

Philippians 10-10-01

This is Friday, the 1st of October, 2010. We will continue and conclude our study of Paul's letter to the Philippians tonight. We're in Chapter 4 and we're in the verses in the vicinity of 19.

We'll back up slightly and move forward and complete our study in a single session tonight. We'll make the most of the 40 or so minutes that are available to us. We'll begin, as we always do, by asking God's blessing on our study individually as we go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, how thrilling it is to see your active and onward movement of your plans and purposes, both large and small throughout the world and in our midst. We are so grateful to be saved by your grace, to be related to you personally through the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be the benefactors of so many wonderful expressions of grace. We thank you for this passage of Scripture.

We thank you for the letter and the truth that we have gleaned from it. As we conclude our study tonight, we ask your blessing on us. May each of us find in these passages from your word, truth that will not only inform us, but motivate us, encourage us, and strengthen us for the tasks that we have been assigned.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, you will remember that this letter, in its four chapters, sort of breaks naturally into four parts.

In the first chapter, we saw the Apostle Paul giving an account of his situation, letting the Philippians know via an update exactly what his circumstances and situation— now I can't say is or are, one or the other is going to be wrong— what his circumstances are and his situation is. But they had heard reports, they had sent Epaphroditus out of a sense of concern, and so he is reporting back via this letter, carried by Epaphroditus, to let them know his situation. And you remember, if there's one phrase that would sum up chapter one, it is, looking at the glass half full.

And Paul encourages, by example, the Philippian church to look on the potential, not on the difficulties. We recognize difficulties, we have to take them into account, we have to grapple with them, but we always end up looking at the situation in terms of its potential. One way of putting it, I think I mentioned this to my mom a long time ago, is it's not so much oppression as opportunity.

And it's a lot of the extent to which God can use us and the potential that exists in a situation is whether we are willing to look at it in that light. So Paul gives us the example in chapter one. In chapter two, we had that great exhortation with regard to the attitude of Jesus Christ.

Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus. It's an expression of humility, it's an expression of submission, it is an example of the kind of thinking and the kind of outlook that we saw in chapter one. Paul says, it's not just me, I'm not just sort of a Pollyanna, happy-go-lucky, look-on-the-bright-side, eternal optimist.

This is the attitude that the Lord Jesus had when he came from glory, emptied himself, and died on the cross for us. And this is why God has highly exalted him and given him the name that is above every name. And this is why we can look to Christ as our example because he did this in his humanity.

He took on the form of a servant. He came just like us and equipped like we are in human flesh with the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He humbled himself, he was obedient up to and through death, and that's why God has exalted him.

And if we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, he will exalt us in due time. And so Paul ends up saying, just as you have all obeyed, whether I'm present or whether I'm absent, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. He then talks about his example of humility that he put before them when he was with them.

He says, I may be poured out like a drink offering. And we're going to see another reference to offering in our section of chapter 4. You remember that this gift that they sent to Paul is referred to as a sweet-smelling savor sacrifice. But he says, I may be poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, and I rejoice and share in that with you.

Then he talks about Timothy and he talks about Epaphroditus. And you remember those two very concrete and familiar examples. Then in chapter 3, after having talked about his outlook on his circumstances and his exhortation to have this attitude, which he reflects, which the Lord Jesus reflects, that Timothy reflects, that Epaphroditus reflects.

Then in chapter 3, he says, what is it that's going to sustain and build and fuel this outlook? Because you can't just decide consciously or volitionally that you're going to say, okay, well, be positive, look on the bright side, have potential. We can't do that. We can't sustain it for any length of time.

What is it that gives us the ability to do this? And the ability comes through the knowledge of Jesus Christ. That's what chapter 3 talks about. Don't appeal to your flesh.

Don't rely on your own power on this. Paul says, if anybody was going to try to subsist on what you could do in the flesh, I could have more confidence than anybody. I was circumcised the eighth day.

Hebrew of the Hebrews had enough zeal to even persecute the church. But I count all of this as scubalon to gain Christ, because it is not human accomplishment. It's not human visibility.

It is to find that surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ. And so he turns this into an exhortation. And we saw this in chapter 3, to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death.

And this reviews and summarizes and rehearses everything that he said in the first two chapters. He says, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. And it's just a great summary statement of what our Christian life is about.

We can live here. We can spend money. We can earn money.

We can go to school. We can get an education. We can get married.

We can have kids. We can do all of the usual human things. But our life is transformed by the presence of God in Christ, in the Holy Spirit, in our lives.

We do these same mundane things that the unbelieving world does, but it counts for something. It is transmuted. It is enhanced.

It is galvanized into something that no ordinary human life has the power to do. It enters into eternity. It partakes of eternity.

It invests in eternity. It lays hold of eternal life. We do that through the presence of God.

The challenge for us is to not forget, because we're going to live our human life regardless. We will live this life no matter what. We'll live it.

There's a song somebody wrote, I'm going to live until I die. That's exactly right. All of us will live until we die in some fashion.

We will get up. We will perform all of the usual functions to sustain ourselves and get through our day. What difference will it make? Are we just going to be another one of the withered leaves and shrunken blades of grass that has sprung up and vanished on the great lawn of human history? What distinguishes us from anybody else? God has given us the gift of entering into eternal things now.

We can transform what we do now. That's the subject of chapter 3, pressing toward the goal. Let us, therefore, as many as are mature, have this attitude.

And if you think any differently, God will reveal it to you. Because this is the plan of God. It's not evangelizing the world.

It's not rebuilding economies. It's not process theology. It's not kingdom now theology.

It's not if we build it, he will come. It isn't anything other than taking the capital of time, redeem that time, and turn evil days into gold and silver and precious stones. That's our task.

We are stewards. God gives us of his bounty. What do we do with it? If we consume it ourselves, if we say, my master delays his return, and we beat our fellow servants, and we imbibe and stuff ourselves with the master's goods, on the day of the master's return, it will go very hard on us.

If, instead, we remember who we are and why we're here, it just makes all the difference. Let us keep living by the same standard, Philippians 3.16. We cannot afford to lapse. The default is not good enough.

If we default, if we do nothing, we will fulfill the description that Paul gives beginning in verse 18. Many walk of whom I often told you and now tell you even weeping. They are enemies of the cross of Christ.

Their end is destruction. Their God is their appetite. Their glory is their shame.

They set their minds on earthly things. It's absurdly simple to match this description. All you have to do to match this description is do nothing.

Just live your life, and this fits. It takes decision. It takes goals.

It takes setting priorities and observing and respecting those priorities, moving toward those goals, taking active steps, purging out the leaven, taking out whatever hinders, laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, as it says in Hebrews 12. Run with patience the race that is set before us. Why? Because our citizenship is in heaven, verse 20.

That's where we are eagerly waiting for the Savior. We are not assuming that He delays His coming and consuming everything in accordance with our own desires. We know that He will transform us into conformity with the body of His glory.

Then we got into chapter 4. So what was the structure again? This is the last time we're going to be reviewing Philippians for a long time. It starts out with a status report. This is what in the military we call a sit-rep.

Paul says, here's the update, here's the current situation, and as bad as it may sound to you, I think it's great. Why? Because I've got the attitude that Christ had when He came to this earth and went to the cross. He looked ahead, and that's why God has exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, and we will be exalted to rule and reign with Him.

We will share in all good things with Him. Chapter 3 is the means. You catch the fire and you say, I want to do that, how do I do it? You've got to have the knowledge of Christ.

You can't rely on the flesh. You're not going to get there in human energy. We must come to know Christ.

Paul uses himself as that example. I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings being conformed to His death in order that I may attain to everything that comes in the resurrection. You're either going to attain it or not.

So he tells us exactly how. He says, I forget what's behind. I forget my failures, I forget my

successes.

I press on toward the goal, the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. And anybody who's mature is going to have this attitude. If not, God's going to spank you until you either see it or drop.

So then in Chapter 4, after the mind of Christ, the knowledge of Christ, we get to the peace of Christ. Remember that? The God of peace, the peace of God, and the God of peace. We have that wonderful bracket there.

And Paul encourages the people in the church. He talks about the difficulties that Euodia and Syntyche are having. And he says, look, you need to have peace with one another.

Bury the hatchet. Get together. Paphroditus, help them out.

Then he talks about rejoicing in the Lord. Let your moderation, your gentleness, your sobriety be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

Don't be anxious. Keep your prayer life healthy. And when you do so, the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, all understanding, will keep, will guard and preserve your hearts and your minds.

If we have our hearts and minds preserved in the condition that they should be in before God, we're in good shape, right? Sometimes I think, you know, right after I've gotten my soul completely full of all the things I'm going to present in a Bible class, if I could just freeze myself at that point and keep all of that right in the front of my mind, I'm thinking about very little else. I've set aside whatever my work concerns are, whatever my personal concerns are, whatever other issues, because I can only hold so much information. I've just shoved everything else aside, and I've got two Bible classes loaded up in my head.

And I sometimes think, you know, if I could just walk around like this all the time, what a tremendously successful believer I would be. That's what happens when flames get next to glass. It's split, cracked, shattered, burst.

The wicks have to stay in the center. This is why God doesn't let us get too close to His glory. We would not be able to stand it.

So I wish I could walk around with all that in my mind. But how do we actually maintain that orientation, that attitude? We have to divest ourselves of anxiety. We have to maintain ourselves in prayer.

And we have to let our moderation, our gentleness, our balance dominate in our dealings with everyone. That's when the peace of God that passes all understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Then he says, Finally, brethren, as far as, or as much as, or to the extent

that you can find truth, honor, goodness, purity, beauty, loveliness, good reputation, excellence, and something that praises, concentrate on those things.

It's a choice. It's a command. Turn your mind.

I was recently asked, very recently asked, whether I thought people were, all people, even people that are allegedly diagnosed with various kinds of mental problems, if they're responsible. And I said, yes, they are. Because I think in most cases, there are physiological causes, and that's not what I'm talking about.

But in many cases, people that ultimately get diagnosed with a psychological disorder, they are on the wrong end of a series of poor choices. They have habitually pursued destructive thought patterns. If you do the opposite of concentrating on what is true and honorable, what is good and noble and pure and lovely, where there is virtue.

If you constantly run on, if you talk about, if your conversation is constantly, you'll never guess what scandalous thing just happened. You'll never guess what awful thing. There are people that can do this on the personal level.

There are people who do it at a political level. There are people who take all kinds of unwarranted liberties in attacking the government when their party is out of power. Now, I disagree strenuously with a lot of what goes on in government done by both parties.

I'm just about as put out with one as I am with the other. But it does no good to spend a good portion of the day seeking out and wallowing in invective aimed at the bad guys, the political bad guys, the economic bad guys. Sure, we need to be aware.

We need to be informed. We can evaluate based on standards and on history and on good judgment and so on. But if you spend any time at all thinking about that beyond being aware, it is unwholesome.

It will drag you down. What does this scripture say? Find something as far as you find something good. We've got a current president up there.

It may be a strain, but if you look, you can find some good things to say. He has made some good decisions. He's made some good calls.

There are people who wouldn't let those words pass their lips if their life depended on it. I'm here to tell you the guy is not 100% grade A evil, nor was President Bush. And neither one of them is 100% golden, can do no wrong good.

They're human beings. They have a mix of good and bad policies. Sometimes the mix is heavy on one side and light on the other.

But nobody is Satan incarnate. Nobody is the Antichrist in the American government yet. And this scripture says you better start trying to look for something good.

You may not like it, may not want to, may not be popular in circles in which you move. But I'm just telling you, Paul says, brethren, as far as there is truth, as far as to the extent that you can find something honorable, to the extent that you can find something worthwhile, virtuous, noble, something that praises, you think about that. Why? It's self-preservation.

Do you want your spiritual life to work or not? You may think, oh, I'm giving him his just desserts by thinking bad thoughts. You've done nothing. Those people don't know or care what some guy sitting in a house in Plano, Texas, thinks about his job as president.

And rightfully so. If I was up there, I wouldn't be worrying about what some guy in Oshkosh, Wisconsin was saying to his wife about how I was governing. What difference does it make? We destroy ourselves when we wallow, when we cultivate, when we fluff up and perpetrate and keep alive negativity.

It's the worst. If you really think the guy is bad, don't do him any favors. Don't negativize yourself.

Don't tear yourself down over a ne'er-do-well. If he really is a ne'er-do-well, the best thing you can do is not partake of his ne'er-do-wellness. Don't imbibe the evil.

Find something good. Let it go. Let it go.

You're not going to change it by steaming. The steam that comes out of your ears and the blood that shoots out of your eyes does nothing except hurt us. It hurts us.

We hurt each other. We hurt ourselves. So why hand them a victory where it's like, oh, I hate you so much.

And we pull the pin from the grenade and we're just expostulating and waving our arms and we forget to throw the thing and we blow ourselves up. It does no good. There is no productive benefit to railing.

None. You can evaluate. You can use reasonable argument.

You can engage in debate. You can engage in dialogue. You can point things out.

You can research. It's all fine. Don't let it get a hold of you.

Don't let the root of bitterness spring up by which many are defiled. It never leaves the tube. It's like in artillery.

We have a thing called a cook-off. You've been shooting all day. The howitzer gets really, really hot.

You cut the charge, put it in. You chamber the next artillery round. And the tube is so hot that it goes off in the tube.

The powder goes off. And you typically have quite a significant disaster on your hands at that point. Why? Shot too fast.

I'll show him. I'll put so many rounds down range he won't be able to come up out of his little fighting hole. If he isn't already ripped to shreds.

And in the effort to hurt the enemy, you wind up hurting yourself. It does no good. Measured.

Balance. That's what it says in one of those true, honorable, whatever is right, and so on. So the things you have heard and seen in me, Paul says, these do.

And the God of peace will be with you. Do you think the God of peace is going to stick around when all you can do is spew bile? He doesn't do that. The Lord Jesus didn't do that.

The Lord Jesus denounced the Pharisees on rare occasions. He had the authority to do so. But generally speaking, Jesus didn't waste time on his enemies.

He focused on his mission. So should we. That's the thrust of the first part of chapter 4. We need to have peace with one another.

We need to have peace with God. We need to have peace in all of our circumstances. And he, in this most recent section that we covered, 10 through 17, Paul talks about how, I know you had love for me and concern.

You didn't always have opportunity to express it. And by the way, do you remember that point that we saw in this last week or two? That you always had the concern, but you lacked opportunity. And there's a principle there that sometimes God intentionally severs the connection so that people have to do without.

You may want to help, but you just can't. You may need help, and you just can't get it from that particular source. It's of God.

Well, that bears on the interpretation of a verse that we're going to look at in the time that remains to us tonight. But the upshot of it is we need to have peace with one another. Euodia, Syntyche, don't waste your time shooting at each other.

We've got a common enemy out there. Get together. Be of one mind.

And anybody that can help them, Epaphroditus, do it. That way, by releasing anxiety, by concentrating on those things that are uplifting and beneficial, the God of peace will be with you. And all this nonsense about may the force be with you.

I don't want the force. I want the God of peace with me. The force is going to disappear when this earth gets incinerated.

Every copy of Star Wars, I'm sure, is going to not last into eternity. Every little reference to Yoda and Skywalker and all the rest of that is going to be fluff and detritus vanishing into the dim dust of history. The God of peace is who we're going to live with, dwell with, for all eternity.

So, who do you want with you? Do you want some humanly engineered idea of how to get along, or do you want to be in the plan and purpose of God? The God of peace will be with you. Now, we talked about how Paul is kind of balanced in his response to their gift. He appreciates that they sent it, but he's careful to tell them, I have learned to get along whether I am abased or whether I abound, whether I am needy or whether I am prosperous.

Right now you've sent a gift and I'm prosperous. I'm full, he's going to say. I don't have need of anything.

But even when I am full, I recognize my neediness. And even when I'm needy, I recognize my fullness. I have learned how to be abased when I abound and how to abound when I am abased.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. And when Christ is with me, circumstances are just circumstances. I can get along fine either way.

So he's careful. He doesn't want them to get the idea, oh, well, we need to do this on a regular basis. Look how much that one helped.

We should do it again. So he ratchets back. And by the way, the language that is used here is really interesting.

I did a little work on the Greek, and I won't give you the Greek per se, but when he says in verse 17, not that I seek the gift, I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. And he says, you know, the things that I will be able to do in perpetuating ministry, I mean, you think about the situation with Dr. Reddy. Dr. Reddy's not over there saying, boy, I sure wish I had a lot of money.

He's thinking what we could do if we had facilities, what we could do if we could produce more books, what we could do if we could make more discs, how many more people we could reach in our area if we had resources. And when God has resources, he's thankful to the source of the resources, and he's thankful to God, but he's mainly thinking, you know, this is going to bear fruit. I'm going to plow this into ministry and look at the potential for the fruit.

And he knows that whoever has had a part in the resources is going to share in the joy over the fruit. And that's what Paul is saying here. And he says, indeed, I have all and abound, I am full.

And this particular phrase is a, this is an accounting statement. They have dug up all, as you know, all kinds of ancient records in Greece and in the Roman Empire. And when someone

handed somebody else a receipt, this phrase that Paul uses here is what's written at the bottom, received in full.

We would say paid in full. You got a little stamp paid, you know, paid in full. Well, the Greeks would put a little statement on there that says, *op echo, perisuo*, I have received in full, received in full.

And it's the exact phrase that he uses here. And you would think, well, maybe that's just coincidence. But remember earlier when he said that back when I went out from Macedonia, no one was a partner with me, a co-fellowship with me in the word.

And then he said of giving and receiving. You remember that up in verse 15, that giving and receiving. Those are the Greek words, the accounting words for credits and debits.

No church shared with me concerning credits and debits, but you only. I'm sorry, debits and credits. Giving is debits, receiving is credits.

These are the Greek words that were used in accounting language for those. *Doseos* and *lemseos*. *Doseos*, *lemseos*.

It's all these records that they've dug up that have nothing to do with the Bible. They're just old stuff that they found stuffed inside various things. You remember once they found the *Oxyrhynchus papyrus* down in Egypt and they were stuffed crocodiles.

And somebody had said, boy, aren't these crocodiles going to sell like hotcakes or something? They had all these stuffed crocodiles. Well, the archaeologists couldn't care less about the crocodiles. They wanted the stuffing because the stuffing was these priceless ancient documents that had examples of writing that were long lost.

And in the same way, from some of these seemingly mundane records from the ancient world, we find out how words are used. And Paul says, this is a monetary gift that you gave. And that's what informs our understanding down below when he says, the gift that Epaphroditus brought from you, I have received in full.

He didn't spend any of it. I got it all. It's received in full.

It's a monetary gift. And he says, but more so, it's a gift to God. And he uses this phrase, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

I have mentioned to you in the past that I think it's a little bit presumptuous for a church to very, almost without thinking, draw the conclusion that if you give to that church, you are giving to God. Giving to me is giving to God. Paul makes that equation here.

And he can do so. He's an apostle. It's manifestly clear because he always supports himself.

You remember? And you can do lots of research into the background of this that I'm not going to go into. But if you think back, Paul makes a statement in some other epistles during this Macedonian ministry period. And he says, I haven't taken gifts from anybody.

I've worked with my own hands. And yet he says, you Philippians sent me gifts in the past, and now you have sent me another one. And so it would seem to be a contradiction.

Well, I thought you said you weren't getting any support from the churches. But here you say the Philippians sent some in the past, and they've sent some more here. Paul isn't living on any of this money.

He's the steward. He's the accountant. He has received it from them.

He says in terms of the accounting, the debits and credits in the past, you all were the only church participating. All of that money. There is no overhead with Paul.

He doesn't dip into it for his own needs. This is what he needs for ministry. This is his ministry budget.

He's going to use this maybe to copy pieces of Scripture, maybe to, I don't know what all he would be doing. But whatever it is, it's ministry. Sending messengers forth, giving them traveling expenses so that they can get the epistles delivered to their destinations.

These guys can't make any money while they're traveling. Are they going to travel at their own account? It was expensive to ride ships and travel with caravans and so on. You had to buy meals.

You had to purchase lodging. Sometimes these trips were weeks or months. Where does the money come from? Well, somebody is financing it.

Antioch sent Barnabas and Paul out and financed. Women financed the travels of the Lord Jesus and his disciples in Judea and across Samaria and into Galilee. There were women who financed that, who gave them food and lodging money.

And it's all for that. Paul doesn't say, boy, you know, I could really use a new sundial or something. So the fruit that amounts to your account, I have it all.

I've received it from Epaphroditus, and it is a sweet-smelling aroma. Now, this is really quite a compliment because this sharing with others and meeting needs as a sweet-smelling aroma, remember that the death of the Lord Jesus Christ itself is referred to as a sweet-smelling savor, acceptable to God. And you find the same phrase used over in Hebrews, Hebrews 13, 16, do not neglect doing good and sharing for with such sacrifices, God is pleased.

And if you look up that sweet-smelling savor or pleasing aroma in the Old Testament, it goes all

the way back to Genesis chapter eight forward through Leviticus. And the idea that God is not just his justice is satisfied, but he is pleased. The aroma goes beyond satisfaction of justice.

The sweet-smelling savor, God is not just kept from judging, but he is actually pleased. It goes beyond filling in the negative and adds to the positive. Sacrifice is well-pleasing to God.

Now, verse 19, And my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. I've learned the verse that way ever since I was a tiny boy. It's in every promise book ever made.

However, I learned something new just this past week in picking through the Greek here, because there is a textual variation, there is a difference. And after going through all the evidence on both sides, we have a choice, and it centers on shall supply. My God shall supply.

This is the word pleiroo, will fill up, will completely meet. Same word that's used for the filling of the spirit. My God, and then we have a choice.

This is either a future active indicative, pleirosai, or it is the aorist optative, pleirosai. There's a difference of one letter, and some of the manuscripts have one, some of the manuscripts have another. My conclusion, after quite a lot of research and analysis, is that it is the aorist optative, and Paul is saying, may my God supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

And we talked about the relationship of glory to the rest of this. The reason for that is manifold. But at the close of his letters, Paul often makes this kind of statement.

He will express a prayer on behalf of his correspondents. He will say what God can do, 2 Corinthians 9.8, God is able to make all grace abound to you. Remember, I said a minute ago, don't forget that principle we learned last time about how sometimes there's a need and God will intentionally cut the pipe, and leave the need, and leave people wanting to meet it, but it just doesn't happen.

He just got through saying that. Why would he confidently assert that God is going to meet every need of theirs according to His riches in glory? He just got through saying, I had needs, and you were anxious to meet them, but you didn't have occasion, you didn't have opportunity, and I functioned for a time being abased, doing without. And I learned in that state to be content, and that even when I'm without, I am full, and even when I'm full, I'm without.

I learned through that. Paul himself learned. Why would he then suddenly say, well, God is going to meet every one of your needs according to His riches in glory? The declarative doesn't quite fit.

The aorist optative, may God supply your every need, is an expression of wish. And Paul uses this quite frequently in his letters. This exact same expression, the post-positive conjunctive particle da, followed by ha-theos, or ha-churios, followed by the optative.

For example, and you can just write these down quickly, I don't want to run out of time here, but Romans 15.5, Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus. May God grant. 1 Thessalonians 5.23, Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely.

You could say, well, why wouldn't that be a declarative statement? God will, because He is going to sanctify us entirely at some point. But Paul says, may the God of peace sanctify you entirely. And may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And there's no textual problem in these other letters. This is Paul's method of expressing his confident wish. But it leaves open God's discretion.

Paul is not saying God is going to meet every one of your needs according to His riches and glory. He says, may God supply your needs according to His glory. However He sees fit, whatever glorifies Him, that's how He'll meet your needs.

He will fill your need. Sometimes, you know what you need? You need your need. That's what you really need.

You need your need. That's how you're going to grow. That's how you're going to learn.

And God is going to fill up that need by leaving you with a need. Remember Paul with his thorn in the flesh? Asked God three times, take it away. God said, no, you need it.

You need that deficit. You need that debility. So that he wouldn't be puffed up.

So that he wouldn't get too full of himself. God says, you need that. And I'm not going to take it away.

So I am reasonably confident that the manuscripts that show the aorist optative are the superior text. Now may my God supply your need. And it's a beautiful symmetry here.

I wish I could draw it all out on a board in Greek and show you how beautiful this is. But he says, basically, you have filled up my need, received in full. I had a need and you filled it up.

Now may my God fill your needs according to His riches, according to His glory, by Christ Jesus, in and through Christ Jesus, in His glory, on behalf of His glory, according to the standard of His glory. This is in the present. And in the same way that this was a monetary gift to him that he received, he says, I hope that God will meet your needs in the way that reflects the glory of Jesus Christ and His own glory.

But it's the optative. May God do so. Second Thessalonians 3.16, same thing.

Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. Hopefully He will, but there are occasions where He wouldn't. I could give you countless other passages where He uses this same thing.

Romans 15.33, where He leaves out the verb, but the implied verb is an optative. In Romans 15.33, Now the God of peace be with you all. That's how they put it.

There is no be. He just says, Now the God of peace with you all. And what is He saying? May the God of peace be with you.

Maybe He will, maybe He won't. It depends on how you conduct your prayer life, right? We just saw that up above. Depends on how you think, whether or not you have that knowledge and that mindset.

1 Corinthians 16.23 is another implied optative. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

2 Corinthians 13.13, Galatians 6.18, Ephesians 6.24, all the same. Very common in Paul. And I think it's the case here.

Why is that important? Because God is going to do, and we want God to do, whatever expresses His glory. Whatever reflects being in Christ Jesus. And sometimes we need our needs.

Now He's going to close this letter in the final section by saying, Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. Because that's what it's all about.

Everything ultimately is subservient to, subordinate to, pointed at, the glory of God. And once again, you notice that B is in italics? Because this is an implied optative. Now may glory be to our God and Father forever and ever.

Amen. And of course, ultimately it will be. But who recognizes it? Who sees God's glory when they look at Sinai? And who sees nothing but the clouds and the thunder and runs away? Who hears the voice of God? Who thinks it thundered? He closes this last section here, this quick little three short verses.

He says, Remember up above when He said, You Odious and Tyche, get together. Let everybody be of one mind, one spirit. Let all of you have the same mind.

And in other letters, like at the end of Romans, where He names all of those people, here, He knows the people in Philippi probably even better than He knows the people in Rome, but He doesn't name any of them. Why? Because this letter was sent there, but whoever's reading the letter, whoever hears the letter, if the crowd is not all present, He says, Greet each saint. He could have said, Greet the saints.

And it would be just a general term, all the saints, greetings to all you saints. But He individualizes it. Each one of them is precious.

Each one of them is meaningful. He counts each one as a friend. He's not taking sides.

He doesn't say, Greet those of you Odious, and say hi to Tyche. Each saint. Nobody's going to be able to say, Well, Paul's on my side.

Greet each saint in Christ Jesus. And the brethren who are with me greet you. The brethren who are with Him, this is Timothy, this is Luke.

And by the way, when you look at the 16th chapter of Romans, you want to know who's with Paul? Read that chapter. Because he's writing, I think, from Rome, the Roman imprisonment, back to the Philippians. And if you want to know who the brethren are, you've got a nice list there.

All the saints greet you. So there's the brothers. Those are his close ministry partners, like Luke and Timothy.

Those are the brothers. Then he says, All the saints. And these are the new saints, these who know the Philippians only by reputation.

But now they're brothers. They're family. And it's like family that's never met.

But they greet you anyway. I've told them about you. And I'm telling you about them.

And there's these greetings. It'd be like Dr. Eddy saying, everyone in the church sends his greetings to everyone in your church. We haven't met, but it still warms your heart to know that there's a group over there that we haven't met.

We might've seen them in pictures, but we feel a bond with them. We feel close with them. And that's exactly what Paul is talking about here.

And especially those who are of Caesar's household. Remember, Philippi, Roman colony, a lot of status there, a lot of pride in their standing as this Roman colony with special rights and so on. And he says, just as an add-on, there are saints in the household of Caesar.

You almost get the idea. If this was modern day colloquial linguists, he would say, the saints, especially the ones in Caesar's household, greet you. Isn't that great? That there are saints in the household of Caesar, the imperial guard, the imperial realms up there, all of these oppressive Romans that are wreaking all this havoc.

And there's saints scattered in that household and they send their greetings also. You've got friends, even in Caesar's household. You've got brothers and sisters in Christ, even in Caesar's household.

And he closes by saying, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. And you'll remember that's how he began the letter.

Grace to you and peace. Grace to you. We are so indebted to God for his grace.

Where would we be? What would we have without the grace of God? And there's not a more fervently or more often expressed wish by Paul than that God's grace be with God's people. And it is just as true for us as for them. We have nothing that we have not received.

We owe everything to grace. The founder of Dallas Seminary, Louis Perry Chafer, wrote a book called All of Grace. It's all of grace.

And it truly is. And it's a wonderful way both to begin and to close this great letter. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all because the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

John chapter 1. And then he puts another amen on there. So be it. Most of the prayers you find of Paul and the fervently expressed wishes close in this way.

Well, that concludes our study of the letter to the Philippians. We will begin our study of the letters of Peter next Friday, but we'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for your grace and your faithfulness toward us, the compassion and the love that you express to us through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank you for this great letter and the truth that we have gleaned from it. We know that there is probably far more and we've only scratched the surface, but it has been so meaningful and so motivating to see the example of the Apostle Paul and his great words of exhortation and encouragement in this epistle. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will bless these truths to our hearts and constantly remind us of them and impress them on us in a way that we will benefit, we will be edified and built up, and both collectively and individually, we will accomplish your plan and purpose for us in the time that remains to us in this life.

We ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.