resurrection is the real person. Jesus is the same Lord and Savior. Paul is the same Apostle Paul.

Peter is the same. All of us are the same. How do we know? This word right here, metaschematizo.

I'm not wiping you out and creating another one just like you, like Bill Cosby's dad. It's you. It is you.

There is one and only one you, and you yourself will be transformed. You will come back not as anything other than the real you. That's what I think it means.

Don't worry about, did I get incinerated? Did my ashes blow away? Did I turn into gases that became a part of the ozone layer and then never to be reassembled? Was I eaten by the fish? Was I swallowed by an alligator? Did I perish in an unknown jungle and be eaten by bacteria that then scattered to the winds? How is God going to reassemble all the physical? God's not going to reassemble the physical. We're not going to be made out of molecules. The molecules and cells and other detritus that form this body, you take away the water and you're two-thirds of a coffee can full of powder.

God's not going to mess around trying to reassemble that stuff. What for? We're not going to be made out of that stuff. Our body will be like His.

So don't worry about what happens to your carcass, your remains on that score. There are other reasons to think about the disposition of your mortal coil, your mortal remains, but that's not one of them. Don't worry about how God's going to find you if you, you know, well, you know, I foolishly had them scatter my ashes over the Antarctic and then the global warming and I don't know where all my stuff went.

Don't worry about that. That's not what he's talking about. Metaschematizo means the real you is going to be upgraded, not replaced, not reinvented.

So we eagerly wait for our Deliverer, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our humble soma. And this is your actual physical body. But, you know, Paul's point is not to get into physics and biology at this point.

Your body is, for all intents and purposes, you. It's metonymy of the part for the whole. Okay? Your body is, for all practical purposes, you.

We don't say, well, you know, I saw Matt's body sitting in the car, but I saw his soul in the backseat, you know, reading a book. So we're all, we're integrated. Soma.

Transform the soma in order that it might be conformed. Summorphos. Sun is with.

Morphos is formed. Formed with. Formed to match.

You know, sun becomes S-Y-N when it comes over into English. We say when something is synchronized, it's timed with. It's in the same time.

You want your music and your musicians synchronized. You've got an important time-sensitive thing. You want your watch synchronized.

You want everything to be the same. Summorphos. Same form is what it ends up meaning.

Transform our typeno body so that it may be conformed. And this is really one of the most, this is one of the places where English via Latin really does reflect the Greek. Conformed.

Con means with, especially if you ever took Spanish. Conformed. Summorphos.

To his glorious body. See, this is how I vindicate, justify, explain, and bomb-proof my earlier explanation that we're not really talking about your physical body. Does Jesus still have one of these with skin and, you know, all of the shortcomings of mortality? No.

His soma. He was metaschematized. And he's the prototype.

He's the archetype. He's the perfect type to which we will be conformed. And our soma is going to be transformed from this to what he has now, which is the resurrection body, we call it.

You know, actually, there is no phrase in the Bible, resurrection body. We just made it up. But that's what it's talking about.

His glorious body. His doxa body. His body of glory.

And I don't think it means, wow, look at that body. Isn't it glorious? It's the body that dwells in

glory, that is in the universe of glory. We're going to leave this physical, mortal, temporal universe and enter into a realm called glory.

And we are going to have a body we will be turned into a form that exists in that realm. It's a dimensional shift. It's a dimensional upgrade.

It's a different universe, not this physical universe, the place where God dwells, the place where the Lord Jesus said he is going to prepare a place for us and he would come again and receive us to himself so that where he is, glory is a where. His body of glory. Where? According to the Energeia, kataten Energeon, according to the power, God has got an Energeia, an energy, an ability to make things happen that is completely not of this world.

There is nothing on this earth that could do what God has done, what God is doing and what God will do when he metaskematizes us. This is in accordance with his Energeia. He's got that ability by which also he is able to subdue.

And I'm translating that as even, the chi there I think is, it can be even, it can be also, it can be and, it intensifies what's being said. By which he is able to subdue. This is hupotasso.

Hupotasso. This is the word used for a commander of troops. This is what's used for military authority.

The Roman officer that was talking to the Lord Jesus when he said, I say to one, go, and he goes. I say to another one, come, and he comes. I am a man under authority and I understand how authority, this is hupotasso.

By which he is able to subjugate, to place under his authority, to control via his authority all things to himself. He is able to subordinate, subdue all things to himself. And what this is saying is the power that God is going to use to resurrect us, to transform us to be like Christ, is the same power by which everything else in this universe works.

What powers the galaxies? What fuels the stars? What created the vastness of our physical universe? It's the Energeia of God and it is that same power which we know by nature is vastly intelligent, vastly omnipotent, and vastly able to do this. If God can create a galaxy, he can enter us into glory. Therefore, and the reason I'm going through this a little bit slow is we're leading up to one tiny word in English.

It's just two letters. Eso. That's coming up here.

Therefore, my beloved and longed for brethren, I talked about this last time, agapetoi and epipothetoi, pathos, pathetic, it's a strong feeling, my beloved and longed for adelphoi, joy and crown, my joy, my kara and my stephanos, so stand fast in the Lord, agapetoi. In English, we generally say, I've told you a bunch of stuff, so now do this. I've told you that there's a lot of trash in the back of your car there, daughter, so go clean it.

Cigarette smoking causes cancer, so quit smoking. We use so as a therefore. This so in verse one of chapter four is not a therefore so.

This is not that kind of connective word. He says, therefore, my beloved and longed for brethren, what's the antecedent of the therefore? Because our citizenship is in heaven, because our deliverer is going to come and receive us to himself, because we are going to be transformed and entered into a new, higher, grander, more glorious economy by the power of God that created the galaxies, therefore, my beloved and longed for brethren, my joy and crown, this is how you stand fast in the Lord. Stand fast in the Lord, beloved, this way, the way I just got through describing, the way I've been talking about for the last chapter and a half.

You know, we say, as you have seen me do, so do, do the same thing. This is that kind of so. He says, what I just said, that's how you stand fast in the Lord.

This is the how. You want to stand fast? You want to be ready? You want to be on your feet and dressed when the Lord comes back because you've been eagerly waiting? This is how you do it. What I have just detailed you about, letting this mind be in you, putting the interest of others, looking at good examples, watching for Timothy and Epaphroditus.

That's how you stand fast in the Lord. Having that unity, being of the same mind, looking for opportunities, view each situation as an opportunity, not a perversity. Look at it as a story problem God wants you to solve, that God has given you everything you need to solve, that it's a way to exercise faith and grasp righteousness and lay a treasure in heaven.

Look at it that way. So, this is how you stand fast in the Lord. It's one thing to tell somebody to stand fast.

It's something else to tell them how to stand fast. Paul says, I have just given you everything you need to stand fast in the Lord. Steiketoi.

Sounds a lot better in Greek. Steiketoi, Agapetoi. Steiketoi.

Stick. Almost a transliteration. Stick where you're supposed to stick, beloved.

Stand fast. Well, that is the conclusion of Paul's thought. That's where chapter three should end.

We're going to pause here and take our break. When we come back, we're going to pick up at verse two. And Paul says, Parakalo.

You know, the Holy Spirit is called the Paraclete from the root of this word. Paraclete. Parakaleo.

Call alongside. Kind of like a paramedic. Paul says, I implore you.

I beseech you. I call you alongside. I am doing for you what the Holy Spirit does.

I am exhorting and encouraging you in the truth. I am Parakaleo-ing you. And then he gives these two ladies names.

What's up with that? We'll see you when we come back from the break.